

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee

FROM: Committee on Academic Programs (CAP)

RE: Assessment of Advising Charge

DATE: February 28, 2018

Background and Charge:

In November, 2016, Steering charged the Advising and Student Support Planning Council (ASSPC) with the development of a plan for the assessment of advising. As directed by Steering, ASSPC sought input from Associate Provost Mosen Auryan, from Academic Leaders, from the Council of Deans, and from the Faculty Senate and Student Government Executive Boards during the 2016-2017 academic year and developed a preliminary recommendation. Steering charged CAP with reviewing the assessment plan proposed by ASSPC, together with the background materials provided by ASSPC that informed their recommendation. CAP should make any changes it deems necessary to the preliminary recommendation developed by ASSPC and then solicit Tier III testimony.

Method:

CAP consulted with KT Elliott and Tracy Kress, previous chairs of ASSPC. The proposed assessment plan consisted of both college-level assessment (perhaps via the National Survey of Student Engagement, or NSSE) and school-level assessment (either via a survey the ASSPC created or via methods that schools develop). Based on faculty feedback, the ASSPC did not recommend assessing individual advisors. CAP also consulted with Mosen Auryan, who said that the NESSE is administered every 3 years to first- and fourth-year undergraduates. Mosen said that CIE has already paid for the additional assessment module for the next administration (in 2018) and can continue to do so. However, CIE does not formulate and answer data-related questions themselves. Instead, they maintain existing data and can analyze it for any unit that requests it. Finally, CAP consulted with John Krimmel, who shared that the union would object to any assessment that could be used to impose sanctions on an individual faculty member.

After these consultations, CAP attempted to revise the preliminary assessment plan proposed by ASSPC. However, after several conversations, CAP was unable to reach a consensus about the assessment plan. There were several concerns that we did not feel we could resolve.

- 1) The plan does not specify who will formulate research questions and what will be done with any results that are analyzed. In fact, advising data will be collected from the next NSSE, but there is no group/unit who is tasked with evaluating the results. We should note that the ASSPC no longer exists; oversight of advising is now under the purview of the Teaching and Learning Council (TLC), although it is not clear whether evaluating the results of a large-scale assessment is realistically within the TLC's scope. Recommending an assessment without a unit to formulate research questions and evaluate the results seems like bad practice.
- 2) CAP believes that assessing advising only by asking students about their satisfaction seems like an incomplete assessment. We believe that students, faculty, and staff should

all be assessed, and also that objective measures of advising effectiveness (that do not depend on student self-report) should be identified. Revising the assessment plan to the degree that we feel is necessary does not seem within CAP's scope. Because ASSPC no longer exists, we cannot send the assessment plan back to them for revisions. TLC could be charged with revising the assessment plan, but again, we do not know whether this is realistically within their scope.

- 3) CAP has been unable to agree on whether to assess individual faculty. Clearly, some individual faculty members and the AFT are strongly opposed to this practice. However, other faculty members as well as some students feel that individual assessment is the best way to facilitate improved advising.
- 4) CAP has also been unable to agree on whether assessment should occur at the department- or school-level. We see pros and cons of each approach.

For all of the above reasons, CAP has been unable to reach a consensus about the advising assessment policy. Given our several other charges this year, we do not anticipate being able to resolve these issues before the end of the academic year. If it is within their scope, TLC could be tasked with addressing these issues and creating a revised advising assessment policy. Finally, we want to restate that college-level assessment of advising is scheduled to occur in 2018 via the NSSE, and that any unit could request analyses and results from CIE.