



To: Dr. Michael Lane, President
Dr. John Schwenn, Vice-President for Academic Affairs

12-4-07

From: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (TLAC)
Cynthia Akers, Chair

Re: University Assessment and the Strategic Planning Process

Some months ago, members of the Teaching and Learning Assessment Committee sent you a copy of the attached resolution pertaining to the importance of ongoing assessment in planning for the future of Emporia State University. Members of the committee are pleased to recognize our shared commitment to assessment and evaluation, and express our appreciation for your continued support of our activities.

As the Strategic Planning process develops on our campus, there exists a rare and extremely valuable opportunity to incorporate assessment into the fabric of our institutional life. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, we would need the assistance of your offices.

The initial two work groups in the Strategic Planning process have already commenced their work. Beginning this week, the remaining eight work groups will undertake to examine and make recommendations concerning the complete spectrum of university activities. These eight workgroups include: Undergraduate Education; Graduate Education; Outreach and Lifelong Learning; Distinctive Academic Programs; Internationalization of ESU; Public Engagement, Service, and Community Partnerships; Critical Resources; and Facilities.

Each of these eight groups will work to develop appropriate Strategic Directions for the institution. The planning process, as Dr. Lane outlined in his General Assembly remarks of August 14, includes development of methods of assessment of the goals established. Indeed, the final Strategic Planning document, to be completed by next summer, is intended to contain a set of assessment processes and key performance indicators. This is an extremely valuable aspect of the overall document.

At their October 31, 2007 meeting, the TLAC committee realized that the development of assessment processes may be aided if each of the eight work groups were asked to provide, as part of their ultimate report, recommendations pertaining to assessment and evaluation within their specific areas. While we recognize that this may all along have been the intent of the Strategic Planning process, we note that assessment is cited only with regard to the final document to be developed next summer, and not specifically with regard to each of the eight work groups. To be fully effective, we believe that an overall assessment plan must include proposed details of assessment processes from each of the work groups. The processes should also outline strategies to support university personnel in their assessment and evaluation efforts.

If you concur with our view on the value of assessment planning for each of the work groups, we would ask that you contact the individuals chairing each of the groups and make clear the expectation that proposed assessment processes be provided along with recommendations and goals for the coming years.

Thank you for your continued support and assistance.



From: Teaching, Learning Assessment Committee

5-3-07

To: Michael Lane, President
John Schwenn, VP, Academic Affairs

Re: TLAC resolution

The Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee has reviewed and discussed results from the AY 2005 University Assessment plan reports from programs and departments. The committee has explored challenges with implementing successful assessment university-wide. Despite the assessment ESU has done for many years, our historical success cannot continue to advance without the recognition that the past was based on initiatives that were not campus-wide nor actively supported by an institutional culture. The current situation calls for assessment of student learning to become a strategic goal for the institution. It is imperative that the culture of assessment continue to develop and improve, a process that requires serious commitment and resources.

RESOLUTION:

Whereas, the leadership of ESU has expressed a strong commitment to the continued expansion and improvement of assessment strategies at all levels, and

Whereas, development is needed for intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to faculty for being involved in program assessment activities such as faculty professional development opportunities, career advancement, time/load reduction, conference travel, awards, and the promotion of assessment plan activities by faculty as scholarly activity, and

Whereas, developing university-wide assessment will require a multi-stage plan expressed within a realistic time-line paralleling the next strategic plan for departments to adapt to a new paradigm and to acquire the tools and skills necessary to develop an assessment infrastructure as outlined in the Program Assessment of Student Learning evaluation system, and

Whereas, development is needed of published internal guidelines on how information-based decision making will occur at ESU, and

Whereas, promotion of information-based decision-making at program and course levels is needed and should be shared through campus-wide activities, and

Whereas, the development of a culture of assessment will require funding and support for public opportunities for faculty to share information on assessment efforts, evaluation findings, program successes, and scholarship, and

Whereas, the inclusion of assessment as a core strategy is one of the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission for institutions,

Therefore be it resolved that the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee unanimously recommends that the elements above be incorporated into the new Strategic Plan.