

**Student Affairs Assessment Council Retreat
November 3, 2006
In a cabin by the woods**

Attendance: Beth Dyer, Linda Reid, Ann Robinson, Kent Sumner, Rebecca Sanderson, Bob Kerr, Jodi Nelson, Rosemary Garagnani, Kami Hammerschmith, Rick DeBellis, Edie Blakley, Larry Roper, Tina Clawson, Lisa Hoogesteger, Jo Alexander, Michele Ribeiro, Suzanne Flores, Jessi Long

Morning:

Larry spoke about what he sees relative to the SAAC from a Division, University and national level. In addition, he spoke of the SAAC impact on others and its ability to create value for others at OSU.

Here are some comments from this conversation. Please recognize these are fragments of speaking, not direct quotes.

- Nationwide, there's a lot of energy in SA for assessment, but little orderliness. The thinking is from a perspective of obligation, not value-gained. Assessment is an opportunity to transform culture and deepen the thinking about our work. Some of our colleagues are reticent to talk about "student learning" and may instead focus on "satisfaction."
- Many in SA are looking for evidence of measurement of value and its application. Larry read an e-mail from a colleague (John Schuh, Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Iowa State University) that said in essence, we at OSU are "remarkable". Direct quote from email: "I just thought you should know that what I found at OSU was exceptional—easily the best of all the sites I visited. . . I plan to mention this in my remarks as a superb example of how to do things well."
- From a historical perspective, assessment has been a part of the SA culture since the Campus Compact provided the framework for change and a foundation for SA work in the mid-1990's.

Expectations and Vision:

- Dept. Head buy in is uneven. The reorganization will increase our understanding of our core values, and accountability will be important. Assessment is across the model as part of the infrastructure of success. We will need and want to demonstrate evidence of what we are doing and achieving.
- In response to some of what's been written by the Spelling Commission, we at OSU have created conditions that will carry us forward proactively, rather than needing to react to required measures. It is a priority for Larry to continue to

support assessment efforts. One way of doing this is to provide professional development opportunities to increase knowledge or provide energy to do our work better.

- The charge is clear for the SAAC (paraphrased from original document).
 - To provide leadership and direction for strategic planning in assessment.
 - To establish and monitor an agenda for assessment.
 - To establish and monitor assessment for SA and other collaborating units.
- We can and have influenced the rest of the institution.

Looking to the future:

- We will serve as an internal and external model of assessment for sharing responsibility for organizational activities.
- We will be a dynamic example of continuity through change. Assessment will continue to undergird and influence our structure, our organizational habits and our core responsibilities.
- The SAAC functions as a learning community. We are invested in learning. We continue to develop new approaches and share them with others. Together, we have transformed the culture around assessment, and more broadly and deeply than a mandate or compliance.
- We focus on the student from a holistic perspective and this overlaps well with the learning themes in the newly developed learning goals for SA.
- We have an opportunity to provide structure for common data reporting, sharing of results and applications for continuous improvement. We are a powerful model of leadership, working on behalf of the organization. This is evidenced through reports, presentations, web information and acting as a resource for other institutions.
- Our work is cutting edge.

Powerpoint Presentation on the Student Affairs Assessment Survey (previously sent to SAAC members).

A shortened synthesis of the information presented will be sent to all of SA by the end of November (Michele and Lisa working on this)

Lunch break –

Excellent food and conversation.

A “Congratulations SA Assessment Council” Cake that was FABULOUS!!

Afternoon:

Small groups discussed what we learned from Larry and from the survey and talked about these questions.

- What else do we want to know (from the Student Affairs survey on Assessment)?
- What could/should SAAC do with this information, broadly or specifically?
- What did we learn?

Ideas, Actions, Comments and Questions:

- Should we have an Assessment plan for SAAC?
- We need to report back to SADH/Division results of the survey
- Put survey results on Student Affairs Research and Evaluation web site, maybe some quick tips
- Blog
- Orientation: SAAC members
 - Mentor possibility for new members
 - Model process to bring folks up to date
- Communication Plan (about what SAAC is doing)
 - Info STUAFF in general
 - What is access to StuAff list serve?
- Create a common language to increase understanding and knowledge—clearly define assessment
- Critique current survey: re-administer
- Plant seeds for DH to have conversations about assessment with staff
- Article discussion/ on going learning outside of SAAC meetings
- Invite people to focused lunches on assessment topics (e.g., customer service)
- Reaching out to those not at SAAC—ID who and why
- Reach out to academic advisors, faculty, outside of SA
- Working together to do national presentations within discipline or broader
- Intentional about self-care of group
- Systematically gathering, reporting across SA departments
 - Intentionality of/on a similar component—one common question
- Provide an Information commons for Assessment
- Report/use of leadership survey that was done last spring by a subset of this group
- In current plans ask for choosing 1 or 2 things and explain its relationship/impact on learning goals
- Regional conference
- Timeline/scheduling

- With budgeting
- End of year reports

CONDITIONS impacting our work

- Things changing: Dept/Division Fluid
- “Do what you can with what you have”

We put the information above into three categories and broke into groups for further brainstorming and an attempt to prioritize what the work of the SAAC should be.

COMMUNICATION

To whom, what, how, toward what end

SYSTEMATIC PROCESS

OUTREACH

SYSTEMATIC PROCESS GROUP

How can we produce a story about our learning?

- Value in seeing other plans
- Look at alignment pieces of plans; have alike groups get together and respond to how they contribute to a particular learning goal (i.e., healthy living, community, etc.)
- Collective info could be shared with Rebecca to write up the story

COMMUNICATION GROUP

What info do we want given to whom for what purpose?

New employee orientation

- Leader vs. manager
- Understanding of assessment
- Resources of assessment
- Individual applicability for assessment
- Link to SA
- Value of assessment
- Nurture curiosity

Virtual learning community—blogs, tips

Simple OR materials (campus compact, assessment, learning goals)

Availability of group training

Mentoring SAAC

Presentation to Depts about who SAAC is, what we do

Paper information transferred to web

Format to reach all SA (stuaff list, mailings, dept head transfer info.)

Student Leader Orientation

Create common language

Modeling follow-up on SA assessment survey:

What we got, what we learned, what we are going to do

OUTREACH/CONNECTING WITH OTHERS GROUP

Report results of survey to STUAFF and what we are doing

Division

Orientation, mentoring SAAC—intro at every meeting (name tags)

University

Project interactions work

Intentionally/purposefully invite others

Lunch n Learn

Available for departmental presentations and training

Regionally/nationally

Contribute to national database

Write for journals

Do regional conference

Present at conferences

Conclusion:

We decided we wanted time to think about these ideas and what criteria we would use to prioritize for the SAAC. Specific action steps following the meeting were to provide a short summary of the survey to SA and to provide notes from our retreat to the entire SAAC. The conversation will continue at subsequent SAAC meetings.