

SOAC 2011-12 Annual Report

One of the major initiatives of SOAC this year was to develop a process for General Education Outcome assessment. It was decided to model this process after the established, faculty-developed program assessment process. While it is understood that unique differentiations exist between program course activities and general education course activities, the similarities of the overall process and ability to view information in a similar repository justify this approach. Some additional final refinements performed during the summer should allow this process to be piloted in the fall of 2012.

Several activities occurred during this past year that aided in this plan. Initially, the existing outcome rubrics were reviewed to provide a few of the institutional outcomes associated with OCC. This process helped to clarify the various levels of assessment in our institution: institutional, discipline, program, outcome, and course.

In conjunction with this activity, the outcomes were each evaluated in terms of developing direct or indirect measurements: direct measurements being objective, quantitative measurements and indirect measurements being subjective based on student perception. It was determined that those four outcomes still under development -- Aesthetic Awareness, Social Responsibility, Personal Development, and Global Understanding & Responsibility-- would have only indirect measures, while all others-- Effective Communication (both oral and written), Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Information Literacy -- would have direct measurements and indirect measurements. These will be developed by the disciplines with the assistance of the outcome faculty facilitators.

While undertaking these tasks, the Senate subcommittee on the Senate committees allowed SOAC to examine its mission and responsibilities. These were documented and submitted to Senate after the decision to disband the ad-hoc General Education committee and the incorporation of their responsibilities that applied to SOAC.

One of the other requirements for the general education outcome process to be successful required some modifications by OAE to its existing ARTIS database to accommodate all levels of assessment. These modifications were implemented and reviewed at one of our regular SOAC monthly meetings.

Furthermore, the assessment activities performed over the past three years by the English discipline have demonstrated the value of some discipline-wide models: common course outcomes, adjunct guidelines and adjunct assessment conference-type sessions. All disciplines will be encouraged to develop the most notable of these--common course outcomes-- for their core and sequential courses.

SOAC also continued to perform its established functions of program and general education assessment. This included review of program status and the general education outcome rubrics,

both for refinement of established rubrics and the continued development of those mentioned above.

Program Assessment Day (PAD) was deferred until the fall of 2012, since the program coordinators determined it was difficult to enact what that day presented due to the summer break. Consequently, the decision was reached that PAD in fall would be more effective.

Faculty Assessment Day (FAD) was successfully held in March and well attended. In addition, at the suggestion of the former SOAC chair, Leslie Roberts, the Friday session was extended into the afternoon allowing some disciplines to work together and a general session that evolved into an assessment question-and-answer.

The essay contest was again a success and the OCC foundation already approved funding for the 2012- 2013 essay contest. The prompt has already been developed and e-mailed to all faculty encouraging them incorporate this into their courses.