

Annual Report 2013/2014

**CAMPUS-WIDE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
(CWAC)**

6/3/2014

College-Wide Assessment Committee (CWAC) Annual Report – 2013/2014

With an endorsement from the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee, the College Council approved the creation of the College-Wide Assessment Committee (CWAC) in May, 2011. CWAC has recently completed its third year of work, which continued to build on the solid foundation laid by the committee's first two years. This report covers the activities of the Committee in the 2013/2014 academic year.

CWAC was very active in its third year. In addition to the "day-to-day" work of the Committee – reviewing and providing feedback on reports of assessment activities across campus – the Committee worked on important initiatives to help further a culture of assessment at John Jay (details below). The membership of the Committee consists of seven faculty and three HEOs, plus the Director of Assessment (Virginia Moreno) and the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (Jim Llana) who both serve *ex officio*. Jim Llana chaired the committee in its inaugural year while Assistant Professors (Carla Barrett and Jennifer Rutledge) have chaired the committee in each succeeding year. The goal is to have the Committee led by faculty, since most of the assessment taking place on campus is assessment of student learning. During this past year the Committee welcomed 7 new members, as many of the members who had been present for the first two years moved on to other tasks. CWAC met seven times during the 2013/2014 academic year (with one meeting cancelled due to a snow storm). The Committee created a shared drive system (in coordination with the Office of Assessment) to house and organize key reference documents as well as meeting minutes, assessment plans and reports, and Committee responses to campus assessment activities. In addition the Committee has its own John Jay email account (assess@jjay.cuny.edu) for communicating with departments across campus.

Below is a review Committee's activity during the 2013/2014 year:

Responding to Assessment Reports

In our first year we developed a system for responding to assessment activity. Given the large number of reports to review, we break into small groups assigning one person to write recommendations for one department report and then circulate it to the two others in the group for review. We have a standard format for such reports but also consider variations depending upon the need. The Chair reviews all the recommendations for rough consistency before sending them out. In an effort to make a more timely and efficient review process, this year the committee decided to focus on programs that we had never responded to before (primarily minors), or those programs that seem to be struggling with the assessment process. Our ability to provide reports is limited in some case by a lack of updated assessment reports; this is particularly the case with minors and non-degree programs. This year we provided assessment reports to:

- **11 assessment reports for Academic Majors** (CIS, Culture and Deviance Studies, Fire and Emergency Service, Fire Science, Forensic Science, Global History, Criminal Justice, Criminal Justice Management, Law and Society, Police Studies, Security Management).
- **9 assessment reports for Academic Minors** (English, Gender Studies, Health and Physical Education, History, Law, Psychology, Public Administration, Theater, Writing).
- **3 assessment reports for Graduate Programs** (Criminal Justice, Public Administration, Forensic Mental Health).
- **2 assessment reports for Non-Degree Programs** (Health and Physical Education, Communication and Theater Arts).

Through these reviews we were able to see that some departments are doing assessment very well, some are doing well but have room for improvement and some departments are still struggling with assessment activity. Overall, we believe that a culture of assessment is forming (assessment practices are becoming embedded within departments, assessment expertise is growing across faculty, the “language of assessment” is becoming less foreign to many, etc.). There is still room for improvement in ‘closing the loop’ at both the departmental/program level as well as at the college level; many of the findings of the assessment reports point to systemic problems that need to be tackled at both the college level, such as funding writing intensive classes, as well as the departmental level.

While the committee believes that a culture of assessment is forming at the college, there is certainly room for improvement. For instance, we must continue to make everyone, not just chairs and major/program coordinators invested in on-going assessment practices, and we must work as a committee and a college to cement the connection between sound assessment practices and sound educational practices.

[Creating a Culture of Assessment: Lunch and Learn](#)

Working with our partners in the Office of Assessment, the Deans of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies and the Provost’s office, one of the main goals of the committee is to foster a culture of assessment. To this end the Chair of the Committee met with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to discuss the promotion of the culture of assessment and now sends the Dean copies of all assessment reports related to undergraduate programs. Furthermore the Committee hosted a Lunch and Learn where we asked two faculty members who are experienced in assessment (Carla Barrett, Sociology, and Bettina Carbonell, English) to speak about both the challenges and benefits to assessment. The event was held on April 30 during Community Hour and each presenter spoke for ten minutes about their personal experiences with assessment followed by an open discussion about the challenges of doing assessment. The Provost’s office provided lunch, for which the Committee thanks them. We received 17 RSVPs and had 31 people attend the event. An informal evaluation of the event showed that it was well received, as it allowed people to feel less alone in the assessment process and share their struggles. Based on the

feedback we received we plan to continue events of this sort in the future, and we will more formally assess those events.

Assessing Administrative Units

The Committee has struggled in the past to properly assess administrative units, probably in part due to the preponderance of faculty on the committee. This year we decided to spend time calibrating our response system to the types of reports that the administrative units produce. For this reason we did not respond to any administrative units this year. In order for the committee to better respond to these units we held a focus group on March 31, 2015, with ex-committee members from administrative units (Danielle Officer and Sumaya Villanueva) as well as current committee members Maureen Coyle and Rosann Santos-Elliot to discuss their frustrations with the formal assessment process. Moving forward we believe that the committee can help both academic and administrative units focus on the institutional learning goals when doing assessment, which should help assessment across the units be more uniform. In addition we plan to work to de-mystify the assessment process for administrative units. To this end we plan to hold a Lunch and Learn next year focused on administrative units and the Chair of the committee will hold individual meetings with the administrative units next year.

Agenda for 2014/2015

Next year the Committee plans to focus on:

- Creating a Culture of Assessment Across the Campus
 - Build on our experience hosting the Lunch and Learn this past semester and host one to two events of this kind each semester.
 - Wide dissemination of the assessment guidelines document across campus.
 - Designing an assessment workshop for the new faculty orientation (possible coordination with Provost office and/or CAT for this).
- Continuing review of assessment reports, and refining the rotation system for providing feedback.
- Continuing to build, develop and expand the John Jay assessment website into a useful site for assessment at the college.
- Working with the Provost on the possibility of developing an “Assessment Fellows” program where faculty would spend time learning deeply about assessment, developing assessment practices, and sharing their knowledge with colleagues across the College.

CWAC accomplished much this past year and worked well as a group. Danielle Officer left the committee at the end of the fall semester and was replaced by Rosann Santos-Elliot. No one resigned at the end of the spring semester and Jennifer Rutledge was chosen as Chair of the Committee for the 2014/2015 academic year.

Submitted by Jennifer Rutledge
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College-Wide Assessment Committee 2013/2014

Jennifer Rutledge, Political Science - Chair

Maureen Coyle, International Studies

James De Lorenzi, History

Kelly Greene, Marketing and Development

Elizabeth Jeglic, Psychology

Jim Llana, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (*ex officio*)

Marie-Helen Maras, Fire Sciences

Virginia Moreno, Director of Outcomes Assessment (*ex officio*)

Bonnie Nelson, Library

Danielle Officer, Student Life (1/2 term)

Belinda Rincon, Latin American and Latina/o Studies

Rosann Santos-Elliot, Student Affairs (1/2 term)

Denise Thompson, Public Administration