

RUSS

Rowan University Self Study Update

Volume 1, Issue 12

Spotlight on Standard 14

In the last RUSS Update, we discussed Standards 11, 12, and 13 which focused on educational programs. In this issue we highlight Standard 14 which examines the assessment of student learning. This standard concerns itself with answering the questions, “Are students learning what we want them to learn?” and “How can we improve student learning?” Each program needs to design customized assessment instruments and Standard 14 asks the institution to identify and describe these various systems.

Profile of Standard 14 working group leader

Leading the working group’s efforts in analyzing the assessment of student learning on our campus is in the very capable hands of Associate Professor Roberta Harvey who has been a Writing Arts Department faculty member since 1998. Roberta serves as Coordinator of First-Year Writing and teaches writing to engineering and biology students. She has also been involved in efforts to create a “culture of assessment” since 2002 when she joined the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee of the University Senate. She is also a member of the Assessment Consulting Team (ACT), a faculty peer group that has developed a systematized approach to helping faculty assess academic programs. ACT works largely with those faculty whose programs do not have external accreditation.

“I want to bring a holistic, integrated, and process-centered perspective to this evaluation and by doing so enhance the teaching and learning environment at Rowan. This self-study is a chance to evaluate our progress and communicate our work to the campus community,” she said. Roberta enjoys cooking and gardening and lives in Glassboro with husband Sanford Tweedie, Professor in the Writing Arts Department, and two daughters.

Standard 14 working group progress report

This working group employed several methods to collect data for their portion of the self-study. Their analysis included collecting and analyzing Assessment Status Reports from all departments. The status of assessment was ascertained by looking at how many programs undergo regular accreditation by external agencies and how many have performed self studies and invited input from external evaluators. Additionally, this working group examined descriptions of assessment processes and results provided by departments for the Educational Offerings Standard 11. An All Campus Open Form devoted to the topic of assessment consisted of several sub-groups that each examined a facet of the institutional culture of assessment. This methodology was used to help answer the following questions posed in the original self-study document:

- 1) To what extent are the institution’s academic and student support programs aligned with its mission and goals? What evidence illustrates this?

- 2) To what extent do our academic and student support programs integrate their efforts to meet student needs? What evidence illustrates this?
- 3) What are the processes by which the institution defines and documents the quality of its academic and support programs? What are the findings of these processes? Have the results of these assessments been used to inform decisions about teaching, planning, and budgeting? Is there a culture that supports and rewards these efforts?
- 4) How do we assess that we are meeting our students' needs in a climate of change? What are the results of these assessments?
- 5) To what extent do the institution's assessment processes promote and sustain the quality of new educational offerings and programs? What evidence illustrates this?

Standard 14 working group

Lorin Basden Arnold (Interim Dean, College of Communication)
 Melissa Arnott (Director, Academic Success)
 Kevin Dahm (Associate Professor, Chemical Engineering)
 Craig Dillon (Research Assistant, Institutional Research and Planning)
 Christy Faison (Professor, Teacher Education)
 Cindi Hasit (Professor, Reading)
 Elisabeth Hostetter (Associate Professor, Theatre)
 Karlton Hughes (Instructional Designer, Information Technology)
 Eric Milou (Professor, Mathematics)
 Luci Nurkowski (Associate Director, Admissions)
 Maria Rosado (Professor, Anthropology)
 Don Stoll (Associate Professor, Writing Arts)
 Margaret Van Brunt (Assistant Dean, College of Business)
 Roberta Harvey—Working Group Leader

Middle States Evaluation Team schedule

The Middle States Evaluation Team will be working in Rooms 126 and 226 in Campbell Library as well as a few surrounding rooms from Monday March 30 to Wednesday April 1. ***The Middle States Team will read the preliminary report of their findings to the campus community on the last day of their visit: Wednesday, April 1 at 11 a.m. in the Betty Long Rowan Auditorium in Rowan Hall.*** All members of the campus community are invited. Please note that this session is not a discussion; there will be no questions from the audience. The session's purpose is for the Middle States Evaluation Team to share its preliminary oral report with the Rowan community.

We expect to receive the formal final report from the Middle States Commission in June 2009. Please direct any questions or concerns to the RUSS Team Co-Chairs Don Stoll (stoll@rowan) and Pat Mosto (mosto@rowan).

The FINAL version of the self-study document and other documents used in the self-study can be found at: <http://www.rowan.edu/president/selfstudy/index.html>

RUSS Update Editor/RUSS Team Communications Liaison.....Pat Alexy Stoll