# HEDAC- Assessment (HEDAC-A) Subcommittee

**Minutes: April 26, 2010**

**Created by MDHE staff: Tim Wittmann**

# Recommendations and Resolutions

* The consensus opinion of the committee is that institutions should make a good-faith effort to report High Impact Educational Experiences (HIEE) and Student Satisfaction survey data to the MDHE **from Fall 2010 through Spring 2011** The first year of collection is optional, but encouraged. Findings from this pilot first year will be studied for validity and methodological adjustments by MDHE and reviewed by HEDAC. This collection will employ definitions and methodology presented at April 26, with potential for further refinement in the coming weeks.
* By way of clarification, HEDAC-A recommends that the reporting cohorts for the HIEE survey be labeled “collection year” completers, per IPEDS definitions, rather than academic year completers.
* HEDAC-A resolves that student satisfaction is a construct distinct from student engagement and the two should not be equated. Student Engagement will not be tracked as part of IFC-1CA
* Reporting by award level associated with the Performance Indicator Survey (PIS) should distinguish outcomes of AAS completers from those of completers earning other types of associate’s degrees. HEDAC-A will continue to work on the PIS this summer.

**Procedural Actions**

* Next meeting of HEDAC-A, to be chaired by Pat Gillman, was scheduled for June 10, 2010.

**Action Steps**

* In preparation for June 10th meeting, committee members plan to examine the reporting categories for PIS and, on a preliminary basis, determine which assessments belong in each.
* MDHE will issue revised HIEE and Student Satisfaction materials to reflect the advice and expert opinion of HEDAC-A members.

# MEETING OUTLINE

**High Impact Educational Experiences (HIEE)**

* HEDAC-A members remarked that HIEE data collection should be the first order of business since the “issue has been identified” and it therefore seems realistic to also identify a solution.
* MDHE clarified that its initial memo regarding HIEE methodology was simply to gather feedback, on a voluntary basis, about the types of courses that should be counted as a HIEE.
* HEDAC-A members reviewed and discussed HIEE definitions and methodology.
* Institutional representatives outlined several issues with immediate implementation of proposed HIEE survey.
  + Timeframe—institutions might face an extraordinary burden to revise their data systems to include HIEE elements in time for Fall 2010 reporting.
  + Current methodology indicates HIEE’s must be transcripted to be eligible for reporting. Institutions lacking a co-curricular transcript process may be disadvantaged by this requirement if HIEE is to be reported by institution in the future.
  + Mechanics of implementation and reporting remain unclear to some members. For example, any given course may only be reported under a single HIEE category, but determining which to assign it to may at times require an arbitrary decision.
* HEDAC-A members (from the initial MAC methodology subcommittee) expressed reservations about potentially altering existing categories, since they were formulated out of extensive literature review and input from assessment experts. HEDAC-A members acknowledged this concern; no categories were added or deleted.
* HEDAC-A members expressed a desire for high-quality, valuable measures to track student participation in HIEE, and outlined the rationale for rigorous standards for a course to be counted as HIEE.
* Participants clarified parameters for HIEE reporting with MDHE. The following list presents these clarifications:
  + A single student can take multiple HIEE courses, but that student may appear only once in each HIEE category, for a maximum of seven times. So a student who participates in multiple Study Abroad experiences would still result in a single entry in the Study Abroad category. A student who participates in three courses in each category would result in a count of one student per category.
  + A data collection-only experience would not normally meet minimum intensity to be counted as an HIEE research experience, but such decisions will largely be at the discretion of individual faculty.
  + It is not normally feasible or appropriate to tag individual students for involvement in HIEE rather than the courses or activities with which the student was involved.
  + An internship is an on-the-job or work-related experience with an external business or organization that is transcripted for credit. A focused field experience is an off-site experience drawing on learned skills or knowledge; it is not typically an arrangement with an external employer.
* The committee reached consensus on a motion to recommend that institutions make a good-faith effort to report High Impact Educational Experiences (HIEE) survey data to the MDHE **from Fall 2010 through Spring 2011**. The first year of collection is optional, but encouraged. Findings from this pilot first year will be studied for validity and methodological adjustments by MDHE and reviewed by HEDAC. The collection will employ definitions and methodology presented at April 26, with potential for further refinement in the coming weeks.
  + HEDAC-A members commented that year-to-year maintenance of HIEE-related data systems could be tedious due to the freedoms faculty enjoy to tailor their sections of a particular course to include or omit HIEE elements.
  + Other members commented that the severity and extent of such issues would be evaluated as part of the pilot.
* By way of clarification, HEDAC-A recommended that the reporting cohorts for the HIEE survey be labeled “collection year” completers, per IPEDS definitions, rather than academic year completers.
* Members generally voiced approval of a proposal to collect HIEE data *going forward* rather than attempting to “make up” past data.
* MDHE indicated that it is open to alternative formats for the reporting of HIEE data, such as unit-record style spreadsheets, during the pilot collection phase.
* MDHE also suggested future collection at the unit record, perhaps as a 4th EMSAS file. Representatives had reservation about adding new columns to current files, or adding additional files.
* One member asked whether a former certificate completer who re-enrolls and completes an AAT or related degree could have credit earned at the certificate label “resubmitted” for HIEE reporting at the second completion point. This question has been tabled for the time being.

**Student Satisfaction Survey**

* The committee reached consensus on a motion to recommend that institutions make a good-faith effort to report Student Satisfaction survey data to the MDHE **from Fall 2010 through Spring 2011**. The first year of collection is optional, but encouraged. Findings from this pilot first year will be studied for validity and methodological adjustments by MDHE and reviewed by HEDAC The collection will employ definitions and methodology presented at April 26, with potential for further refinement in the coming weeks.
* HEDAC-A resolved that student satisfaction is a construct distinct from student engagement and the two should not be equated. Furthermore, HEDAC-A members expressed a desire to measure student satisfaction rather than engagement, despite any empirical correlation between these constructs. Student Engagement will not be tracked as part of IFC-1CA
* Institutions currently administering the NSSE assessment expressed concern that it would be unreasonable to add a question to gauge satisfaction with instruction since doing so would jeopardize the ability to participate in existing NSSE consortiums.
* Institutions currently using NSSE will work with MDHE to construct an indicator of instructional quality using an average of instruction related benchmark scores.
* MDHE reviewed proposed Student Satisfaction survey methodology with HEDAC-A members and clarified that, for four-year institutions, satisfaction data on so-called “rising juniors” is to be preferred over data on other cohorts. Representatives generally agreed with this stated preference; concerns were raised that data on graduating students will overstate the true level of satisfaction of the student body.
* Representatives of public two-year colleges were generally amenable to the suggestion of reporting their satisfaction data on graduates, as proposed by MDHE.
* Subcommittee members voiced approval of a suggestion to provide satisfaction data on a yearly basis, with the most recent data available at the time of reporting to be submitted to MDHE. Members agreed that any time data is reported, it should never be more than three years old.
* HEDAC-A recommended that the results from the first year of data collection be reviewed by Missouri Assessment Consortium (MAC) to determine its value.
* As an alternative to using NSSE, COS, or SSI, some institutions have decided to add the three student satisfaction question to their graduating students exit survey.

**Performance Indicator Survey (PIS)**

* MDHE set the tone for discussion of PIS by speaking to the value of data on pass rates, noting that such data is often requested by legislators who tout the success of students attending colleges in their districts. MDHE was quick to also note that PIS data will help inform strategic planning and quality improvement initiatives as well.
* MDHE clarified that the draft PIS instrument for Fall 2010 initially went to data coordinators rather than IR offices or MAC members per se. At the time, MDHE indicated a basic interest in gathering additional information about the types of learning assessments and skills examinations colleges currently use.
* HEDAC-A members discussed various General Education assessments and outlined assumptions regarding MDHE’s reporting expectations.
  + Members indicated that in the past if an assessment with multiple modules or subtests was administered to a sample of students, scores at the 50th percentile or higher were required on only one of those modules or subtests for a student to be counted as scoring at that level on the exam as a whole. If, however, a composite score was available, the expectation was that students should be classified based on those scores instead.
  + Some members remarked that composite scores do not capture actual student learning at some colleges and in certain programs, especially technical or AAS programs, and suggested that it would not be fair to assess students on the basis of a general score in such instances.
  + Most members voiced approval of the option to report performance on specific modules, but some members also indicated that this approach is not well-suited to strategic decision-making to improve higher education as it could encourage obfuscation of student learning deficiencies.
* Due to discrepancies in schools’ reporting expectations, even where the same instrument is used, some members suggested that methodological notes be submitted in tandem with completed survey instruments to clarify each college’s chosen approach.
  + MDHE remarked that reporting within tests should at least be consistent—e.g., any time the CAAP is administered, institutions should report students scoring at specified levels either by module or by overall performance.
  + Members expressed a desire to maintain local autonomy rather than adopt a standard approach based solely on the particular assessment selected by each institution.
* MDHE proposed that, going forward, the count of student’s scoring at or above 50th percentile) in cases of module-based reporting **should take account of scores on a majority of modules** rather than on the one that earned the best score. This proposal met with some approval.
* Representatives of technical and two-year public colleges strongly opposed lumping AAS completers in with AS and other associate’s degrees. HEDAC-A recommended, with consensus, that reporting by award level associated with PIS should distinguish outcomes of AAS completers from those of completers earning other types of associate’s degrees.
* HEDAC-A members generally voiced support for the option to report the number of students scoring at the 80th percentile on general education assessments in addition to the number scoring at the 50th percentile.
* Subcommittee members expressed an interest in gathering information about how assessment data is shared across sectors—e.g., many two-year schools supply assessment data to four-year schools to help administrators make more informed placement decisions for their students and reduce the need for redundant retesting.
* Some members expressed an interest in reporting so-called “learning gains” though the use of pre-test/post-test assessment methods. Some members resisted this proposal, remarking that it remains important to verify whether students can meet basic proficiency benchmarks upon completion, regardless of any apparent gains. MDHE suggested that learning gains are not incompatible with standard proficiency-based measures, and that these measures have distinct purposes.

**General Discussion and Closing Remarks**

* Some members expressed an interest in consolidating various types of reporting and data transmission. For example, can EMSAS also track data currently collected via surveys? MDHE expressed approval of such an approach.
  + On a related topic, MDHE also agreed to share its edits or routines for cleaning EMSAS data in the near future.
* Next meeting of HEDAC-A, to be chaired by Pat Gillman, was scheduled for June 10, 2010.

In preparation for June 10th meeting, committee members agreed to examine the reporting categories for PIS and, on a preliminary basis, determine which assessments belong in each.