

SOC Meeting Minutes
Sept. 11, 2008, CTL Conference Room, 3:00-4:30 pm

In Attendance

Derek Borman, Chair; Mark Gooding, Craig Jacobsen, Ly Tran-Nguyen, Tim Florschuetz, Peter Brown, Sam Martinez, Christina Del Rosario (ORP), Dennis Mitchell (ORP).

Assessment Week 2008 Report Update

Christina is finishing up work on the 2008 Assessment Week Report. She is still running data for two of the assessments, and she will email the committee when she is done.

Personnel Changes

Derek noted potential changes that might impact SOC and student assessment with the start of a new Vice President of Academic Affairs (Jim Mabry) and a new Dean of Research and Planning Analysis (Matt Ashcraft). He said that since the Office of Research and Planning (ORP) will be reporting to the President, ORP may not have as many resources to allocate to SOC. He asked the committee to be thinking about the best places to cut if the need arises.

“Closing the Loop”

Derek suggested starting the discussion about ROC earlier in the year. Closing the loop involves ROC and grants, and there were no ROC grants last semester. Derek asked if more advertising was needed for the ROC grants.

Mark said that SOC needed to get a commitment from the Vice President in terms of financing and suggested that the ROC grants dovetail with FPLC.

Derek will meet with Jonelle Moore about FPLC. Derek, Matt and possibly more SOC members will meet with VP Mabry to discuss ROC grants and SOC.

Tim suggested briefing the new administration on the history of SOC and student assessment at MCC. He talked about linking assessment to some of the current problems the college is facing such as retention. He suggested looking at assessment results again to somehow collapse assessments (like writing and communication), and he said he wonders if we have something more here than we think as far as using data for student initiatives. He said there are serious changes and discussions that need to take place such as maybe using results to put together learning communities and hybrid classes.

Mark suggested this is another topic to discuss with the VP.

Tim said that committee meetings are crossing over with the climate shift the college is having now.

Craig asked where it is that SOC is looking to close the loop. SOC has been looking at having outcomes affect classroom-level issues, so maybe the committee should rethink about where in the whole process we need to close the loop.

Derek asked if faculty feel that outcomes are unimportant or just politically expedient; are faculty thinking about the outcomes even if they can't articulate it. If there really is this change in climate, then this might be the time for this discussion.

Mark said that it'd be nice to know how the new VP views this. He said that ROC hasn't been really successful and maybe that's not the way data fits in.

Craig said that if all we need to do is compare pre to post students then the current system is fine.

Derek said that if faculty are not interested in accreditation outcomes then maybe more faculty driven measures need to be developed in order to find data that interests more people.

Tim said that everyone is so worried about retention and marketing that students don't really know about the assessments.

Peter said that four-year schools have a certain curriculum so when someone comes out of a particular school they have values from that school. He said assessments are our way to say even though we are a two-year college, we have a sense of curriculum and we share a goal of outcomes. We can measure these things but we haven't closed the loop.

Ly said that when our students do transfer, data shows they are successful.

Mark said that there is national data showing that the more hours a student has at a community college, the better their GPA at university.

Craig asked who benefits from knowing this stuff if changes he (and faculty) makes at the classroom level are based at how students are doing in a particular class section and not assessment results.

Derek asked if SOC needed to start funneling assessment data to IA.

Mark said that this was resisted in past because of the fear that leaking the data could be misused by the press and public.

Derek said that if the data is contextualized then there shouldn't be any problems. He suggested that little SOC meet to determine what data should be handed to IA. Then SOC can approve what data and context to send to IA.

Craig said that SOC is not able to close loop because there is no consistency and too many holes, so there really is no loop—no curriculum standardization.

Tim noted the huge time required to make district-wide curriculum changes. If SOC wants to use the data for curriculum changes, then we are looking at competencies. If that's the case, then it's time to put the thing to a complete overhaul.

Craig discussed the possibility of having ROC concentrate on a certain area instead of generally all outcomes; every year we have one theme we are worried about. He said that SOC may be in the turning point of a new administration, but the committee is up in the air with unknown levels of commitment.

Assessments

Derek asked the committee to give more info on revamping the assessments.

Tim suggested collapsing some of the outcomes such as the new global cluster with diversity.

Mark said that the cluster spent a lot of time writing different outcomes differentiating global from diversity.

Craig said that the global cluster shouldn't put the work on that at the top of their priority list until the committee knows more from the new VP and where things are going.

Mark said that from the accreditation standpoint of assessment, MCC's assessment sails with flying colors.

Craig said that if SOC stretches out to giving 1/3 of the assessments each year over a three-year cycle, it would give more time to evaluate the assessments.

Derek asked if SOC can cut an assessment by spring, if needed.

Tim discussed the arts and humanities group.

Derek said going every three years is plenty and would satisfy the political needs of assessment.

Craig discussed the gaps between the way prompts were worded and the way they were scored; they unintentionally signaled for one type of answer but were then graded for a different response.

Mark said that the committee agreed last year that it should review measures periodically.

Derek asked if SOC needed to create a process from the senate—a protocol to periodically review assessments.

Craig said that the people who review it should be people who give it in their class, take it and score it.

Ly asked if SOC needs to have a formal proposal to get systematic review.

Tim said that SOC only needs the senate involved in adding and deleting, not reviewing assessments.

ROC Posters

Derek suggested focusing on problem solving for ROC.

Tim said that problem solving is open to all disciplines.

Derek passed out and discussed new ROC posters he created. He suggested a two phase promotion: the first poster would ask faculty to think about problem solving, and the second poster would announce that ROC is accepting applications.

The committee discussed the design of the posters and agreed that as long as the new VP supports funding ROC, the posters should be printed and used to advertise the ROC grants.

Future Meeting Dates

10/9; 11/13; 1/8; 2/12; 3/12; 4/9

CTL Conference Room, 3:00-4:30 p.m.