

Committee on Curriculum and Assessment
Next Steps Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
Columbia, Missouri
June 24, 2011

Attendance:

Mike Grelle, Chair	University of Central Missouri
Rita Gulstad	Central Methodist University
Vicki Schwinke	Linn State Technical College
Rusty Monhollon	Missouri Department of Higher Education
Angelette Prichett	Missouri Department of Higher Education

At the initial meeting of the Committee on Curriculum and Assessment (CCA) it was decided that a subset of our larger group would meet to set the agenda for CCA for the coming year. The following is a summary of the discussions that took place at the subcommittee meeting of the Committee on Curriculum and Assessment held in Columbia, Missouri on June 24th. The major objectives of the meeting were to develop a small list of priorities for the CCA that addressed the major requirements of SB389, were doable within a reasonable timeframe, had the potential for a positive impact on student learning and development, and had a high probability of success. The first part of the summary lists and describes the major issues, questions, and concerns expressed by the group. The final section of the summary addresses the proposed agenda for the CCA group for 2011-2012.

ISSUES FOR POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION BY THE CCA

- Should CCA continue to develop and refine the competencies for courses already identified and/or move on to additional courses?
 1. CAI has already identified and obtained approval by CBHE for competencies for many more courses than required by SB389.
 2. The imposition of competencies in specific courses on our campuses will be difficult because of a number of practical and political reasons.
 3. Restricting our implementation efforts to a few courses (subject areas) would allow us to develop and refine a model before attempting to expand to larger list of courses.
 4. It is critical that secondary ed and the Missouri School Boards Association be active participants in the discussions and decisions related to exit-level competencies from high school and entry-level competencies to college.

- Should CCA accept the Common Core Standards (CCS) as equivalent to the CAI competencies for the areas already completed (English and mathematics) and for subsequent areas under development?
 1. Acceptance of Common Core Standards would appear to be a reasonable choice since a crosswalk has revealed substantial similarity between the competencies developed by the CAI group and the CCS, and the unlikelihood of reversing the decision by DESE to adopt the CCS.
 2. Focusing on implementation of the CCS in mathematics and English would allow us to: focus our efforts on implementation in areas research has shown lead to improvement in all discipline areas; save us and our faculty tremendous amount of time and angst working on competencies that likely would not be adopted by DESE; develop an implementation model to be used in subsequent courses and subject areas coming out of the CCS movement.
 3. There has been much debate and discussion centered on this issue as to whether there is a difference between a so-called “college prep” curriculum and its competencies and the more “vocational ed” curriculum.
 4. “College Readiness” does not mean ready for all colleges and all courses. CCA should address the issue of the gap between high school exit level competencies and college entrance level competencies, with particular attention to the issue of differences in selectivity.
 5. Should the CCA publicly acknowledge that the competencies and the exit levels of student performance in those competencies to be defined through the CCS effort as meeting readiness for exit from high school are the same as those needed for entrance to college?

- Should CCA take an active role in influencing the Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBC) movement to ensure that higher education’s voice is heard in the development of the assessments of college readiness tests?
 1. The presidents of most of the two- and four-year public institutions in the state have signed an agreement to participate in the SBC (with an opt-out clause).
 2. Since there is a high likelihood there will be pressure for the assessments developed by the SBC to be adopted as entrance/placement assessments for college, CCA should push for involvement by higher ed in the development of those assessments. There is considerable potential for both harm and benefit here.
 3. It is imperative that the CCA make every effort to ensure Higher Ed (not just Missouri) has an active participatory role in the development of these college-ready assessments.
 4. What is the degree of involvement from the higher ed sector in other states?
 5. What is the degree of involvement in this effort from the major vendors for standardized assessment of gen ed knowledge and skills (e.g., ACT, ETS)?

6. Should CCA solicit the assistance of Dr. Michael Nietzel and Governor Nixon in getting higher ed represented?
- Should CCA work on developing a crosswalk between the exit-level competencies that have been or will be developed and the 42-hours general education block?
 1. Creating a crosswalk would ensure compliance with existing board policy with respect to transfer and articulation associated with general education courses/program.
 2. Creating a crosswalk would improve transparency of courses and might improve acceptance of transfer courses across the state.
 - How can CCA influence or motivate COTA to address the ramifications for dual credit courses resulting from our efforts to define entry- and exit-level competencies and associated assessments?
 - Other topics included clearing up the confusion over assessments at the completion of general education coursework versus assessment of general education programs.

PROPOSED 2011-2012 AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

It is recommended the CCA:

1. Accept the Common Core Standards as equivalent to the CAI competencies for the areas already completed (English and mathematics) and for subsequent areas under development. CCA shall lead the implementation of these competencies in higher education institutions in Missouri and the communication of this information to the appropriate audiences.
2. Work to gain inclusion of the higher education sector in the Smarter Balanced Consortium to ensure higher education's voice in the development of the assessments to be developed. This would also include communicating with other states regarding their involvement in the consortium and the types of issues they have been addressing.
3. Address the gap between the high school exit competencies and the college-entry level competencies.
4. Implement the exit-level competencies in English and Math to include assessment of those competencies and how those results are to be communicated to the MDHE.
5. Improve the processes for communicating common course equivalencies and identifying/determining equivalent courses.