Objectives for 2008-09:
- Provide feedback to the employer survey report;
- Develop, disseminate, and submit analysis on the faculty/staff climate survey report;
- Discuss and determine plans for our next alumni (and employer) survey;
- Provide feedback to the Neag School Profile Report, and
- Ensure that each department/program has development NEASC Assessment Plans in the fall and reports the results the end of the year.

Objectives for 2009-10:
- Transitions to an advisory committee with off-shoot assessment working groups (teacher ed, clinic eval and surveys using Checkbox, assessment alignment, advisory group on Spotlight, OATS, fostering assessment through technology),
- Fine-tune the communication with faculty on assessment system and culture (based, in part, on survey results), and
- Formulate all questions for alumni (and employee) survey questions for dissemination in fall 2010.

11:30-11:45 Lunch
11:45-12:00 The Past Three Years and Looking To the Next Three Years
12:00-12:30 The Results of the Neag Assessment Review Survey

The Committee Results

The School Results

The Commendations and Areas for Improvement

12:30-1:20 The Alumni Survey

Overall Questions

By Department and/or Program

1:20-1:30 Wrap-up and Spring Plans
NEAG ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
December 1, 2009 Minutes

Following a healthy salad lunch and brownies/cookies for dessert (which did not contain any calories), the meeting of the Neag Assessment Committee (NAC) was formally begun at 11:45.

The first topic on the agenda was examining the past three years and planning for the next three years. Two handouts were used: one handout describing the NAC and the TNE Assessment Committee that was used over the past three years, and a new handout graphically displaying the NAC and the respective workgroups that would convene over the next three years.

The reconstitution of this committee, 2½ years ago, was successful as the group attained each of the yearly objectives. For example, last year the NAC provided feedback and published the employer survey report; developed, disseminated, and submitted analysis on the faculty/staff climate survey report; discussed and determined plans for our next alumni (and employer) survey; provided feedback to the Neag School Profile Report, and ensured that each department/program developed NEASC Assessment Plans in the fall and reported the results at the end of the year.

Now, beyond its infancy and “maturing,” NAC is ready for a turning point. It was discussed that this advisory committee will be moving toward incorporating other individuals working on the many assessment topics. The core nature of this committee will remain unchanged, but there will have more people involved through “working groups,” some of which are considered subcommittees, advisory groups, and/or critical friends groups.

The discussion went further to explain that three of these groups have already met this semester. The Neag Assessment Subcommittee on Teacher Education, formerly called the TNE subcommittee, now reports directly to the NAC. Other groups which already had their first meeting this semester were the Neag Assessment Committee on OATS and the Critical Friends Group on Clinic Evaluations and Surveys Using Checkbox. Tied to the latter, a handout that lists all evaluation forms and surveys using Checkbox was distributed. The NAC was reminded that it was only a year ago that we purchased a license for this web-based application system.

The remaining three groups will commence meeting this spring – Advisory Group on Spotlight of Assessment, Critical Friends Group on Assessment Alignment, and the Neag Assessment Subcommittee on Fostering Assessment through Technology which will initially look at Taskstream and Husky CT. While some NAC members will be invited to serve in one or two of these groups, it will include others beyond the membership of NAC. Each group will report back to the NAC. Most importantly, to protect valuable time, we expect to hold only two meetings for each of these groups, just as we only anticipate two meetings per year for the NAC. Other communication throughout the year will be conducted via electronic means.

By moving in this direction, we hope to realize the following objectives for this year. The objectives for the NAC in 2009-10 are:
Transitions to an advisory committee with off-shoot assessment working groups (teacher ed, clinic eval and surveys using Checkbox, assessment alignment, advisory group on Spotlight, OATS, fostering assessment through technology),

Fine-tune the communication with faculty on assessment system and culture (based, in part, on survey results), and

Formulate all questions for alumni (and employee) survey questions for dissemination in fall 2010.

It was noted the members of the NAC may be interviewed in the spring as part of the NCATE accreditation requirement. NCATE incorporates assessment throughout the standards, especially standards #1 and #2.

To facilitate the discussion, Mary Y had handouts of print screens from the assessment web page. On this assessment site there are the major priorities and accomplishments from each year realized by NAC. We can access this site by bringing up the Neag webpage and typing in assessment.

The group learned where all of the News Briefs are located, all of the colloquium announcements and PowerPoints are posted, and where the conference information may be found. Mary Y indicated that the Neag School, in conjunction with AERA Divisions D and H, recently submitted a $50,000 proposal for a conference.

More specifically, according to the following abstract:

The Assessment of Students with Special Education Needs and English Language Learners: A Focused Look at Research and Applications on Assess, Progress, and Student Involvement in Assessment (SPEDELL) project is an exciting opportunity for a diverse group of academics and practitioners to deal a critically important topic to our nation: include roughly 12% of our students who receive special education and 11% that receive limited English language instruction in assessments at all levels from the classroom to state to nationally to internationally. This project will allow the assessment community to summarize what research has found, to indicate the practical applications of this literature, and prioritize the direction of research in the future.

This project was organized by AERA’s Division D: Measurement and Research Methodology and Division H: Research, Evaluation, and Assessment in Schools in collaboration with University of Connecticut’s Neag School of Education. The divisional vice presidents gave the charge to the Proposal Planning Advisory Committee to think of significant research problems that a new approach to an issue or area of research or show the potential to advance research or break new ground. The committee selected the areas of investigation to be access, progress, and student involvement for meaningful assessment. The committee identified the scholars who represent diverse disciplines and fields of inquiry.

Outcomes of this project include a conference this summer and developments of three monographs. Selected graduate students and early career individual will participate in the conference with scholars. PowerPoint and multimedia presentations will be disseminated and the organizers will pursue partnership opportunities for posting on AERA’s Podcasts called Profiles in Research and in AERA’s quarterly series called Research Points.

This project will encompass “research used to inform practice - practitioners inform researchers - which ultimately benefits our students.”

We anticipate hearing from AERA regarding the funding of this national conference proposal in the beginning of December.
Continuing the discussions on the web page, all available reports are listed by title, publication year, graduating year, program, cohort, and field. For example, you can find the Linda’s Music or Mary T’s/Larissa’s Mathematics by going under “field” while Michael’s TCPCG Hartford and Waterbury can be assessed by “cohort” and Craig’s PT and Keff’s/Laura’s Kinesology by “program.”

Surveys are also available.

Under the tab that says “committee,” members will find important information relative to the NAC which includes membership, agendas, minutes, and key reports (such as the Neag Assessment Plan).

The opportunity was taken to demonstrate how to access the NCATE website and information on the standards.

There was much discussion regarding the website. All committee members felt that access to the information should be available in a very user friendly format. Also, faculty can immediately go to the most pertinent information for him/her.

**Recommendations**

- The committee members will socialize/share the contents and ease of use of the assessment website to all department faculty.
- Mary T will follow-up with the Information and/or Communication Committee to have the webpage shared during a faculty meeting.
- Throughout the year, Mary Y will share pertinent information that the faculty members can relay at the regularly scheduled department meeting.

**The second major agenda item was the assessment review survey.** Annually, the committee utilizes this self-assessment survey, modeled on the rubric used by NCATE, on multiple facets of assessment at the Neag School of Education. This survey consists of three questions and corresponding rubrics. The questions focus on:

- the assessment system;
- data collection, analysis, and evaluation; and,
- use of data for program improvement.

On the survey instrument, individuals are provided the opportunity to add comments to these three areas. Open-ended questions are posed; asking individuals to describe strengths, areas for improvement, and other comments.

The NAC was reminded that at its meeting last fall, they had recommended that all faculty members be invited to respond to this survey. As a result, the survey was put on Checkbox this fall. Faculty members on the committee shared with their respective department and two general emails were sent out inviting others to participate.

Results were analyzed for the committee and for all faculty. Results from the past (that is, the baseline) were similarly distributed and discussed.
The NAC looked at baseline data reports from fall 2007 (measuring 2006-07) and spring 2008 (measured 2008-09). They were reminded that the 2nd edition of our plan (truly encompassing all departments as the 1st edition only focused on teacher education) was initiated in the fall of 2008.

Twenty-four committee members completed the survey. Using the handouts, results were shared and discussed. NAC discussions were focused on what do these results tell us.

MaryAnn brought up the focus of NCATE Standard 2 ties directly to the 3 major questions, (#3, 4, and 5 from committee and #13, 15, 16 from all faculty). We should address any red flags in reviewing in data. Jason shared we need to do a better job of communicating and sharing information. Based on their perspective and experiences, there is a need for an “I don’t know” option of the survey. Jeff remarked how Kinesology might not understand what the data they are collecting; he feels that this has to be relevant for exercise science and other non-accredited fields. Craig then asked if the rumor about reviews coming back from the Provost Office, especially for those programs not undergoing accreditation, is a reality. Mary Y confirmed that the rumor is true. While the review will not be external, the review process will result in a 4-5 pages incorporating the academic plan, the accreditation reviews that have been held, the measures on the different metrics, and maybe the NEASC assessment plans.

Recommendations:

Continue with the process the next year.

Next year, provide “not applicable” option added to the survey.

The third major agenda item was a discussion on the alumni survey. Members were reminded that, in the previous fall, they recommended that the alumni (and employer) survey from all departments will be administered in the fall of 2010. The last survey was conducted in 2006-07. The survey is envisioned to have some questions for all alumni (demographic, employment, and some open-ended statements), and branching questions to ask program-specific questions.

The last Alumni Survey was useful as a “starting point.” (Real surveys had been distributed to get a flavor of individual responses.) The NAC broke up into groups of two or three individuals. After about 20 minutes, we reconvened as a full committee and discussed the responses format and the content of the items that would be maintained for all respondents.

For the next stage, Mary will type minutes and shared survey on Checkbox. Each will go back to their department and asked each program to formulate approximately 6-20 questions. They might be presented in Likert style, short answer, or open-ended. These questions will be submitted through the committee member and to Mary by early March. More specifically, these recommendations were generated:

Recommendations:

- Based upon NAC work today, the “revised” survey items will be placed into Checkbox.
- All NAC members will share this “revised” survey with their department faculty.
- All NAC members will request that the branching items that are program-specific within a particular department be submitted by early/mid March.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:29.