

Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Undergraduate Outcomes Assessment Committee (UOAC) Meeting Minutes  
Date: Wednesday, 03/03/2021  
Location: ZOOM meeting

Present: Jianyu Liang (Chair, ME), John Bergendahl (CEE), Chrys Demetry (Morgan Center), Art Heinricher (Provost's Office), Rajiv Malhotra (Institutional Research), Kate McIntyre (HUA), Emily Pimentel (student representative), Khalid Saeed (CAP), Qi Wen (Physics), Pamela St. Louis (Engineering Dean's Office, guest)

1. The meeting started at 2pm via Zoom
2. The minutes from the February 17, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. Update: ABET example report for industrial engineering on Canvas and further thoughts on ethics assessment
  - a. Pamela St. Louis has shared an example ABET report for industrial engineering, which is now on the UOAC Canvas site.
  - b. Prof. Saeed suggested that student course evaluations might be able to cast a wider net than IQP and MQP evaluations, if questions were added to address ethics outcomes. The responses could be useful for UOAC. Prof. Demetry pointed out that CAP oversees the student course report system. She wondered if student course reports would be a useful instrument for UOAC because instructors have such wide-ranging course learning outcomes, and an ethics course learning outcome might not necessarily be in place. Dean Heinricher said student course evaluations are good for measuring overall student satisfaction, but not necessarily for capturing individual data points. In the move to online student course evaluations, questions were removed to streamline the forms. Adding more questions might make the forms too lengthy. He suggested that perhaps the UOAC could examine the Dean of Students report on academic integrity for trends in integrity issues and that Greg Snoddy, the Dean of Students, could be invited to a future UOAC meeting. Prof. McIntyre pointed out that faculty could be encouraged to add a question to their course survey to address students' perceived ethics learning, if relevant for the course learning outcomes. Prof. Demetry said the Great Problems Seminars all have a set of questions that get added to the course evaluations. The evaluations represent a way to get multiple sources of data, adding students' perceptions of ethics learning to more direct measures.
  - c. Prof. Demetry asked if the UOAC might be able to see the EBI for seniors in engineering, as another source of ethics information. Pamela St. John said Dean Heinricher should be able to access the EBI information. There are also data points for the NCEES, a professional licensure exam for engineers. The data shows that our students do well, and we get a breakdown of results by program. Prof. Bergendahl added that all civil and environmental engineering students are encouraged to take the exam. There is a disparity in number of students in taking the exam across

- engineering fields. Rajiv Malhotra pointed out that only the first-time attempts by test takers count in the outcomes for programmatic assessments.
- d. Dean Heinricher said we have reported these results on E Series forms in the past. Pamela St. John will send these forms for distribution to UOAC.
  - e. Chair Liang said we will work as a team to gather more data on ethics.
4. Follow up on NECHE eforms
- a. Chair Liang said the NECHE forms have been gathered from the graduate offices and asked if there was anything more we should do at this time. Rajiv Malhotra said we are done for now. He will put the forms into a single document. Then we can see where gaps exist. We can work with departments to help them fill in the gaps. Chair Liang pointed out that some grad programs are currently in the process of developing assessment plans.
5. Discussion: WPI's Next Strategic Plan
- a. Prof. Demetry and Dean Heinricher are in subgroup #2, exploring topics including student success, access, and well-being; purpose-driven education and research; and how we work together on diversity, inclusion, and campus culture. Prof. Demetry said the group has been asked to think about foundational, transferable skills for students because the half-life of tech is so short. We believe our students do learn these transferable skills, in the curriculum and the co-curriculum, including effective, equitable teamwork; being agile and getting started quickly; and communication and critical thinking skills. Prof. Demetry proposed that the UOAC should meet with this subgroup to share and get feedback.
  - b. Chair Liang highlighted the term "just in time learning." Is this idea less relevant at the college level? Perhaps it is more suitable for professional learning? Prof. Demetry said this term can refer to continuing ed offerings to support alumni in "upskilling," as tech changes, just in time, when needed. Dean Heinricher added that a lot of higher ed policy discussion is about how we are too focused on "just in case" learning. The idea is to live somewhere between "just in time" and "just in case." The IQP and MQP don't assume students have all the background they need. Students have the ability to learn as they go—that's the just in time approach.
6. Other updates and discussion
- a. Dean Heinricher will invite Greg Snoddy to one of our future meetings.
  - b. Emily Pimentel asked if she can share the activities of the UOAC with the SGA. Members confirmed that she can.
7. The meeting adjourned at 2:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kate McIntyre, C term Secretary