

# UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2016

### *Assessment Update and Progress Chart*

June has been a busy month for assessment. All final assessment reports for 2015-16 were due May 31 and almost all reports have had feedback returned to the departments and units.

The chart on the back page shows how far we have come. Note all of the green areas in the chart, indicating the percentage of reports that have met all conditions of the feedback rubric.

**THANK YOU** to everyone who has assessed, collected data, analyzed data, used the data and analysis to improve, and reported those improvements. UT Martin has made phenomenal progress since January, and you all have contributed to that progress!

### *Assessment Oversight Committee meets*

The Assessment Oversight Committee met on June 16 to review the reports from the Assessment Coordination Committees and data on reports collected May 31. The Committee has made four major recommendations to Chancellor Smith regarding UT Martin's assessment process:

- 1. Training in the assessment process should be the top priority.*
- 2. Each unit/department should identify one person to coordinate data collection and analysis and to communicate assessment and data collection deadlines to others.*
- 3. Create individual assessment handbooks corresponding to each of the five institutional effectiveness areas.*

- 4. For academic units, create a Faculty Senate Assessment Committee to provide faculty oversight of the assessment process.*

The Committee also made three minor recommendations:

- 5. Assessment reporting forms should be kept standard for at least one cycle of assessment.*
- 6. The Assessment Coordination Committees should meet a minimum of once per semester.*
- 7. Assessment Newsletters should be continued even after the SACS COC decision in December.*

### *From Data to Decisions*

We have begun constructing the UT Martin Third Monitoring Report for submission to SACS in September. In our narratives, we are including, verbatim, portions of your reports that demonstrate the progress UT Martin has made. We have chosen examples that demonstrate the use of data to inform decisions and that follow the results of those decisions to show that improvements have been made. We will be sharing snippets of some of these examples with you in the next few newsletters.

Faculty teaching courses for the **MBA program** noted that "identifying the ethical dilemma" had the lowest assessed mean from several identified criteria related to ethics. The MBA report provided a narrative that described the process of improvement from 2010 until 2016 that eventually resulted in a

longitudinal ethical reasoning assignment that led to 100% of the students meeting the benchmark.

Faculty and staff in the **Paul Meek Library** have recently performed an extensive two-year journal review that resulted in substantially increasing the number of titles available electronically while simultaneously reducing the amount of money spent on journal access.

The **Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships** has decreased UT Martin's cohort default rate, which is the percentage of our students who enter the loan repayment period and default prior to the end of the next two years, from 16.1 in 2009 to 10.6 in 2012 (our latest cohort data). The office found ways to increase the contact with students and guide them to repayment, deferment, or rehabilitation of their loans, which resulted in the lower default rate.

The general education program has been the area of biggest concern for our upcoming report. A comparison of course reports from 2015 to reports collected in 2016 show a marked improvement in student attainment of our general education outcomes. The general education program still has some weaknesses,

but departments are taking steps to address those weaknesses. Here are a few examples:

In **Zoology 251**, faculty have noted that students are having difficulty with terminology. The instructors are implementing a critical thinking activity in which students work through a mock experiment, with an emphasis on understanding the terminology.

In **Social Work 220**, faculty noted that one instructor's students scored higher than students in other sections on one assessment. The instructor uses a particular activity to promote student engagement and understanding of the course material. The instructor has created an activity guide to share with other instructors for use in their classes.

Faculty teaching **English 250** noted that students were scoring lower on using sources than they were on other sections of their rubric, so they are creating a handout on source use specifically for their literature courses, to be shared in all 200-level English survey courses.

More examples will be included in future newsletters!

