

Assessment Committee

Convener: Paula Danzinger

A. Charges:

a. The Assessment Committee shall carry out its charges within the context of the current Assessment Policy and the "Principles of Assessment" adhered to by this institution which are:

1. For the purposes of assessment, assessment shall be defined: Evaluation is the judging of individual or group performance for the sake of distinguishing this performance from that of others and acknowledging the individual or group as responsible for this difference. Assessment is the judging of individual or group performance for the sake of determining achievement in relation to predetermined objectives, preferably agreed to by the individual or group, and correcting the system in order to improve this achievement. Evaluation is the end point in a process or stage of a process. Assessment provides information for beginning a new process or for re-orienting a continuing process. When one evaluates, the system or context within which these performances occur is considered as a constant among the performance and thus cannot be judged as a system. When one assesses, the participants are considered to be constant in the process and thus can not be judged on their performance.

2. The focus of assessment is to improve student learning and development which must be viewed in a broad context including at least the following four areas: General Education, Faculty and Staff Development, Majors, and Student Services. In order to enhance our educational environment, methods will be designed that:

a. better articulate the educational goals,

b. provide means for collecting information on the progress towards the goals,

c. disseminate results to faculty and staff involved, who will consider possible modifications in their programs.

3. There are many valid approaches to assessment. Assessment may be quantitative or qualitative. The faculty or staff in each program will identify or create its own assessment instruments.

4. Assessment will not be used as "gates" to control entrance to or exit from programs.

5. Assessment results are solely for William Paterson University use; only data which are currently required and presently reported (e.g. affirmative action data, Basic Skills results, graduate survey information. etc.) will be made available to external agencies.

The educational soundness of the program requires confidentiality of the data be maintained.

6. Data from assessment shall be collected on an anonymous basis and shall not be used to make comparisons among faculty, staff, programs, departments, schools or colleges here or at other institutions.

7. Assessment data shall not be used for personnel evaluation and in particular, shall not be employed in the retention, tenure, promotion, or merit award processes.

8. Assessment is a mutual responsibility shared among faculty, staff, student and administrators. Basic to the fulfilling of that responsibility is financial support, assistance, guidance, and leadership.

9. Assessment is a dynamic, long range process. The initial period of any assessment program will be used to identify approaches to study and refine them, and to develop systems for implementing ongoing program assessment.

10. Assessment must involve consideration of the context in which learning takes place.

b. The Assessment Committee shall abide by the procedures outlined in Article II - Section 1, General Responsibilities for Council and Committees.

c. Composition of the Assessment Committee shall consist of the following :

(1) One Faculty Member from each College,
(2) One Librarian,
(3) One Professional Staff Member,
(4) Two At-Large Members, not from the same department, and from different departments than the College representative, thus allowing representation from seven different departments

(5) Four Administrators with representation from:

(a) The Provost's Office
(b) The Academic Deans
(c) Student Services
(d) The Planning Council

d. Nominations and election to this committee for Faculty, Librarians and Professional Staff will follow the existing procedures for membership for Senate Councils. The Senate Executive Council shall make every effort to ensure that it nominates individuals who are currently working in their chosen area of assessment. The four administrative areas to be represented: Provost, Academic Deans, Student Services, and the Planning Council will be appointed to serve by the Provost/Executive Vice President.

e. Members of the Assessment Committee shall serve two year terms and these terms shall be staggered so that no more than 5 members or less than 4 members shall be elected to a new full term each year.

f. Members of the committee shall elect a faculty, librarian, or professional staff committee person as chairperson.

g. All members of the Committee shall have voting rights.

h. The Committee's function will be to:

1. Coordinate assessment activities adopted by the Senate.
2. Inform and educate the entire college community regarding issues and trends in relation to assessment.
3. Review and recommend priorities and policies regarding assessment to the Senate.
4. Prepare and allocate resources with Senate approval for assessment.

5. Act as consultants for assessment projects.
6. Recommend to the Senate the direction and focus for assessment at William Paterson.
 - i. The Committee shall present its yearly budget to the Senate Executive Committee for approval prior to sending it to the Administration.
 - j. Minutes of the Committee's meetings shall be provided to the Senate Executive Committee, Provost, and the President.
 - k. The Committee shall submit a year end report to the Senate ending its term at its last meeting of the Academic year. A copy of this report shall be made available to the President of the College and the President of the Union.
 - l. The Committee shall also provide a budget report each semester as well as any reports or information requested by the Senate Executive Committee and/or Senate.
 - m. The Committee shall report to the Senate Executive Committee its participation in State or other mandated assessment activities before engaging in these activities.
 - n. The Assessment Committee should work closely with all constituencies to attain the goals and objectives as stated in the current Assessment Policy adopted by the Faculty Senate, endorsed by the President, and approved by the Board of Trustees,

Additional Charges:

- a. Complete and submit updated documents related to the Assessment Committee (i.e., description of charges, functions, and constitution of the Assessment Committee) to the Senate Governance Council.
- b. Continue work on an assessment page for the Faculty Senate Website.
- c. Publish another installment of the Assessment newsletter to inform the campus about "best practices" in assessment and campus assessment activities.
- d. Organize the annual spring assessment forum.
- e. Continue efforts to promote a climate of assessment on the WPUNJ campus.
- f. Work with Learning Literacy and groups, forums, and initiatives related to Learning Literacy.