

University Assessment Committee – Suggested Assessment Cycle – updated 4/1/06

We started this year with a three-part agenda:

- (1) Work on Teamwork assessment;
- (2) Redraft the educational goals along assessable lines;
- (3) Group the goals into a five-year cycle such that we can complete a five-year assessment cycle by the time of the next NCA visit (spring 2010) if possible.

We've done a lot on the first two, but the third has got little attention. After Maria, Mary and I talked about this at our last meeting, I set out to draft a suggested way to get on a five year cycle, and this is the result.

By a five-year cycle, I mean that once every five years, one of the goal groups would be the focus of the years' assessment efforts, both in our Committee and University-wide. Some efforts will of course be ongoing, while others may be done only during these focus years, but the emphasis during the focus years would be on compiling data, analyzing and reporting it, and generally "closing the loop", as well as carrying on ongoing activities. I recognize that this will not always (and may not ever) coincide well with accreditation cycles and the like, but that is unachievable.

One thing I hadn't really noticed before is that math skills, creativity, analytical thinking, and problem solving are now part of the "cognitive skills" group, rather than standing on their own. We're assessing the communications goals now on a regular basis, but these others have not yet started. Consequently I had to find a place to start them "out of sequence". Tentatively and somewhat arbitrarily I put them in 2008-09, but they could go in 07-08 as well if we can figure out how.

Another constraint is that I don't see how we can really start Leadership assessment before 2007-08. The Leadership Program Task Force will report out a program this spring, but it will have to be approved and integrated, and next year will be needed for that. A similar argument probably applies to Teamwork, which I put in 2008-09, and Character Education in 2009-10.

By this schedule, our situation at the visit in 2010 would be that we would be finishing the first assessment cycle with Character Education that year. Leadership and Teamwork would have been done in the previous two years, and Cognitive Skills at various times over the same period, counting the ongoing communications assessments (We might want to do something special with writing next year, since that would be the focus year under this schedule – perhaps a third-year look at the Writing Assessment course.) Advanced Knowledge would not have had a focus year at that point (it would be next), but I think that the level of assessment of knowledge that we have to maintain for accreditation purposes will cover that for one year.

Once we have a five-year cycle, the other thing we need to do is fit the timelines of our activities to it and to other cycles in reasonable ways. Let's keep that in mind as we discuss the assessment strategies further.

Please give this some thought, and bring your suggestions to our next meeting. Thanks!

Walter

	Goal Group	Assessment Committee work	Assessment Cycle 1	2
I	Advanced Knowledge	06-07 (departments)	07-08?	10-11
II	Cognitive Skills			11-12 (all goals)
1	Communications	02-03, 03-04	06-07?	
2-4	Humanities, Math	06-07 (departments)	08-09?	
5	Creativity, Analytical Thinking, Problem Solving	06-07?	08-09?	
III	Leadership and Entrepreneurship	04-05 (Task Force, 06-07)	07-08	12-13
IV	Teamwork	05-06 06-07?	08-09	13-14
V	Character Education	06-07	09-10 (NCA visit)	14-15 (NCA visit?)