Welcome & Announcements
Diana Leilani Karafin – Director, Assessment and Evaluation
Russ Hamberger – Associate Provost, Academic Program Review

Diana welcomed the group and outlined the agenda. Russ updated the council on a recent presentation that he and Diana gave at the 2014 MSCHE Annual Conference in Washington, DC titled, “A Large Research University Faces the Challenge of Assessing Student Learning.” The presentation focused on NYU’s approach to assessment, including the Office of Academic Assessment, Academic Assessment Council, codified policies and procedures, and a data-driven assessment of the system’s quality and sustainability. Approximately 122 people attended the presentation and feedback was positive.

Diana announced a staff transition in the OAA: Melody Cherny will begin a new position as Assistant Director of Institutional Analytics and Course Evaluations at the Steinhardt Center for Research and Higher Education Outcomes (CRHEO) as of March 9, 2015. The OAA is actively seeking applicants to fill the Graduate Research Analyst position.

AY 2015 Planning & Review
The purpose of this section of the meeting was to review the OAA’s current unit-level feedback system. Specifically, Diana solicited the council’s input on the OAA assessment rating scale and unit-level reporting template.

Assessment Rating Scale
Over the past two academic assessment cycles, the OAA has been using a five-point scale to rate assessment reports (excellent, good, satisfactory, below satisfactory, and not acceptable). Based on unit feedback however, the OAA proposes simplifying to a three-point scale (exceeds standard, meets standard, and partially meets or below standard).

The assessment rating scale is based on a rubric, but also involves holistic, subjective judgment. Because of this, five levels of sensitivity can be difficult to maintain over multiple academic
cycles (e.g., rating a report as good vs. excellent, or satisfactory vs. good). The new rating scale has only three levels of sensitivity and will permit more specific and objective ratings.

Diana reiterated that, to meet standards, an assessment report must include the following components: student learning outcomes, at least one form of direct evidence of student work, discussion of results, and discussion of how results are used to improve learning opportunities.

Several members of the council communicated that the new three-point rating scale meets their needs and that it is clean and simple. Based on this feedback, Diana confirmed that the new three-point rating scale will be implemented moving forward.

Unit-Level Reporting Template
Diana solicited feedback on the new annual unit-level reporting template. Based on feedback from prior cycles, the OAA revised and simplified the AY 2015 template.

1. Page one details the census of active programs, giving a snapshot of programs for which the unit is responsible, whether there are shared assessment plans, and whether programs have external accreditation. Page one also details any new programs.

   One council member asked for clarification on the first reporting deadline for new programs. Diana clarified that the first reporting deadline is the year after the first cohort of students graduate from the program. For example, if a four-year bachelor’s program started in fall 2015, the first cohort would graduate in 2019, and the first assessment report would be due to the OAA in 2020.

   Another council member noted that it might be helpful to identify any external accreditation bodies in the first page table. Diana said that the OAA tracks this information in a master database, but will also include the names of external accreditation bodies in the reporting template.

2. Page two outlines key status indicators for the unit (compliance rate, use of direct evidence, results, and use of results). The purpose of this page is to provide a quick snapshot of unit-level outcomes. Council members did not provide any feedback on this page, so Diana confirmed that the page would remain as is.

3. Page three provides OAA rating trends and compliance status by program. A simple graphic represents compliance across multiple years to show movement over time.

   One council member shared that the graphic is much clearer than in past templates, and also asked how the OAA would compare old ratings based on the five-point scale to new ratings based on the three-point scale. Diana clarified that the OAA will keep an archive of past ratings, but will also convert them to the new three-point scale to allow comparisons with future reporting.
Another council member asked that a year label be included for each bar on the graphic in case the page gets copied or cut off. The broader group agreed. Diana confirmed that this label would be added.

4. Page four shows OAA content coding results by program. The purpose is to communicate open-ended feedback and suggestions for each report submitted.

One council member stated that the columns using checks and x’s, should be converted to yes and no for ease of reading. Diana confirmed that this change would be made.

Diana asked if it was useful to indicate page four data for multiple years of data. One council member stated that it would be easier to include multiple years of feedback for each program in the new template. Diana responded that the OAA will create and propose a graphic to represent multiple years of program-level feedback to send to the council for feedback.

**AY 2014 Assessment Cycle Analytics**

The purpose of this section of the meeting was to share the results of NYU’s student learning outcomes assessment in the AY 2014 cycle.

The OAA uses two forms of compliance tracking: (1) the extent to which expected reports are received, and (2) the extent to which required components in the reports align with MSCHE requirements.

Diana shared the AY 2014 compliance rate of 96%, which mirrors the AY 2013 compliance rate of 96%. These results suggest that the University is doing well with receiving expected student learning outcomes assessment reports.

The extent to which required components in these reports align with MSCHE requirements was also explored. Of the reports received in AY 2014, 50% exceeded the standard, 25% met the standard, and 25% partially met or were below the standard. An analysis of the 25% of reports that partially met or were below the standard were deficient in one of the following areas: expected report not submitted, one or more core MSCHE component missing, or use of indirect evidence only. Diana stated that a focus on improving student learning outcomes assessment within these programs is an important opportunity for growth in the AY 2015 cycle.

**Guest Presentation: Learning Portfolio**

Francesca Socolick – Senior eLearning Specialist, Information Technology Services
Dan Rabinowitz – Instructional Media & Technology Specialist, Information Technology Services
Yulee Jun – Project Manager, Global Technology Services

Three representatives from Information Technology Services gave a presentation on the initiatives of the NYU Learning Portfolio Working Group and opportunities for the council to get involved.
There have been multiple iterations of learning portfolio initiatives at NYU that focus on tracking academic milestones throughout a student’s coursework. The Learning Portfolio Working Group is currently testing tools to meet the diverse needs of units, disciplines, and coursework.

Francesca announced that the group is searching for academic programs to take part in a learning portfolio pilot. This would involve integrating a learning portfolio electronic solution alongside existing course sites. Dan clarified that ideal candidates for the pilot are programs/departments that currently use NYU Classes and have faculty who are interested in adopting new technology to enhance student learning outcomes assessment. Participating in the pilot will not require adopting any new hardware and that needed support should be minimal. The goal is to have pilot programs confirmed by April 15, 2015.

Diana prompted the council to consider applying for a 2015 OAA mini-grant to support participation in the learning portfolio pilot.

**Opportunities/Next Steps**
Diana concluded the meeting with the announcement that OAA will send the link to apply for a 2015 OAA mini-grant, as well as the formal invitation for the Academic Assessment Symposium on May 8, 2015. Diana offered a final reminder that AY 2015 assessment reporting deadlines are quickly approaching.

**Upcoming Meetings**
2nd Annual NYU Academic Assessment Symposium & Lunch Reception
May 8th, 10:00am-2:00pm Rosenthal Pavilion, Kimmel Center

*Prepared by Melody Cherny*