

Mānoa Assessment Committee
2011-2012 Annual Report
April 2012

The Mānoa Assessment Committee (MAC) was formed during the 2008–2009 academic year and first met in the fall semester of 2009. In this report of MAC’s activities for 2011–2012, we describe the committee’s purposes and major tasks, list the committee members, and describe the major activities conducted during the year.

Committee Purposes and Major Tasks

The purposes and major tasks of the MAC that were specified in the 2009 Senate resolution that authorized the committee were to (a) establish assessment policies, (b) identify the most appropriate assessment practices and uses, (c) review resource needs and recommend concomitant budgetary applications, (d) liaise with the faculty to promote effective practices, (e) consult with subject matter experts, (f) produce an annual report, (g) serve as a repository of assessment activities, (h) provide consultation to the administration about gaps in available assessment information, (i) recommend changes in processes, (j) review the usefulness of assessment strategies, and (k) ensure that the Mānoa campus uses assessment data to inform decision-making and improve student learning.

Committee Membership

The resolution authorizing the committee states that MAC membership should include nine voting members (four from Arts and Sciences and five from other units) and four non-voting members (the Senate Executive Committee [SEC] liaison, the Assessment Office [AO] Director, an undergraduate student, and a graduate student). The voting members in 2011–2012 were Chairperson Lilia Santiago (Indo-Pacific Languages and Literatures), Vice-Chairperson Peter Hoffmann (John A. Burns School of Medicine), Daniel Jenkins (Engineering), George Harrison (Curriculum Research and Development Group), Jude Miller (Nursing), Adam Pang (Learning Assistance Center), Violet Harada (Library and Information Science), Sang-Hyop Lee (Economics), and Amy Schiffner (Theatre and Dance). Lilia and Peter were the two Faculty Senators on the committee. The SEC liaison was Thomas Conway. Aaron Levine served as the graduate student representative and Kyle Kurashima represented the Associated Students of the University of Hawai‘i. Marlene Lowe and Monica Stitt-Bergh, faculty specialists serving as AO staff, attended the committee meetings contributed much information and expertise.

Major Committee Activities

The MAC met 9 times during the 2011/2012 academic year. Briefly, its activities included the following:

- *Participation in the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) working group.* Amy Schiffner and Monica Stitt-Bergh were members of the ILO working group, which met from November to February. The ILO working group was tasked with developing a set of institutional learning outcomes for the undergraduate degree (Faculty Senate Issue #25). The working group submitted three documents to the Faculty Senate: Draft Institutional Learning Outcomes, Institutional Learning Outcomes FAQ, and a report on procedures (all available at the Faculty Senate website). The motion to approve the institutional learning outcomes for undergraduate students was presented for a Senate vote on April 18, 2012; the motion was tabled to give more faculty members an opportunity to read the documents.

- *Participation in Critical Thinking Working Group (CTWG).* Three members of MAC participated as members of the CTWG: Peter Hoffmann, Violet Harada, and Adam Pang. CTWG met twice per month to operationally define critical thinking, to develop a strategy for assessing how critical thinking is currently incorporated into the UH curriculum, and how it may be better included in academic programs at UH. During the academic year, the SLOs were examined and analyzed for how they map onto the essential elements of critical thinking as put forth in the WASC recommended curriculum 'pillars'. For the most part, many programs already have elements of critical thinking incorporated into the SLOs. The more difficult problem is how to assess how well critical thinking is being taught to students. Marlene Lowe and Monica Stitt-Bergh met with the CTWG to discuss strategies for assessing critical thinking, including the nationally normed, faculty driven CAT (Critical thinking Assessment Test) instrument. It was also suggested that honors theses or Capstone courses could serve as one instrument to have students engage in critical thinking. A report was generated by the CTWG and shared with MAC members for feedback prior to submission to the Manoa Faculty Senate.
- *Assessment Office Annual Report rubric.* Annual assessments are conducted by each program and submitted to the Assessment Office each fall semester. Of the 230 programs, approximately 180 submitted assessment reports in Fall 2011. Much time was spent in MAC discussing how to get programs to better participate. It was suggested that some program faculty feel that these assessment reports are either not meaningful or are never reviewed by anyone and thus not worthy of the effort. To better engage the faculty in the important task of assessing their programs in terms of meeting SLOs and providing a quality education to students, Assessment Office representatives with some suggestions by MAC developed a rubric to determine how well assessment reports analyze and report the programs' performance. This rubric was developed not as a scoring system, but to provide feedback to the departments as to how well the assessment was performed and how the SLOs were being met. It is anticipated that the MAC will spend significant time and effort in the 2012/2013 academic year using this rubric to provide feedback to programs on their Fall 2012 annual reports.