

Minutes
LET Dialog with Susan Hatfield
Friday, October 21, 2005, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

ATTENDEES: Celine Kavalic-Miller, Helen Clarke, Patrick Nellis, Philip Bishop, Joe Lynn Look, Nick Bekas, Julie Phelps, Ann Puyana, Kira Bishop, Emily Hooker

Quote of the Day: *"Assessment is a fuzzy little science,"* Susan Hatfield

Opening Questions: You have reviewed our work on the LET website. What comments or input do you have for us?

Summary of Susan's comments:

The first time we collect data, it is not about the data at all; it is about testing the tools. We will want to see how the scores are distributed and confirm inter-rater reliability.

She suggested that we put together a prompt sheet that tells faculty what a good prompt is – especially for assessment at the program level.

We want to identify good anchor papers for each level—look for 3 low, medium and high.

Look to see if there is balance. Assignments may not always address all indicators. There may be one indicator that is not frequently addressed as a think indicator. That indicator may actually be more connected to another competency such as Value. Our competencies are not totally discrete.

At some institutions, there are 3 or so indicators that everyone addresses and then there is a small basket of others from which a faculty member or course can choose.

"Prompts are where we are right now."

She is in favor of an intentional plan to generate examples of student work using intentionally designed prompts.

As an alternative to paying faculty for all scoring activities, there is a cheaper, though less elegant, way to do this. Have faculty develop an assignment for their class using the rubric and score their own work. This way they see this process as part of their work. Then they turn in 3 high,

medium and low examples. A collegewide aggregate comes out of this and faculty can compare their own cores with the whole group.

It is important to use what you find for improvement. Use a pattern of evidence that is based on discussion about student learning. From the evidence, hold a campus-wide dialog. You are not looking for a steady movement forward. These things are not a straight line, but a series of ups and downs. Be sure to make decisions on what you find—use it.

There is a strong professional development connection. Susan's idea: Invite faculty to be "Think Scholars". Get a wide variety of disciplines represented. (an earned status similar to merit badges) This would require attending faculty development activities and other planned steps. Recruit the Think Scholars. Have them use the rubric to assess and get together and discuss the experience. What does this mean? How can we improve the assessment process? Will need to think about incentives for Think Scholars participation.

Comment from group: Over 1/3 of our students are in AS degree programs. The business community thinks our students need better critical thinking and communication skills. Thus, we need to involve the AS degree faculty in the assessment processes.

Think about the institutional level with guidelines for assessing at that level. For the program level, have a bank of prompts, at the course level tie into what they are already doing.

Ask friendly faculty to use the rubric and get them together to talk about their experience—is this going to work? Send them criteria for an assignment and tell them you will invite them to a discussion. They turn in 3 levels of examples. Take a look at credit hours to slice and dice data.

By May/June have a system in place for a legitimate assessment based upon our findings from the first round.

Discussion points related to overall goals: (Julie will take notes and minutes to the Evidence Work Group to inform their work on the revised plan)

- Test rubric in the spring – need people who are willing, need a process for scoring (interdisciplinary)
- Individual faculty 'own' the rubric and use it in the classroom
- Departments begin to assume a role in assessment of work from their courses (need a process for this to happen)

Discussion points regarding Steps/Stages:

- Clear criteria for prompts and possible assignments (Philip will do this)
- Develop a clear process for collecting work (friendly faculty who score their own?)
- Train faculty to use rubric in discipline-based teams
- Test process in LET—pilot on a small scale
- Get faculty to discuss their experience with the rubric
- Lay groundwork for next year (Think Scholars as a next year thing)
- Go to IAC to get support for generating participants

A Tentative "Clear Process"—where to go from here:

1. develop assignment criteria (Philip volunteered)
2. recruit friendly faculty and LET members (Philip will work on this)
 - e-mail goes out
 - send criteria out
 - they attend a workshop
3. work out protocol and send to friends who said "yes"
4. work is graded using rubric
5. debrief experience in December
6. send an all call in January for a wider, interdisciplinary group to re-run the process that has been improved based upon first experience feedback