The University Assessment Council

Minutes
October 22, 2019
Hagood Conference Room, Reese Phifer

Attendees

Ginger Bishop, Christy Cole, Chris Coleman, Fran Conners, James Hardin, Robin Lawson, Joyce Meyer, Heather Pleasants, Cecil Robinson, Tim Salazar, Rachel Thompson

- Christy Cole provided an overview of the upcoming Inclusive Syllabus Workshop (which was well-attended the next day, 10/23).

- The group discussed their observations about *Opening Doors to Faculty Involvement in Assessment*, a NILOA Occasional Paper by Pat Hutchings (2010). The conversation was informed by the results of a pre-meeting Qualtrics survey (attached below) about relevant obstacles at UA and the perceived promise of solutions described by Hutchings. As Fran Conners astutely pointed out, all 4 obstacles described in the paper were rated above 7.0 (on a 1-10 scale) in terms of impeding faculty/staff involvement at UA. Among solutions, those rated as having the most potential were

  - Build assessment around the regular, ongoing work of teaching/learning
  - Reframe the work of assessment as scholarship
  - Make a place for assessment in faculty/staff development
  - Create campus spaces/occasions for constructive conversations and action

- In a fitting segue, Cecil Robinson reminded the group of the application deadline (11/15) for the 2020 Faculty Learning Community on Improving Learning & Teaching through Improvement Science. The last 3 bullet points above are inherent to the FLC.

- Heather Pleasants gave an update on the NSSE, which was administered to ~2,500 students in Spring 2019. The results are now available; a default report (NSSE Snapshot) was disseminated to the UAC, and a round of team trivia allowed the group to test their instincts about our freshmen and seniors against their responses to actual NSSE items.

Meeting adjourned
Next meeting: January 28, 2020

Q3 - Obstacles to Greater Involvement (page 8): In your experience, how much do the following issues impede involvement in assessment? (0 = not at all; 10 = substantially)

1. Language: Assessment seen as part of "management culture" rather than a process at the heart of student learning/success.

7.78

2. Training: Faculty/staff not trained in assessment; no ready place or opportunity to learn about it.

7.27

3. Recognition: The work of assessment is an uneasy match with institutional reward systems.

8.45

4. Belief: Faculty/staff have not yet seen sufficient evidence that assessment makes a difference.

7.33

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	**Language**: Assessment seen as part of "management culture" rather than a process at the heart of student learning/success.	5.00	10.00	7.78	1.50	2.25	6
2	**Training**: Faculty/staff not trained in assessment; no ready place or opportunity to learn about it.	3.00	10.00	7.27	2.14	4.59	6
3	**Recognition**: The work of assessment is an uneasy match with institutional reward systems.	7.00	10.00	8.45	1.08	1.18	6
4	**Belief**: Faculty/staff have not yet seen sufficient evidence that assessment makes a difference.	6.50	8.20	7.33	0.59	0.35	6

Q4 - Recommendations to Expand Involvement (page 13): How likely is it that the strategies below would enhance UA's assessment/improvement culture?
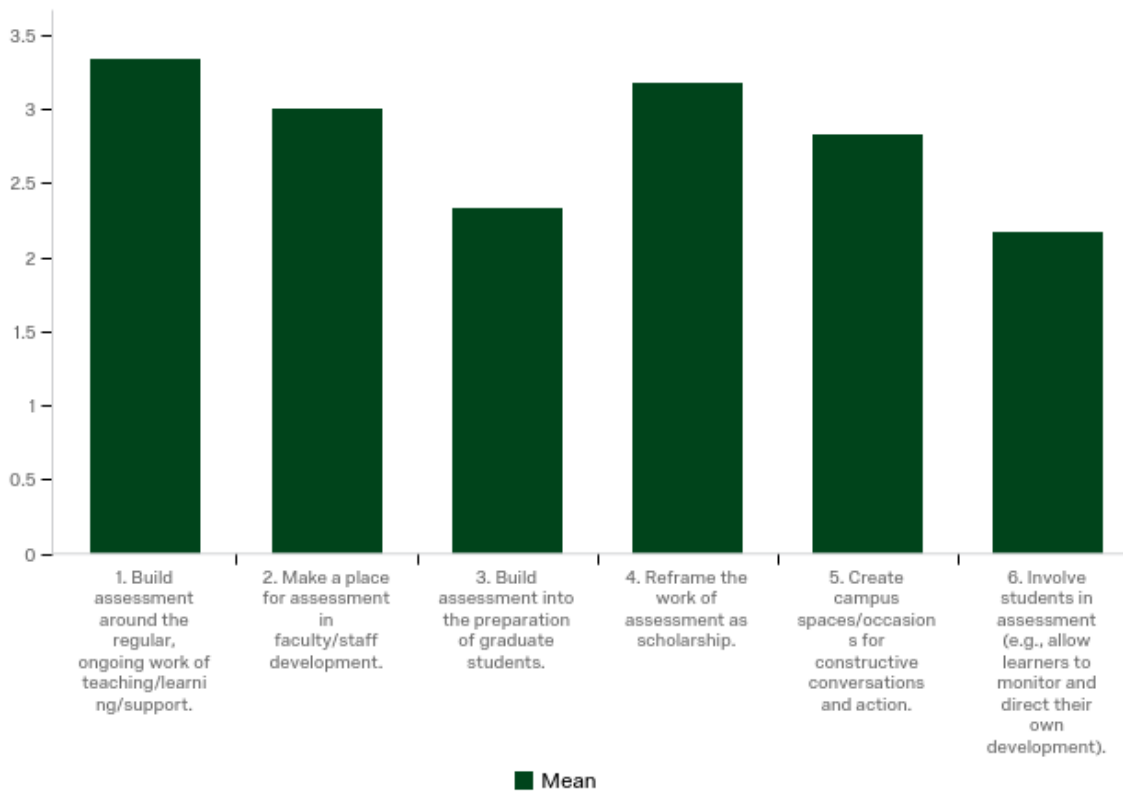
#	Question	Not Likely		2		3		Very likely		Total
1	Build assessment around the regular, ongoing work of teaching/learning/support.	0.00%	0	16.67%	1	33.33%	2	50.00%	3	6
2	Make a place for assessment in faculty/staff development.	16.67%	1	16.67%	1	16.67%	1	50.00%	3	6
3	Build assessment into the preparation of graduate students.	33.33%	2	16.67%	1	33.33%	2	16.67%	1	6
4	Reframe the work of assessment as scholarship.	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	33.33%	2	50.00%	3	6
5	Create campus spaces/occasions for constructive conversations and action.	0.00%	0	33.33%	2	50.00%	3	16.67%	1	6
6	Involve students in assessment (e.g., allow learners to monitor and direct their own development).	33.33%	2	33.33%	2	16.67%	1	16.67%	1	6

Q6 - Can you think of additional obstacles or strategies that might be particularly relevant?

I am sorry to say this, but I think there is still hold-over resentment from the approach that was taken to 'introduce' the concept of assessment to the campus at-large.

No. 6 is my favorite; why wait for the exit surveys!