University Assessment Steering Committee
Summary Note #62
May 18, 2009

Attending: Patrick Benton, chair (Aviation), Sue Brodasky (OIT), Maira Bundza (International Programs), Laura Darrah (DOSA), Marianne DiPierro (Graduate College), Edward Eckel (Libraries), Eileen Evans (OIE), Lin Foulk (College of Fine Arts), Kevin Knutson (Arts & Sciences), Kristin Lagerquist (OIE), Nate Knappen (WSA), Deb Newson (EUP), Brandi Pritchett (GSAC), Cari Robertson (Sindecuse), Karen Stokes (ex-officio, TracDat), Gwen Tarbox (Graduate Studies Council).

Absent: Judah Ari-Gur (Engineering and Applied Sciences), Kathy Cummings (College of Education), Mariam Konate Deme (College of Arts and Sciences), Marilyn Kritzman (AAUP), Stephen Malcolm (College of Arts and Sciences), Muhammad Razi (Haworth College of Business), Dave Reinhold (ex-officio), Lynnae Stankus (DOSA), Yvonne Unrau (College of Health and Human Services).

Summary note #61 was approved (Evans, Darrah).

UASC new members were introduced and announced. Brad Dennis will represent University Libraries, Nate Knappen (WSA) was introduced, however, it's not certain who will sit on the committee for WSA in the fall. Likewise with GSAC, Brandi Pritchett also mentioned there will be someone to sit for GSAC in the fall.

Pat Benton was re-elected to serve as UASC chair (Darrah, Lagerquist). The committee was all in favor. Benton accepted.

Evans gave a commendation to Ed Eckel, whose term ended this year (May). She mentioned that Ed has been an asset to the committee and that his work on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning workshop is outstanding. (applause)

Discussion turned to John Jellies (Faculty Senate) and if inviting him to attend an UASC meeting would be beneficial in gaining support from faculty senate in our assessment efforts and in promoting assessment campuswide. **It was determined that John would be invited in September 2009 to attend the October 2009** meeting. It was suggested that UASC put together two or three key talking points to present to Jellies before he attends. Some key points that the committee discussed follows: How does Jellies and Faculty senate "see" UASC and assessment – how does it all fit in?; What can UASC do to gain faculty senate's support?, What are the steps that faculty senate (and its councils) could take to enhance assessment at WMU?

DiPierro and Tarbox next presented the committee with an update and draft proposal for the Graduate Research on Assessment Program. Two awards were

presented. The first, Graduate College Award for the Analysis of Higher Learning (AAHL) is funded by the Graduate College and will launch fall 2009. This award is based on previous performance and applicants are nominated by their department. A department may nominate one applicant on the master's level and one applicant on the doctoral/specialist's level. This award encourages faculty mentoring of students whose research incorporates assessment. The second award, UASC Assessment Award (UAA) is still in the planning processes, **Tarbox and DiPierro will submit a final draft to UASC members this summer.** The UAA award is student driven and carries a financial incentive. This award also supports the efforts of those graduate students engaged in research related to assessment. It was proposed that this award will launch spring 2010 and will be awarded three times per year. Evans stated that the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will fund this award – totaling six awards at $500 each/academic year. This shows WMU support for graduate level research. Tarbox mentioned that both awards intersect with the goals of UASC and will assist in increasing student awareness of assessment of student learning. Feedback on the awards will be obtained from GSAC and GSC prior to gaining approval from UASC. The Graduate College will be charged with reviewing applications with two UASC members and a representative from GSAC sitting on the review panel.

Eckel provided an update on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning workshop being held at the College of Health and Human Services on Friday, May 29, 2009. At this time there are 31 folks who sent in an rsvp to attend. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Kathleen McKinney of Illinois State University and there will be three breakout sessions that will focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Among those giving presentations that day are Eckel and Betsy Aller, Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Benton provided an update on the Lee Honors College RACT and assessment plan. The plan has been reviewed, the RACT will get together to discuss and put comments on forms, and then provide feedback to the College.

Six members of UASC attended the Higher Learning Commission annual meeting in April 2009: Cummings, Darrah, Evans, Knutson, Reinhold and Tarbox. Members in attendance gave a brief description of the sessions they attended, which dealt primarily with assessment. Some of the themes included assessment and faculty "buy-in", digital assessment (visual representation of areas that need improvement), How to encourage faculty to embrace assessment across the institution, how to inform students of institution mission and vision. Darrah mentioned that Residence Life will be doing the digital project. She also mentioned that the HLC web site has all of the presentations from April's meeting and those who are interested should check them out.

Stokes mentioned that TACT (Traveling Assessment Consultation Teams) teams are available to help the WMU community with assessment issues. TACT's provide resources to those at WMU who participate in assessment. Those who need assistance will contact Stokes who will put together a TACT. Stokes also mentioned that if anyone is interested in participating in a TACT to let her know.

Benton provided a brief report. He had the opportunity to meet with the NCATE team (University of Kentucky and Michigan Department of Education) who was on campus recently and he mentioned that they were impressed with WMU's leading edge in assessment. Members of NCATE (from where?) were very interested in UASC, TracDat, and iWebfolio.

Evans reported that the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will support presentations accepted at IUPUI, North Carolina State and HLC. She mentioned that WMU has a variety of presentations to submit: assessment of student learning, planning, faculty development, leadership, etc.

Evans also reported that the signing ceremony for the dual master's degree program with the University of Malta occurred the first week of May. This will require a change request to the Higher Learning Commission.

Evans reported that the Higher Learning Commission is piloting some new approaches to accreditation to take place next year due to the fact that the Department of Education is increasing compliance. (HLC acts as a buffer between the Department of Education and Institutions of Higher Education). The new approaches will focus on compliance (evidence) and accreditation review; there will be several ways in which an institution can ready for review. These changes or new approaches will not affect WMU and how we are currently pursuing our accreditation with HLC. Evans also mentioned that HLC changed the language related to institutions that have additional campuses away from the main campus – now referred to as sites not campus.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. (Robertson/Lagerquist)