



**Advisory Committee on Academic Assessment (ACAA)  
Accreditation, Assessment and Learning (AAL)  
Office of the Provost  
Kent State University**

**October 21, 2021 Meeting  
\*Via Microsoft Teams\***

**MINUTES**

Members in Attendance:

Susan Perry, Erica Eckert (co-chair), Tom Brewer, Jessie Carduner, Dale Eilrich, Riley Elersich, Gabrielle Frame, Elizabeth Graham, Shannon Helfinstine, Austin Kwak, Jennifer Marcinkiewicz, Lisa Onesko, David Putman, Sandra Randulic, Sean Ratican, Valerie Samuel, Hollie Simpson, Elizabeth Sinclair, Linnea Stafford, Brittany Thomas, Robin Vande Zande and Dee Warren.

Guests:

Versie Johnson-Mallard

**I. Welcome and introductions**

Susan Perry welcomed all and announced that agendas, minutes and other meeting resources will be added to the ACAA Microsoft Teams Post prior to each meeting, rather than sent via email.

**a. New members and guests**

Susan Perry invited new members who could not attend last month to introduce themselves.

- Gabrielle Frame, Graduate Student, Biomedical Sciences
- Lisa Onesko, Professor, College of Nursing

**II. Approval of minutes**

The minutes from the ACAA September meeting were presented, reviewed and approved.

**III. ACAA composition and future focus**

Continuing September's discussion, Susan Perry reminded members ACAA is reviewing and developing recommendations for updating the committee description, charge, and membership.

**a. Continued discussion on charge**

Shannon Helfinstine shared a draft revision of the charge based on earlier discussion, which included incorporating ideas from other institutions with strong assessment practices. Robin Vande Zande mentioned that if ACAA is a "primary advisory body for the assessment of student learning", the charge doesn't seem to specifically deal directly with student learning. Erica Eckert and Susan explained that language about student learning is to clarify the assessment type that is the focus of the committee, and to

distinguish between that and operational outcomes, surveys and other items. Instead, the “meta-assessment” the committee has been engaging in is assessing a program’s assessment practices. ACAA provides support and professional development training to promote that assessment.

Jessie Carduner continued that ACAA provides *a bridge between program assessment and student learning*. Elizabeth Sinclair mentioned that ACAA is the *primary body for evaluating program assessments of student learning*. Dee Warren mentioned that while ACAA lacks authority, she suggested the charge should be written to reflect *guidance - supplying feedback, training, encouragement, support, and aid to units*. Sandi Randulic also mentioned another function of the committee is *comprehensively coordinating and understanding program assessment across the institution*.

**b. Review model membership**

Shannon shared composition examples of other comparable committees from like institutions. Charges varied, and faculty, academic deans, and other professionals were commonly members. Some assessment committees reviewed assessment reports, while others took more of a coordinating role and supplied stipends for a faculty group to review program assessment reports annually. Robin asked about the current role of students within the committee and what we expect them to contribute. Shannon and Susan mentioned that student involvement promotes transparency and is also an educational experience to help them better understand how the university reviews and uses student learning data to improve programs. Follow-up questions will be asked of student members (and all members) to better understand student participation in ACAA and how to optimize their committee engagement. Other students active in higher education administration graduate programs may also want to be more involved with this committee.

**c. Next steps**

Shannon will take these suggestions and draft a revised charge to present at the next meeting

**IV. 2021 Great Colleges**

Continuing September’s discussion, Shannon shared the top ten and bottom ten faculty items on this survey, as well as comment themes from all respondent job categories.

**V. Annual assessment report rubric review, aka “Meta-Assessment”**

**a. Discuss September breakout groups**

Shannon provided a quick reminder of the September practice, and Erica reiterated focusing on familiarization to use the rubric moving forward with more reports.

**b. Break-out groups**

Members were split into virtual breakout rooms with two to four members and asked to review the same sample Taskstream program report and rubric, plus one new report.

**c. Reconvene and discussion**

Reviewers discussed that using course grades and GPAs are not the best evidence for assessing learning outcomes. Learning outcomes in reports reviewed to date are not utilizing active verbs is also an issue. The committee discussed the utility of developing a comment “bank” that would contain feedback blurbs on commonly seen assessment challenges. Having examples such as Bloom’s Taxonomy embedded in the rubric (or available in Taskstream), along with sharing information about best practices in areas such as capstone assessment may also be helpful. ACAA and the AAL Office, with the

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), could aid with programming to provide professional development for faculty to help them address these assessment challenges. The committee determined it would be helpful to share the rubric and the accompanying feedback with those who are doing the assessing, as well as deans, chairs and directors.

Discussion then ensued about review coordination, i.e., how many reports and from which colleges to sample this year. Members thought that having groups of three review each report would work well and would aid in tiebreakers. Having an exemplary report available to the reviewers would be helpful as well. Since sensitive program data could be embedded within assessment reports, Susan shared a non-disclosure agreement provided by Erica Eckert that she uses with her graduate students for review. The committee thought that student members should complete the agreement, but it was not necessary for employees who regularly sit on committees with confidential information and engage in FERPA and other training. An alternative that was discussed is a simple confidentiality statement that could be included on each reviewer's rubric that they could sign off on as a reminder that information reviewed in the reports does not get shared outside of the work of the committee. At the start of each academic year, it could be part of the newly developed ACAA Primer for new members and a reminder to current members. Adding the rubric in Qualtrics was also suggested to aid in data collection since it may be simpler for this group approach than embedding it in Taskstream.

#### **VI. Assessment Award**

- a. Susan presented a modified version of the assessment award for review. Since last spring's discussion, she added a requirement that programs must submit a report in the most recent assessment cycle to apply, thus incentivizing and recognizing those who are most active. Also, non-faculty may apply, but need a faculty co-sponsor, since changes based on assessment affect curriculum. Robin questioned why the funds could not support stipends for faculty and pointed out that recent staff surveys noted the lack of recognition at the University. Susan thought the stipend restriction may have budget or legal reasons since this language was borrow from a past Provost initiative; however, she will research further to see if stipends are an option at this time.

#### **VII. Updates/Announcements**

- a. **Annual assessment report (2020-21) reminder for all programs – September 30**  
Shannon reminded committee members to encourage College colleagues to continue entering program assessments in Taskstream.

#### **VIII. Next meeting: November 18, 2:00-3:30pm, via Teams**

**Meeting adjourned**