TO: Members of the Senate
FROM: Secretary of the Senate
SUBJECT: Senate Meeting on January 14, 2016
DATE: January 7, 2015

A January meeting of the University Senate will be held on Thursday, January 14, 2016, at 4:05 p.m. in Room 113, Education.

AGENDA

1) Announcements

2) Minutes of the previous meeting and business arising from the minutes

3) Question period

CONSENT CALENDAR:

4) Annual report of the Senate University Assessment Committee, Deborah Worley and Shari Nelson, University Assessment Committee (attachment #1)

5) Annual report of the Senate Faculty Handbook Committee, Timothy Prescott, Chair, Senate Faculty Handbook Committee (attachment #2)

BUSINESS CALENDAR:

6) Curriculum Committee report, Roxanne Hurley, Chair, Curriculum Committee (handout at meeting)
Senate University Assessment Committee
Annual Report for
Academic Year 2014-2015

The Senate University Assessment Committee (UAC) provides faculty guidance and oversight to the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost in developing and implementing the University Assessment Plan. In addition, the committee analyzes and interprets assessment results, develops appropriate reports, and disseminates assessment results to the Office of Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, the University Senate, and the community.

The University Assessment Committee was able to accomplish the tasks and responsibilities charged to it by the University Senate, in part due to the support provided by Joan Hawthorne, Director of Assessment & Regional Accreditation. The Committee is grateful for her continued support and expertise.

Much of the work of assessment has been, and is, conducted outside the University Assessment Committee. The UAC wishes to thank the Essential Studies Committee, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), and the University community for their assessment efforts. Every contribution is vital to the assessment process at the University of North Dakota. Special thanks are also offered to Carmen Williams and Jodi Steiner who willingly shared their research expertise and UAC experience with the University Assessment Committee on an ongoing basis.

The Senate University Assessment Committee for the 2014-2015 academic year was chaired by Deborah Worley (EHD) in Fall 2014 and co-chaired by Dr. Worley and Shari Nelson (VPSA Designee) in Spring 2015. Committee members for the 2014-2015 year included:

- Mary Askim-Lovseth (BPA)
- Kevin Buettner (Nursing & Professional Disciplines)
- James Casler (JDO)
- Surojit Gupta (CEM)
- Devon Hanson (A&S)
- Joan Hawthorne (Director of Assessment & Regional Accreditation)
- Bradley Myers (Law)
- Shari Nelson (VPSA Designee)
- C. Casey Ozaki (Graduate Studies Designee)
- Kenneth Ruit (MED)
- Tom Steen (Director, Essential Studies)
- Jodi Steiner (Recorder; Institutional Research)
- Carmen Williams (VPAA Designee; Institutional Research)
- Deborah Worley (EHD)

One undergraduate student and one graduate student were asked to serve on the Assessment Committee but they did not participate.

Functions and Responsibilities of the University Assessment Committee
The University Senate has identified six areas of responsibility for the University Assessment Committee. The responsibilities of the Committee and its accomplishments during the 2014-2015 academic year are addressed as follows:

I. Address all issues regarding assessment of student achievement and development.

*The University Assessment Plan recognizes the role of the Academic Curriculum (implicit and explicit) in student learning and development. Through a review process of annual assessment reports, assessment plans, previous assessment reviews, and departmental documents, the assessment activities of departments and programs within the School of Aerospace Science, College of Engineering & Mines, and the College*
of Business & Public Administration were reviewed in 2014-2015. The results were communicated to the department chairs through the Assessment Director.

The University Assessment Committee also conducted reviews of five non-academic units including: American Indian Student Services, Financial Wellness, Housing, Multicultural Student Services, and Student Support Services (TRIO). The Committee recognizes their contributions in the achievement of Institutional, Essential Studies, and Program goals relative to student learning and development. Finally, the committee reviewed two OIR (Office of Institutional Research) tools regularly used by various University stakeholders: The Graduating Student Survey and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA).

II. Develop, review, and evaluate the University Assessment Plan in conjunction with the Assessment Director.

This document is to be reviewed every other year. The University Assessment Plan was reviewed in fall 2013. Minimal revisions were made to the document at that time. The plan should be reviewed again in fall 2015. To access the most recent version of the University Assessment Plan (January 2014), please visit: http://und.edu/university-senate/committees/assessment/_files/docs/univ-asmt-plan.pdf

III. Oversee and evaluate the implementation of the University Assessment Plan, evaluate assessment activities and the interpretation of assessment results, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Plan.

Assessment of Student Learning and Development: Program Level
As previously indicated, the UAC reviewed the assessment documents for the departments and programs within the School of Aerospace Science, College of Engineering & Mines, and the College of Business & Public Administration were reviewed in Spring 2015. The committee reviewed assessment plans for 15 School of Aerospace Science programs, 18 College of Engineering & Mines programs, and 20 College of Business & Public Administration, including certificate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs. Findings were documented and forwarded to departments through the Assessment Director.

The Assessment Director and the UAC continue to provide guidance to departments as they develop, implement, and make use of their assessment plans. Taken collectively, the reviews help determine the state of assessment for the University as a whole. In general, departments and programs have specific plans for assessment in place, and there are many programs where student learning goals are well-articulated in those assessment plans. Moreover, appropriate methods of assessment are implemented. However, the committee reviewed several programs where assessment methods need further description. A small number of programs did not provide any results of assessment activities or evidence of actions taken on the basis of assessment results.

Assessment of Student Learning and Development: Institutional Level
The University has many assessment tools at its disposal. As noted in section I, two tools were reviewed in the 2014-2015 academic year.

Tools that are administered by the Office of Institutional Research are a combination of national surveys, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and surveys that have been developed by UND for internal purposes, such as the Advising Survey. Many of the surveys do not directly measure student learning; they do address the infrastructures, conditions, and environmental components that promote and enhance student learning. Thus, even though survey findings are of special importance to administration, academic departments may also find results noteworthy in further understanding student learning.

Full reports of the OIR tools were directed to the Office of Institutional Research. UAC reviews were also forwarded to the respective administrative or academic departments via the Assessment Director and/or the Office of Institutional Research. Departmental chairs and individual faculty are encouraged to access survey results at http://und.edu/research/institutional-research/survey-timelines.cfm or by contacting the Assessment Director or the Office of Institutional Research.

In addition, information specifically for students about the findings of the surveys is available online: http://und.edu/university-senate/committees/assessment/for-students.cfm
Assessment of Non-Academic Units
It is recognized that many non-academic units have a direct involvement in student learning and development. As noted in section I, five non-academic units were reviewed during the 2014-2015 academic year. UAC committee members noted that non-academic programs do have assessment plans in place, and some programs include student learning goals in their plans. There is, however, room for improvement. For many programs, a single type of assessment method predominates. For a small number of programs, there is no evidence that results included in annual reports are directly tied to decision-making within the unit. UAC reviews were forwarded to the respective units via the Assessment Director.

IV. Make recommendations regarding how to address any deficiencies that are revealed by assessment activities.

A process for providing feedback from the Committee to administrators and departments continues to be provided by the institution's Assessment Director. Changes in the process continue as appropriate.

Additionally, a luncheon for Department Chairs and the Deans of the School of Aerospace Sciences, the College of Engineering & Mines, and the College of Business and Public Administration was held in May 2015. Many members of the Assessment Committee attended and provided general comments about the assessment plans that were reviewed. The Assessment Director moderated a series of brief presentations by departments who have developed and maintained successful assessment systems.

It should be noted that the Assessment Committee review is viewed as advisory to departments and programs. Program review is the place where action should occur if deficiencies noted in the Assessment Committee reviews are not addressed.

V. Review University Accreditation Report when issued and advise the Senate regarding the Report and its implications.

With guidance from the Assessment Director, members of the Assessment Committee reviewed the self-study report in preparation for the HLC visit that occurred in fall 2013. Committee members specifically reviewed Chapter 5, Criterion 4: Teaching & Learning: Evaluation and Improvement as this part of the self-study specifically discussed the committee's work. A special meeting time was set aside during the HLC visit for reviewers to meet with the Assessment Committee. The meeting was cancelled by the reviewers, however, just prior to the actual meeting day.

In 2014-2015, the Assessment Committee played a role in supporting institutional efforts to address "Opportunities for Improvement" or "Next Steps" in the Final Report of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association [Higher Learning Commission (NCAHLC)] (HLC of the NCA), specifically those aligned with Criterion 4. For example, the Assessment Committee continued to support academic and non-academic programs in implementing and improving upon their assessment practices. They conducted annual reviews of assessment reports submitted by programs (academic and support unit) and engaged academic leaders in discussion of assessment work via a year-end Assessment Luncheon. The Assessment Committee also encouraged departments to make use of the new(er) assessment reporting system and to submit annual assessment reports, as these were the documents that members used to conduct their reviews of assessment activities across campus. One area for improvement, as noted by HLC, concerned the unevenness of assessment activities across campus. The Assessment Committee spent considerable time crafting feedback for academic and non-academic departments to provide tangible examples of how assessment plans can be elevated and to create systematic assessment activity at the program level. The Assessment Director and members of the Assessment Committee were also available to assist any department with assessment.

The Assessment Committee continues to support institutional efforts related to accreditation and will contribute as needed to help the institution prepare for the HLC focused visit in 2017.
VI. Work with Institutional Research to keep the Assessment Committee's website current.

_The Office of Institutional Research continues to maintain the Assessment Committee's website. Several key features of the site include: a section on the basic steps of writing an assessment plan, a section for students that describes key findings from OIR tools, resources for campus constituents about assessment, and resources for committee members who conduct reviews of assessment plans, including posting of the most up to date assessment review templates (revised in fall 2014). In addition, the assessment plans of academic departments and non-academic units that attend to student learning and development are available to the campus and to the public on the Assessment Committee website. For more information, please visit: http://und.edu/university-senate-committees/assessment/

Summary: During 2014-2015, the University Assessment Committee fulfilled its purpose, function and responsibilities including annual reviews of academic and non-academic assessment activities, and OIR (Office of Instruction Research) tools, and a review of templates for assessment reviews.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Worley and Shari Nelson
University Assessment Committee

December 2015
January 14, 2016

Faculty Handbook Committee Annual Report

The Faculty Handbook Committee did not meet during the 2014-15 academic year.

In the fall of 2015, we met three times: October 10, November 6, and December 4. Because the PTE working group is also examining the faculty handbook for necessary changes, we postponed examining section I of the handbook, which contains the PTE related passages. Instead, we began by focusing on section II, Personnel Information.

Current and Future Work

The existing handbook is comprehensive to the point of being unwieldy. Because it has everything, it is infeasible to browse through it, and no one knows that something is in the handbook unless the specifically look for it. It also tries to be a resource for all information, causing it to frequently be outdated when the authoritative source updates their policy. This also leaves the University Senate approving changes to the handbook regarding policies over which the senate has no control.

We are proposing to simplify the handbook by removing unnecessary and redundant information. The result should be clearer, more consistent with itself and UND, and more transparent as to the party responsible for the policy. Partially, this will be accomplished by linking to other UND websites when possible.

For example, Subsection II-1, Nondiscrimination: is currently ten pages long 
links to: NDCC, SBHE, Code of Student Life, itself, and the current and former Affirmative Action Office website 
has a subsection for EEO/AA, a subsection for AA, and a subsection for EEO 
has at least 6 sections describing how UND can't discriminate based on: 
race, gender, disability, color, religion, age 
national origin (5 times) 
sexual orientation, marital status (4 times) 
creed (3 times) 
veteran's status, political belief or affiliation, status with regard to public assistance, or participation in lawful activity (twice)

Without changing any policy, we propose to reduce this subsection to four pages with appropriate links to the Century Code, SBHE policy, and UND's Affirmative Action office. If a policy is listed in one of those references, then the Faculty Handbook can link to that page and not repeat the information itself. We propose similar simplifications to the remainder of the handbook that also do not modify any policy.

Timothy Prescott, Chair

Faculty Handbook Committee