UCR

To: Anil Deolalikar, Dean, School of Public Policy
Cindy Larive, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Dylan Rodriguez, Chair of Riverside Division of the Academic Senate
Kathryn Uhrich, Dean, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Milagros Pena, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
Thomas Smith, Dean, Graduate School of Education
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CC: Alicia Arrizón, Associate Dean College of Humanities, Student Academic Affairs
Karthick Ramakrishnan, Associate Dean, School of Public Policy
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Michael MicKibben, Divisional Dean, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Rami Zwick, Associate Dean School of Business Administration
Richard Cardullo, Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Sharon Walker, Interim Dean Bourns College of Engineering
Timothy Paine, Chair of Committee on Education Policy

From: Gary Coyne, Director of Evaluation and Assessment

Re: Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Programs in AY16-17

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This letter provides updates on the assessment of student learning process from undergraduate programs in CHASS, CNAS, SoBA and Public Policy for AY16-17.[1] In general, assessment practices continue to develop in a positive direction and this movement is driven both by a number of departments making small improvements and a few departments revising and considerably improving their assessment practices.

This year my office received 36 assessment report from 40 departments or programs.[2] As in past years, many reports were read by an assessment workgroup of faculty and staff from across campus. However, due to time and resource constraints many of the reports were only read by me. I still think it is important, however, to provide feedback both to individual departments and campus leadership to encourage further development of assessment practices. Department chairs and assessment coordinators already received detailed feedback and Dean's offices are being provided additional detail about departments and programs in their college (in a separate communication). On page three you will find a campus level summary.

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[1] BCOE is accredited through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), which has its own policies for assessing student learning. My office works with BCOE to document this work but does not require additional annual reporting.

[2] Reports were not received from Ethnic Studies, Geology, Liberal Studies and Physics.

In each of the areas examined with the reporting rubric (on page four) there is some improvement over last year, with fewer departments having emergent practices and more having practices that could be described as highly developed.

- A few departments revised and improved their learning outcomes. Some, like Math, moved from outcomes that were emergent to ones that were much more developed; others, like Chemistry, improved outcomes that were already well developed.
- Many departments also improved the ways they assessed student learning. In some cases this was fundamental changes to assessment practices that represented a significant improvement. For example, Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages developed good quality rubrics to assess student learning in their capstone course. In other cases, these improvements represented incremental changes to practices that were already fairly well developed.
- Reporting was also of generally of better quality this year, mostly representing better familiarity with reporting expectations from faculty who have lead these efforts in their departments for multiple years. At the same time the slight increase in number of missing reports is problematic.
- Most departments were also more specific in their plans for next year's assessment activities with some, like Psychology and Statistics, mapping out clear plans for assessment activities over a number of years.

As many of you know, our campus is preparing to submit our campus self-study to our regional accreditor. I propose that we use the period after our campus review, including any feedback from the accreditation team's report, to reexamine assessment policies with the aim of better integrating them with other parts of our educational mission. Examples of possible refinements include: linking assessment more closely to the Center for Teaching Learning where there would be synergy with other activities aimed at educational improvement; thinking about, and promoting, linkages among assessment work being done for regional, disciplinary and professional accreditation across various programs, and; revisit the linkage between assessment and program review so that departments are encouraged to assess their own, locally developed, learning outcomes. Relatedly, empowering a group or committee to study the GE and lead efforts to gather and examine evidence of what students really learn in these courses would likely generate insights on how to improve our undergraduate students' overall learning experience. It might also be more logical to assess the WASC core competencies[3] in the GE, as inserting this into department level assessment and reporting remains a source of confusion.

I believe that a sustained and systematic approach to assessment, as part of routine activities, allows faculty to develop practices that are meaningful to their department and sensible in the context of their discipline. Ultimately, the goal of this work should be to improve our core educational mission and not just to satisfy an external mandate.

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[3] The WASC core competencies are written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy and qualitative reasoning. WASC definition of these skills is meant to align with the core outcomes of a broad education in the liberal tradition and allows flexibility for institutions to define and assess them in ways that make sense in their context.

Assessment of Student Learning in 36 Undergraduate Department/Programs, AY16-17

	Not Observed	Emergent	Emergent/ Developed	Developed	Developed/ Highly Developed	Highly Developed
Student Learning Outcomes	3%	6%	19%	31%	22%	19%
Assessment of Learning Outcomes	3%	14%	8%	31%	25%	19%
Analysis and Reporting	3%	19%	8%	31%	19%	19%
Multiyear Assessment	8%	11%	6%	42%	11%	22%
Core Competency	8%	8%	8%	31%	19%	25%
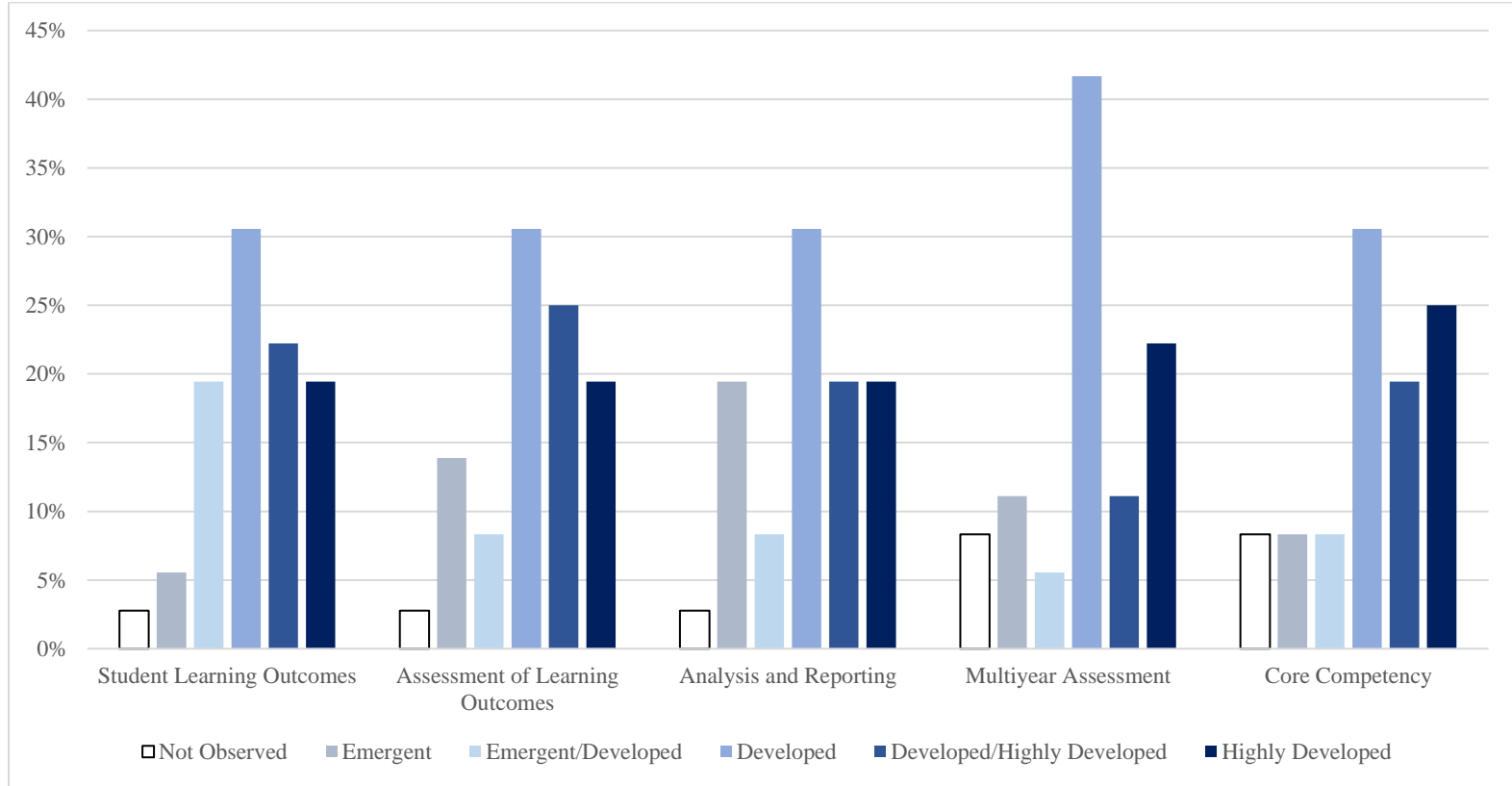
Undergraduate Education (University of California, Riverside)
Meta-Assessment of Department and Program Learning Outcomes (LOs)

Department: _____

Element	Criteria	Emergent	Developed	Highly Developed
Articulation of Learning Outcomes (LOs) ☐ Not Observed	LOs should be reasonable and appropriate for the degree level, and guided by disciplinary standards (if available). LOs should involve specific, active verbs with supporting details describing how students will demonstrate their learning, "analyze" or "solve". Avoid verbs such as "know" or "understand".	Outcomes are vague or incomplete; are not measurable or observable behaviors; are not aligned with program goals or mission.	Stated outcomes align with students' knowledge, skills, or attitudes, as shaped by the program or academic discipline.	Outcomes are clear and well written; there are an appropriate number, are measurable, and they drive assessment for the department or program. Outcomes aligned with institutional goals or core competencies.
Assessment of Learning Outcomes (LOs) Using Evidence ☐ Not Observed	Evidence should be aligned with LOs and discussed among faculty. Evidence collected at program-level, not at course- or student-level. Use of appropriate sampling of student work and direct evidence (e.g., theses or capstone projects), not simply grade distributions that do not align with specific LOs.	Assessment plan is not well developed, is mismatched with outcomes, or not implemented appropriately. Limited forms of evidence, poor sampling. Assessment completed by 1-2 faculty members, with minimal consultation from colleagues. Preliminary assessment of 1-2 learning outcomes.	Assessment is underway for most learning outcomes (at least 3), reviewing valid evidence from the program-level. Committee involvement and some consultation with program or department.	All of outcomes are assessed. Multiple forms of evidence collect at program-level (e.g., multiple classes, with careful sampling methodologies). Assessment plan is fully developed and implemented. Committee involvement, with regular consultation with program or department.
Analysis and Reporting ☐ Not Observed	Reviewer(s) expectations are calibrated with LOs and program or departmental expectations. Multiple faculty involved in analyzing evidence. Results are presented clearly. Conclusions are evidence-based and align with curricular enhancement efforts.	Minimal analysis of outcomes. Evidence not systematically analyzed. Analysis completed by 1-2 faculty members, with minimal consultation from colleagues. Few evidence-based recommendations to improve departmental planning or program improvement.	Thorough analysis of quality of student work via direct evidence. Committee involvement and some consultation with program or department. Summary data are reported with evidence-based suggestions for departmental planning and curricular improvement.	Summary data are collected and carefully analyzed; analysis calibrated among reviewers. Solid recommendations for department planning or program improvement are driven by student evidence and regular assessment findings. Committee involvement, with regular consultation with program or department.
Multi-Year Assessment and Program Improvement ☐ Not Observed	The program monitors and reports the impact of changes made from year to year, and uses these assessments to drive further improvement and planning over time.	Little discussion of prior year assessment activities. Minimal evidence that assessment data is used to drive change. Only 1-2 years of assessment completed thus far.	Analysis of recent results has begun, with impact over multiple years; some committee oversight of assessment process. Multi-year assessment mapped with curriculum and program improvement.	Analysis of changes made in recent year(s) and their impact are further assessed and reported. Strong multi-year assessment plans and updated curriculum map. Broad faculty input to discuss assessment and its role in future planning and program improvement (as evidenced by department meetings and notes).
Addresses WASC Core Competency **Critical Thinking AY 2016-17** ☐ Not Observed	Information literacy can be defined as "the ability to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information for a wide range of purposes"." LO(s) align WASC core competency and the logic of assessing core competencies in general. Careful review of major and general education requirements in relation to WASC core competency. Level of proficiency expected by graduation is defined by program or department.	There is no real connection or alignment, in either content or process, between LOs and WASC core competency. Minimal discussion of core competency and how it relates to discipline or graduation requirements.	There is some alignment between at least one LO and core competency. Assessment and analysis of relevant LO(s) have been conducted with some discussion, in relation to discipline and graduation requirements. For departments or programs that do not have critical thinking requirements, thoughtful discussion of how core competency is relevant to the discipline and graduation requirements.	There is clear and explicit alignment between LO(s) and WASC core competency; existing documentation could be used, essentially as is, to document assessment of WASC core competency. Thoughtful analysis and discussion, in relation to discipline and graduation requirements.