

## **Undergraduate Outcome Assessment Committee (UOAC) Annual report, 2015-2016**

**April 27, 2016**

Committee: Kent Rissmiller(Chair), David DiBiasio (secretary), Art Heinricher (Dean of Undergraduate Studies), Chrys Demetry (Director of Morgan Teaching & Learning Center), Jill Rulfs (CAP representative), Holly Ault, Lauren Mathews, Elizabeth Desjardins (student representative)

The Undergraduate Outcomes Assessment Committee held 22 meetings during the 2015-2016 academic year.

1. Throughout the year, the Committee examined the implementation and initial deployment of the on-line Advisors' Report on Student Learning in the MQP and IQP. The system was pilot tested at the end of B term. Feedback was solicited from those faculty completing the report in December. Issues for consideration included the scale used (3 values v. 4 or more), the development of department/major specific questions, especially for ABET Departments, communication with faculty regarding the reports and need to complete them and the times in the term when the systems is accessible or closed. The Committee anticipates receiving sufficient data and user feedback after D term to fine tune the system.
2. The Committee discussed the scheduling of summer MQP reviews and difficulty in getting departments to conduct these reviews and to conduct them using identical instruments for, at least, part of the review. The Committee is interested in gathering data from all the summer reviews using similar forms so that it can get a broad picture of student learning in the majors. Departments can, of course, use supplemental instruments to assess their department specific learning outcomes.
3. The Committee discussed, at various times, the pending NEASC five-year submission due in the summer of 2016. The Committee reviewed the 2011 NEASC report and NEASC guidance for the 2016 review. In the winter of 2016, the NEASC Commission met to adopt changes in accreditation standards which are anticipated for use in the summer of 2016. As of the date of this report, we still await communication from NEASC on changes to reporting forms and standards.
4. The Committee communicated with the President and Provost regarding the need for a Director of Institutional Research at WPI. Alison Donta-Venman assumed this role in the spring and has been attending UOAC meetings to share her expertise in educational assessment.
5. The Committee also communicated with the President and Provost regarding NEASC's requirements for institutional mission statements. These statement should state goals upon which institutional progress can be measured. WPI's mission statement, dating to 1987 is not written in a manner that would enable us to document our success in achieving the mission.
6. UOAC met with Dean Wobbe to discuss past and on-going efforts to assess progress on learning outcomes in the Great Problem Seminars.

7. The Committee used many of the spring meetings to work through revisions to the *Assessment Plan for Undergraduate Learning Outcomes*, Draft May 2013 (Matrix Reloaded) to identify appropriate sources for each learning outcome and include newer instruments now in use (specifically the Student Report on Learning in the IQP/MQP, Advisors' Report on Student Learning in the IQP/MQP and revisions to the NSSE and EBI Surveys).
8. The Committee noted that the Student Report on IQP Learning (and advising), which was the first measure of this type to be designed, should be updated to better reflect both IQP and University learning outcomes.
9. As part of its review of the May 2013 *Assessment Plan*, the Committee noted that several of the University's learning outcomes are poorly worded. These learning outcomes have not been reconsidered since their adoption over ten years ago and are ripe for reconsideration.
10. The Committee held several discussions on the need for a uniform strategy for surveying alumni on a regular basis. Ms. Donta-Venman provided information on surveys currently in use by other universities. A broad discussion of this issue would involve Advancement, Alumni Relations, the Center for Career Development, UOAC and the departments. Some departments routinely conduct surveys of graduates.
11. The Committee proposed revisions to the Bylaw in the Faculty Handbook that defines the UOAC, its membership and responsibilities. These changes primarily update titles of *ex officio* members, add the Director of Institutional Research and provide for membership from faculty in the IGSD.
12. Goat videos provided inspiration to the Committee.