

Co-curricular Assessment:

Co-curricular assessment is in the early stages of implementation at MSUM. During the 2015-2016 year, each co-curricular unit was asked to write an assessment plan for a minimum of one student learning outcome (SLO), with the expectation that additional student learning outcomes would be added as appropriate to each area in the upcoming years. These initial plans and outcomes were read and feedback was provided on a rolling basis early in the assessment cycle. Units were asked to report on the learning outcomes by the July 1 deadline.

Reports were received from:

- Student Orientation Counselors
- Learning Communities
- Registrar's Office
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Student Union
- Scholarship and Financial Aid
- Alcohol and Other Drug – Level 1 Sanction Program
- Housing and Residential Life
- Intramurals and Club Sports
- International Student Services
- Honors Program
- Academic Support Center
 - Academic Advising
 - Academic Counseling and Intervention
 - Tutoring Services
- Disability Resource Center

Missing reports:

- Career Development Center (issues with collecting and analyzing data as per the approved plan, no report),
- Bookstore (no formal plan or report, but orally discussed both Diane),
- Wellness Center (discussed doing a student worker training with Diane, but no formal report or plan submitted – no director currently, will be some time before they can formalize plan/report).

Feedback was provided to these units in early July so that units could implement appropriate changes as early as Welcome Week of the 2016-2017 year.

As a whole, co-curricular units did a very good job assessing their outcomes. The fact that the University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes (U-WSLOs) had already been written, and units were asked to align their SLOs to these outcomes, was a huge advantage. Several units, among them, Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarship and Financial Aid, Disability Services, Housing and Residential Life and the Student Union did a great job data collection and analysis leading to appropriate action.

In general, the best reports showed strength in the following areas:

1. Clearly organized data and analysis.
2. Evidence of analysis and discussion of the data within the unit.
3. Explicit action plan based on this discussion.

On the other hand, there were several areas where these units could improve their assessment. Chief among these were:

1. Not carrying out the plan as written. In some cases, programs had a solid, approved assessment plan and then failed to collect the artifacts/data described in the plan. When it came time to write the assessment report, it was impossible to write a report based on the plan. This lack of artifacts sometimes lead to issue 2.
2. A desire to write an assessment report on the data that was available, rather than collecting the data that was described in the plan. In addition to the problem of just not following through on the approved plan, this also lead to issue 3.
3. Probably the greatest problem was a lack of alignment between the data collected and the student learning outcomes stated in the plan. In a few cases, comments were given in the feedback to the plan that there was a potential mismatch. Regardless, the mismatch between the SLO and the information collected will require a revision of either the assessment plan or the SLO to bring these into greater alignment. It is hoped that in the cases where good SLOs were written but the right data was not collected, that the good SLOs are not thrown out in favor of aligning to relatively meaningless, but readily available data.
4. On a related note, after completing the assessment report, some units realized that a few of the student learning outcomes, while seemingly noble, were very difficult to assess (U-WSLO 5 comes to mind). This will lead to some revision of the SLOs, which is good. Use best practice benchmarks to inform goals and explain why goals were revised. Aspirational vs. intermediate goals.

One annoying logistical issue is that most reports came in through emails scanned and sent to us:

- with gibberish file names (SKMBT_C454e1063015181)
- sent by intermediaries (Sherry Estrem, Mary O'Reilly Seim) – consider electronic signatures and use of technology.
- with inaccurate descriptions in the title or text of the email (calling a plan a report, for instance)

This makes finding a particular document more difficult than if they the report from unit X, was sent by the director of that unit in a document appropriate titled "Assessment report from unit X".

It is proposed that representatives from the University Assessment Committee meet with co-curricular units this fall to make sure that feedback was received, check in on revisions to plans and SLOs and continue the work that was started in this area.