

March 10, 2004

To: Donald L. Feke
Chair, Assessment Executive Committee

From: Dave Hutter
Interim Chair Physical Education and Athletic Director

Re: Physical Education/Athletic Assessment Process – a slight revision

I. Primary

The assessment process of the Department of Physical Education and Athletics is designed to ascertain the achievement of desired outcomes for students in the three dominant programs for students sponsored by the department: physical education, intercollegiate athletics, and intramural sports.

Outcomes for students participating in the required physical education program are assessed during the spring semester of each academic year since 1995. Outcomes were not assessed during the 2003-04 academic year. An interim chair, unfamiliar with the process, did not implement the assessment process. The survey instrument is a Likert scale in which there is an assumption of equal intervals between responses. During 2002-03 (the most recent assessment), 314 students (248 males and 66 females) completed the survey designed to measure the perceived achievement of the student outcome goals of the Physical Education/Athletics Department.

Data indicated an increased percentage of “agree” and “strongly agree” responses from previous surveys. More than 90% of the completed surveys indicated an understanding of the value of physical education. Consistent with previous assessment surveys, respondents indicated that: physical education is a good thing, participating in physical education is a good way to relieve stress, activity outside of class is enjoyable, and plan to make activity a part of their lifestyle after graduation. There were a high number of “agree” and “strongly agree” responses with regard to items concerning the value of Physical Education. The sample population of students reports that activity is an important component of the collegiate experience. The responses received indicate that students participating in physical education are achieving desired projected outcomes

A high number of “undecided” responses and “disagree” responses for items regarding fitness levels were reported. The negative opinion concerning enhanced fitness levels of students may be a reflection of the former class schedule which focused on lifetime sport skill classes as opposed to fitness-focused classes. In addition, students are not required to choose a class in which the central focus is fitness rather than motor skill. Students are able to avoid vigorous activity.

The department replaced selected sedentary, life-time sports courses with active, fitness enhancing classes such as spinning, yoga, and cardio-fitness as a result of a review of ten years of fitness data of students enrolled in personal fitness classes and the outcome assessment surveys over the past three years

II. Additional Assessment Activities

Physical Education faculty members are encouraged to use course and instructor evaluation forms to improve teaching style, methods, and curricular content to enhance achievement of learning outcomes.

The 2002-03 sample of students included athletes. While feedback is limited by sample size, there are “agree” and “strongly agree” responses for those questions concerning the positive aspects of athletics such as having higher aspirations, enhanced social development, improved mental performance in non-athletic activities, and the ability to work in a team atmosphere

The intercollegiate athletic program is assessed every year as required by the Education Amendment Act of 1972. The EADA report documents institutional compliance concerning gender equity principles in intercollegiate athletics with regard to budgetary and human resource allocation. The intercollegiate athletic program also is required to complete an NCAA self-study every five years. These assessment processes resulted in an increase in female faculty/staff members in the department and greater equity in the allocation of resources with respect to gender. Policies and administrative procedures were adjusted, altered, or implemented to comply with NCAA principles of governance and administration and gender equity legislation.

The physical education department also assesses the intercollegiate athletic program via student opinion from a senior survey electronically administered to students completing their final season of athletic eligibility, random selected students presently members from each team each season, and students on the eligibility roster the previous season but not during the present season. These three assessment activities provide valuable information coach evaluation and satisfaction with program components.

In addition, those surveyed in 2002-03, who also participate in intramural and recreational activity, responded positively with respect to items regarding self-confidence, feeling of well-being, leadership, fitness, stress reduction, and respect of others.

III. Future plans

The Department of Physical Education and Athletics, as a unit within the Division of Student Affairs and in concert with other units within Student Affairs, is in the implementation phase of an assessment project that is to provide opportunity for benchmarking student perceptions of programs and services provided by a department with selected institutions. Two primary activities during the 2003-04 year and the fall of 2004-05 of an Assessment Task Force of the Division of Student Affairs were to review

assessment policies and procedures of each unit of Student Affairs and to develop goals of the Assessment and Planning Process:

The goals are:

1. To encourage responsiveness to student, faculty, staff needs and institutional priorities.
2. To assist all departments within Student Affairs in their continuous improvement of programs that act as catalysts for student learning and development.
3. To provide a structure for programmatic decision-making through the annual budgeting process.
4. To allow the individual departments as much autonomy as possible.
5. To utilize the existing Student Affairs Mission as a basis for assessment and planning.
6. To develop a flexible model that will grow and evolve through time.
7. To identify objectives and metrics that can be measured throughout the year as well as metrics that become available on only an annual or longer basis.

In addition to this work the Division of Student Affairs, engage a consulting firm to develop an instrument that may be used to assess division goals and objective and to be customized to meet the assessment needs of individual units within student affairs.