

Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Undergraduate Outcomes Assessment Committee (UOAC) Meeting #6 Minutes
Date: Tuesday November 14th, 2023
Location: ZOOM meeting

Present: Doug Petkie (Chair, PH), Andrea Arnold (MA), Destin Heilman (CAP, CBC), Chrys Demetry (MCTL), Kent Rissmiller (Provost's Office – Global School), Courtney Kurlanska (DIGS), Melissa Leahy (Office of Strategic Initiatives)

1. Called the Meeting to order at 1:04 PM
2. Updates: November 28th Rachel and Emily will go over the enrolled student survey in our meeting. In August Chrys Demetry included this survey into the assessment data and assessment plan. She commented that Tableau is a good place to review the data in relation to learning outcomes from the survey.
3. The committee approved the minutes from meeting 5 on November 7th
4. Approval of letter to administration for support for educational assessment. The letter will be attached to the meeting minutes and sent out to faculty.
5. The committee discussed how to bring attention to the letter among the administration in order so that student learning outcomes assessment and accreditation efforts can be better supported. An initial step would be to request a meeting with Art Heinricher.
6. Doug asked how we can use the Enrolled Student Survey (ESS), and Chrys opened it up in Tableau to look at learning outcomes. Chrys stated that one option was to create a report for CAP about the ESS drawing on this data with recommendations. A second option is to focus on the outcomes assessment matrix using this recent ESS data set, triangulated with other data, to help us identify focus areas for improvement. Interestingly, with the ESS we can see the progress by cohort (class year, department) and see the difference as they progress through the university.
7. Doug suggested we each review the tableau database before Rachel and Emily join us for the meeting on the 28th. Not all of us have access to this data in Tableau.
8. Doug suggested we look across the different data sources for areas that stand out across multiple places. Chrys commented that we can see changes from 2019 when the survey was last given, she inquired if you can do an easy graphic comparison. Melissa Leahy commented that you can only see one at a time because they are not exactly the same questions, you need to look at the two dashboards separately.
9. Chrys questioned if we should look at multiple data sources or focus on this one data set. Kent suggested we talk to Emily to better understand the dataset. He suggested that we may want to focus on a few of the learning outcomes across the assessment plan to look for comparative data points.
10. Telling faculty that our teaching is not meeting our learning outcomes in some cases can be challenging. One approach might be to also emphasize what we are doing well, when raising the issues of what we do less well. We should also be prepared to explain approaches that faculty can use to improve learning outcomes.

11. Chrys commented that it is likely the learning outcomes that are weak are the ones we rely on as 'across the curriculum' as there is no direct group responsible for these outcomes. She stated that one option would be to challenge the faculty to map their courses to the different learning outcomes as mentioned by Courtney earlier in the academic year.
12. All of this is subjective and difficult to measure. Chrys commented that this is why we have taken the approach of looking at change over time at WPI and comparing the rates to peer institutions, when peer comparisons are available.
13. Kent asked how much we should be looking at the different cohorts as groups of analysis. Chrys noted that there are already plans in Student Affairs to investigate the decline in satisfaction among International students. Students who identified as trans and non-binary reported lower outcomes, along with students who disclosed disabilities. On the other side the numbers associated with black and African American students has improved. Chrys questioned whether UOAC has the capacity to investigate these between-group differences in addition to our direct charge. Often times, recommendations can be made and practices put into place that benefit all students but especially those from under-served or minoritized groups.
14. Meeting ended at 1:52.