

DSA Assessment Team Meeting Minutes September 14, 2020

Present: Miles Rucker, Debbie Almand, Byron Schlather, Whitney Ward, Rick Greig, Huanshu Yuan, Russell Tipton, Stefanie Baker, Alyce Odasso, Maria Baez, Mark Haven, Kyle McCracken, Gabbey Tharp, Jennifer Boyle, Judd Moody, Darby Roberts, Kelly Cox, Susan Fox-Forrester, Eric Webb, Ligia Perez, Jana Corley, and Ashley Drake

Absent: Department of Information Technology and University Art Galleries

Guest: Dr. Danny Pugh

Welcome/Introductions

Discussion:

- Review committee charge
 - Promote assessment in departments.
 - Serve as the liaison between Student Life Studies and your department, especially around assessment and your assessment plan.
 - Serve as a sounding board for Student Life Studies to help us ensure we are meeting the needs for all departments and help you and your department.
- Disaggregating Data
 - We will probably be talking about this a fair amount this year.
 - OIEE expects that you disaggregate data for your assessment plans, especially around campuses you serve.
 - It is also important to look at student demographics in an effort to understand the students who utilize your services or who attend your events.
 - Student Life Studies will be pushing departments to look at results by different demographics and to take that information to determine how to reach all students and ensure all students have the same experience.
 - Student Life Studies can look at a variety of demographics if you have UINs of students.
 - Some examples of departments already doing this:
 - Student Conduct looking at the different phases of the conduct process
 - FLOs and Fish Camp with stages of recruitment
 - Fish Camp understanding all participants experiences
 - University Police Department looking at students' experience with their department
- Topics for Assessment Team for the upcoming academic year. What would be helpful for you as you work with your department?
 - Opportunities to do assessments across multiple departments – one instrument that could help multiple departments.
 - Could Student Life Studies look at the department assessment plans and connect departments with similar assessment efforts? Yes, Kelly will look at the information and bring to the October meeting.
 - Strategies to increase response rates.
 - Student Life Studies will be looking at professional development topics to bring to Assessment Team.
- Student Life Studies Updates
 - Our new AQ launched on August 1; this online form is on the front page of our department website.
 - This form tells us a little about the project and get us started.
 - Kelly and Susan receive new forms and quickly follows up with staff about their project.

- We have added resources and information to our website.
 - The Learning Center has various podcasts and videos on assessment topics
 - There is a new podcast on disaggregating data
 - Blog posts – short read on different topics
 - There is a page for the DSA Assessment Team – including past meeting minutes
 - Results page – a majority of the projects we do are posted on our website
 - There are also links for other assessment areas and universities
 - Alyce thanked SLS for the resources provided
- In the 2016 SLS client focus groups, communication was an area that clients reported the department was not doing well. As a department we worked to improve our communications with clients. In 2019, communication was reported as the top area SLS was doing well.
 - In an effort to continue our communication with clients, we will be doing follow-up meetings to discuss the project, the results, what you learned from the process, additional questions you might have, and if any additional analysis is needed.

AEFIS Updates / Questions:

- SLS will review your 2020-2021 assessment plans and have feedback to you by October 2. Most departments have submitted their plans and SLS will follow-up with a couple of folks.
 - Once you get your feedback back from SLS, you can make edits or changes to your plan based on our feedback.
 - Edits need to be made and your final plan needs to be submitted in AEFIS by November 20. Even if you are not making any edits to your plans, you do need to go into AEFIS and submit your plan.
- There have been some slow times with AEFIS; however, it should be fixed now.
- OIEE has an updated website with new resources; be sure to be on the support unit resources (not the academic units).
 - OIEE has updated the AEFIS user guide that goes through each section of the plan.
- Findings and actions for your 19-20 assessment plans are due October 31. This is your first draft of your plan. When you submit it in AEFIS, your plan will come to Student Life Studies for review.
 - Student Life Studies will get you feedback by November 20 and you will be able to make edits before submitting your final plan, which is due December 18. Even if you are not making edits, you will need to go into AEFIS to submit your plan.
- Question: When will the reflection questions and closing the loop form be available?
 - They will be posted in AEFIS on November 1.
 - The prompts are in the manual on OIEE's website if you want to start working on those early.
 - This form is also due December 18.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Danny Pugh

- Dr. Pugh asked Darby to share about SLS looking at big data and predictive modeling about students' success at Texas A&M, and how it relates to retention, persistence, and graduation.
 - Challenge looking at where Student Affairs is going and what we can contribute to the university.
- Assessment is more critical now than ever. We need to think about how assessment connects with planning. Assessment is not a tool but a process. We need this to make better data-informed decisions.
 - An example is that we are testing sewage from the residence hall to see if we have COVID in areas. It made us stop to figure out what to do with this information. If we don't do something with the data, we are not helping students stay safe. Talked about Squadron 17 and the cluster that was formed.
- How is assessment informing our practice. Some of us are doing this well, but we need to do better. We need to have a plan for using data before the results become available.
- Question: Now that we have been doing annual reports for a few years, can you talk about how you use them and the key purpose they serve?

- An opportunity to talk with directors about what is happening and look at the alignment with the division and university mission. Helps to have the conversation with directors about what is happening.
- Also takes this information to university budget meetings and helps to make the case why we should receive resources.
- Dr. Pugh is able to use the information to help in university conversations and having the data helps in responding.
- Question: If you had a magic wand and there was no COVID, in the context of big data we have available, what would you want to achieve that involves the division as a whole?
 - None of the information we produce is being used to understand at risk students and student success.
 - Dr. Pugh would like to take the data we have to the institution and have it be used and factored into student success or students at risk. Who is in most in need for assistance to be successful?
 - We have challenges with getting rosters for student organization membership with what General Counsel says we can or can't collect. So how do we get student organizations to want to share that with us.
 - The Fish Camp data can stand on its own – how do we get that for more areas?
 - We also have to think about what we will do with the data. This may mean to be prepared to shift resources or stop doing something in order to do something different.
 - We also need to know how to share our data with the university, system, and other institutions. We need to contribute to the literature.
 - The challenge is that we often don't have the time needed to solely focus on assessment.
- It would be interesting to put a research question around how data is used and put a team together. Look at other industries to see how other areas look at data to inform practice and make decisions to advance the university. How could we think outside of higher education.
 - Jennifer shared that those big companies often present at SXSW regarding data/big data, etc. Highly recommend SXSW or SXSWedu! SXSW Interactive or SXSWedu.
 - Lazy susan idea – how can we ask questions within Assessment Team or outside of higher education and have someone new look at opportunities to solve problems.

Announcements:

- New Aggie Student Survey is running until September 25.
 - This is for new first year and new transfer students.
 - Please share this with new students you work with.
- SERU will be administered in the spring, exact dates TBD.

Reminders and Due Dates:

- By October 2: You will received feedback from SLS on your 20-21 assessment plan
- October 12: Next Assessment Team meeting
- October 26: DSA Annual Reports are due
- October 31: 19-20 Findings and Actions are Due in AEFIS
- November 20: 20-21 final assessment plans must be submitted in AEFIS
- By November 20: You will receive feedback on your 19-20 assessment plan
- December 18: 19-20 final assessment plans and the assessment reflection/closing the loop form Must be submitted in AEFIS