University Assessment Council Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2003
Noon – 1:30 PM ~ RT 1701

Present: Everett Cataldo, Jeffrey Chen, Sandra Emerick, John Holcomb, Paul Klein, John Lallo, Earl Mortensen, Vida Svarcas, Peter Trumpower, Michael Wells, Melanie Yates, Marie E. Zeglen and Debra Sudy (clerk)

Guest: Chin Y. Kuo, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs

1. Minutes of the February 20th meeting were read and approved. M. Zeglen was presented with the Council’s best wishes as she leaves CSU for a new position in Miami, Florida. She thanked the members for their kind gesture and the work they have contributed to the assessment effort.

2. Meeting with Provost Kuo on the Status of Assessment Efforts:
M. Zeglen gave the Provost a report on the state of the University’s assessment effort and opened the meeting for comment on strategies for what lies ahead. She also thanked the Provost for his unwavering support of the assessment effort.

Comments:
Dr. Kuo opened the session requesting suggestions and comments on where assessment stands and what would be the next step. He thanked M. Zeglen for laying the foundation for outcome assessment and stressed that ‘Outcome Assessment is not anyone’s pet project but everyone’s – a serious task for evaluating and assessing program quality, along with fulfilling NCA accreditation requirements. CSU is moving from climate to culture and everyone is more aware of assessment.’ The Provost is requesting that by the end of this semester every academic department and student service units have an assessment plan in place, ready for implementation in the fall and over the next two years.

M. Zeglen stated that the process was as important as the documentation and that initial responses from units were perfunctory, but resubmissions showed more progress and effort as awareness has improved. The review process involved the Council: E. Cataldo, E. Mortensen, and M. Zeglen along with a councilmember reviewed the submissions of assessment plans from programs/units offering concrete suggestions. Many meetings were held with deans, directors and individuals. Three areas are in need of improvement: Sciences (physical and life,) the College of Law, and the College of Urban Affairs. M. Zeglen estimated that about 20% are not at NCA level 2.

E. Cataldo has generously offered to spend one month during the summer and 2/3 time during the Fall 2003 semester to help with the interim period. The Provost stated that he recognizes that a full-time staff is needed to monitor and facilitate outcome assessment and program review. This person would act as a resource person and provide assistance to individuals and units struggling with assessment.

M. Wells commented that each department would benefit from having a person designated, i.e. a liaison, that was formalized is some way. A discussion of compensatory options included offering release time, consulting fees or stipends, having assessment as an alternate option to research or creative activity contractual obligations, stipulated in chair contracts and/or program review – especially with the re-organization effort, offering graduate student assistance with time-consuming tasks, such as data collection and maintenance. Mentioning the CSU assessment website, M. Wells commented that the overwhelming amount of information is difficult to put to use and suggested a more direct path or product, such as was offered to CSU at an Assessment Seminar in 2001 by Dr. Douglas J. Eder (see: http://www.siue.edu/~deder/assess/index.html)

To keep the assessment effort in the limelight, the Provost suggested the publication of an article or column every month talking about assessment – anything helpful to promote its culture, including possibly publishing units who are at NCA level 3, holding target meetings with areas of concern as well as the funding to assist units not at level 2 and for those willing to contribute time to coach. The Provost invited members to email comments or suggestions to him: e.kuo@csuohio.edu

3. Other Business
M. Wells invited the Council to attend a May 8th, Senior Seminar Poster Project, in the College of Urban Affairs Atrium, 4 – 6 pm. For the project, part of an assessment effort, students worked with parishes to create asset inventories for the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland.

Next meeting: tentative - May 23, noon to 1:30 pm, RT 1701