



OPA Offline

The newsletter of the Office of Planning and Assessment

Promoting
institutional effectiveness
through planning and
assessment

Fall 2012

OPA Celebrates Assessment



West Texas Assessment Conference

October 16th has come and gone! Thank you to all of you who attended the inaugural West Texas Assessment Conference. We hope that you had as good a time as we did!

For those of you who could not make it, here is a quick recap of the conference:

The conference kicked-off with a continental breakfast on a beautiful Tuesday morning with the first session starting at 10:00 am. We had two concurrent sessions before lunch with topics ranging from the new Texas core curriculum to quality enhancement.

At noon, we enjoyed lunch with a fantastic keynote address by Dr. Kevin Stoker, Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs in the College of Media and Communication. Dr. Stoker discussed what he learned at the 2011 SACS COC meeting and the importance of faculty engagement in the accreditation process.

After lunch, there were two more concurrent sessions with topics ranging from student affairs to hospitality assessment. The conference wrapped-up at 3:00 pm with time allotted for snacks and networking.

We had 155 registered attendees from across the West Texas region. We are beyond pleased with how the conference came together. Thank you again to all of those who helped make this event possible.

Based on evaluations, we are excited to say that 98% of the attendees would recommend this conference to others! When asked what they liked best about the conference, attendees shared that,



Katie Garner TTU, Lisa James TTU, Jennifer Hughes TTU, Sabrina Sattler TTUHSC, Kari Dickson TTUHSC

“Everything was wonderful, but I really enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with others on assessment and accreditation issues”, “Everything was great--the venue, the speakers, the food, the sessions”, and “The wide variety of experience and affiliation not only in the participants but in the presenters”. We are overjoyed with the positive feedback and are anxious to start planning for next year’s conference! Keep your eyes open for updates on registration and sessions!

Please visit our website and Facebook page for more information:

Website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opa/wtac/>

Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/WestTexasAssessmentConference>





Thoughts about Assessment

Some early researchers of interpersonal communication came to the conclusion that it is impossible for a person to not communicate (Watzlawick, Beavin-Bavelas, & Jackson, 1967, p. 51). In terms of assessment in higher education, this means that faculty, staff, and administrators cannot escape communicating about the topic of assessment. When one tries to abstain from saying anything about assessment, this supposed lack of communication sends the message that assessment is not important or at least not my responsibility. The same researchers of interpersonal communication also concluded that every act of communication has two parts: the content of the message being communicated and the relationship being suggested by the process of communication (Watzlawick, Beavin-Bavelas, & Jackson, 1967, p. 54). In terms of assessment in higher education, it seems that the process of communication sometimes involves more being said by directors, deans, and administrators and less being said by the faculty and staff that are most directly involved with student learning. This process of communication about assessment can be taken to suggest that assessment is primarily important as a mandate from

administrators and external audiences that is imposed on those involved in student learning. One way to change this process is for faculty and staff to begin talking more about the assessment of student learning and to send the message that assessment is primarily important as a part of the classroom experiences that are most directly responsible for student learning. This faculty and staff driven process of communication can help to ensure that assessment better reflects the diversity of perspectives found on this campus and that assessment more directly relates to those who are more directly involved in student learning.

If you are interested in improving student learning assessment at Texas Tech University, please feel free to contact the Office of Planning and Assessment with any questions and/or feedback and sign up with the TLPDC for our next assessment training opportunity.

Reference: Watzlawick, P., Beavin-Bavelas, J., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication: A study of interactional patterns, pathologies, and paradoxes*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.



The TTU Assessment Network (TAN) was formed by OPA in 2010 as a working group of folks across campus who are involved in assessment activities in their respective departments and colleges. Since its creation, TAN has held 6 meetings, totaling 10 presentations. The presentations have ranged from faculty engagement and student assessment to strategic planning.

Our Fall TAN meeting was held on November 7th from 3:00-4:30 in the TLPDC Room 153. The meeting consisted of a West Texas Assessment Conference wrap-up, a discussion led by Dr. Larry Hovey, College of Education, regarding common assessment issues and potential resolutions, and closed with an overview of TTU's SACS Reaffirmation Plan by Jennifer S. Hughes, Director of Planning and Assessment. Thank you to all that attended! It was a fantastic meeting.

If you have never attended a TAN meeting, now is the time to start! Membership is open to all and there is no need to register. We will simply add you to our list at the meeting in the Spring! We have tentatively scheduled the Spring meeting date for February 20th at 3:00. In the meantime, check out our Facebook page and website. If you have any questions, please contact Katie Garner katie.garner@ttu.edu or 742-1505.

OPA hopes to see you soon!

Webpage:

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opa/tan.php>

Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/TTU-Assessment-Network-TAN/113776685303854>

On the “Road to Reaffirmation”

The Office of Planning and Assessment is actively planning reaffirmation efforts in anticipation for the University’s Compliance Certification Report, which is due September 1, 2014. All institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools are required to undergo a review for reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years. This process reaffirms Texas Tech University as a “totality.” Therefore, this review includes all regional sites, centers, or other locations at which postsecondary degree or non-degree work is offered through distance learning.

Beginning Spring 2013, OPA will begin a formalized “Road to Reaffirmation” dialogue with members of the campus community. We

will be visiting academic and non-academic departments to share information about the standards to which we must uphold. These standards range from institutional effectiveness to fiscal stability to academic program length.

OPA is also starting to assemble Reaffirmation Teams. We are looking for faculty and staff to serve on a variety of committees. These committees will meet in Spring 2013, Fall 2013, and Spring 2014. Committees will be formed based upon the following areas: Governance/Finance, Institutional Effectiveness, Undergraduate Education, Faculty Credentialing/Faculty Issues, Student Services, Distance Learning, QEP, and Graduate Education.

If you are interested in working on one of these groups, please contact Jennifer Hughes, jennifer.s.hughes@ttu.edu, in the Office of Planning and Assessment.

New Staff Hires

The Office of Planning and Assessment is excited to have new staff join us filling critical and vital roles. Katie Garner began working with OPA in March 2012 as the TracDat and TSO 10 Administrator. She is originally from Oklahoma City, but has lived in Lubbock for the past 3 years. She received a M.A. in Political Science here at Texas Tech in the Fall of 2011. She also earned a B.A. and M.A. from the College of International Studies at the University of Oklahoma. Devin DuPree began working with OPA in 2009 as a Graduate Assistant helping with assessment, statistical analysis, and reporting. Promoted to administrator over institutional assessment, Devin continues in these responsibilities of organizing, implementing, and reporting on University level assessment and providing support for College and Department level assessment. Devin is currently pursuing his PhD in Marriage and Family Therapy at Texas Tech University. He earned a B.S. in Psychology from Brigham Young University (Utah) and a M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy from Texas Tech University.

OPA is also very proud of the new and relatively new students who work in the office. Ashley Alvarado is OPA’s Student Assistant. She began in January 2012 and is a Pre-Nursing major. Matt Leinart is a Graduate Assistant working with DigitalMeasures. Matt started in February of 2012 and is pursuing his Masters of Architec-

ture and his MBA. Curtis Craig is a Research Assistant leading a sponsored research project with Educational Testing Services. Curtis has been with OPA since 2010 and is working toward his doctorate in Experimental Psychology.

The most recent additions to the staff are: Courtney Smith who will work with TracDat, Ganeshmani Iyer who will assist with SharePoint, and Matthew Frame who will assist with the Ethics Center. Courtney is working toward her Masters in Community Counseling. Ganeshmani is a graduate student in Computer Science. Matthew is a graduate student pursuing his Masters in Architecture.



Full time Staff at
Office of Planning and Assessment

Road to Reaffirmation Timeline

Spring 2013
Launch Reaffirmation Roadshow

Spring 2013
Reaffirmation teams meet monthly

Fall 2013
Reaffirmation teams write responses

January 30th, 2014
First Drafts due to OPA

April 1, 2014
Compliance Certification Report (CCR) Draft Completed

May 1, 2014
CCR Draft Delivered to Provost and President

September 1, 2014
CCR Submitted to SACS



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

Postage

OPA *Offline*

Office of Planning and Assessment

Box 45070 | Lubbock, Texas 79409-5070



Strategic Plan Priority 4 Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI)

conveniently located in
DigitalMeasures

2013 STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT DEADLINES

**APRIL 15TH, 2013
CENTERS & INSTITUTES**

**MAY 1ST, 2013
DEPARTMENTS**

**JULY 1ST, 2013
COLLEGES**

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OPA

Our Mission

To promote institutional effectiveness through planning, assessment, findings for improvement, and related resource issues in academic, administrative and institutional environments.

Vice Provost for Planning and Assessment
Valerie Paton, Ph.D.

Director
Jennifer Hughes, M.S.

Associate Director
Craig Morton, Ph.D.

Senior Program Administrator
Elaina Cantrell, M.B.A.

Administrator
Katie Garner, M.A.

Administrator
Devin DuPree, M.S.

Section Coordinator
Lisa James

Senior Business Assistant
Dianne Reyes

Research Assistant: Curtis Craig

Graduate Assistants: Matt Leinart, Courtney Smith,
Ganeshmani Iyer

Student Assistant: Ashley Alvarado