

Undergraduate Outcomes Assessment Committee Minutes #1, Friday, September 28, 12:00-1:00 pm, SL226.

Present: Peter Hansen (Chair), Dean Art Heinricher, Jianyu Liang (Secretary) , Nancy Bezies (SGA), Tanja Dominko (CAP), Chrysanthe Demetry (Morgan Teaching & Learning Center), Neil Heffernan, Satya Shivkumar

Chair Peter Hansen called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm.

1. Introduction

Chair Peter Hansen welcomed the returning and new members on the committee. The members introduced themselves.

2. Approval of agenda

Chair Hansen introduced the agenda. It was approved by the committee.

3. Review of our charge

The Chair Hansen reviewed the Committee's responsibilities as described in the Faculty Handbook and summarized the key activities and actions from the last academic year.

4. Election of chair and secretary

Chair: Heinricher nominated Peter Hansen for the Committee's chair, seconded by Jianyu Liang. No other nominations were made. The motion was approved unanimously.

Secretary: No nominations were made. Jianyu Liang volunteered for the position.

5. NEASC visiting committee report and response

UOAC reviewed the Report of the NEASC Visiting Committee that visited WPI on March 18-21, 2012, and WPI's response to this report dated Aug 1. These documents are both for internal use only. A final letter from the Visiting Committee will come in due course.

a. Dean Heinricher summarized the strengths and the concerns reported by the NEASC Visiting Committee. The committee concurred with Dean Heinricher in recognizing that the WPI self-study was an effective process and had identified the same weaknesses that were identified by the NEASC Visiting Committee.

b. The concern on reported student time on task was discussed. Focusing on assessing learning outcome instead of time spent was briefly discussed. It was also pointed out that the reported hours of 12 h/week/class by WPI students was higher than the reported national average of 8-9 h/week/class.

The new question No. 26 on the student course report was anticipated to provide new insights.

c. The concern on assessment of capstone projects and Great Problem Seminars was discussed and determined as an item for the committee to look into this year.

6. UOAC items for this year

Chair Hansen requested for the items for this academic year and following items have been identified:

a. The committee will work with Dean Heinricher to review the Assessment Plan for Institutional Learning Outcomes (WPI's learning outcomes matrix) and incorporate new data from recent studies and surveys. These surveys include:

- i. NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement)
  - ii. EBI (Engineering Benchmark Index)
  - iii. Wabash Survey
  - iv. Alumni Surveys
  - v. The calendar of assessment activities (including these or other surveys) should be updated.
- b. The committee will compile and analyze the data from the new question No. 26 on the student course report.
- c. The committee will look into the assessment of capstone projects and GPS. It will evaluate the current tools or the option of adding items to the existing matrix.
- d. The committee will examine Institute-wide evaluation of MQPs this year after the recent adoption of the MQP Learning Outcomes.
- e. Some other topics for possible discussion:
- i. Ethics - how well do students demonstrate these outcomes?
  - ii. Should a computation requirement be part of the Math and Science Requirement?
  - iii. Kathi Fisler and John Goulet used outcomes assessment in teaching courses and could discuss this with the committee.
  - iv. Chrys Demetry mentioned that the Program Assessment resources are available on a myWPI site called "Program Assessment Gold Mine".

It was determined that before the new data became available, the need for the committee to meet again in A term was not urgent. The committee will meet again in B term.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jianyu Liang, secretary  
Mechanical Engineering