Members Present:
Sandra Kelly (Administrative Co-Chair), Susan Beverung, Pam Bowers, Karen Brown, Mackenzie King (for Nancy Buchan), David Cardenas, Sara Corwin, Tena Crews (ex-officio), Rob Dedmon, Cliff Leaman, Paul Mackenzie, Manton Matthews, Donald Miles (ex-officio), Chris Nesmith, Ginger Nickles-Osborne, Claire Robinson (ex-officio), Andrea Tanner, Jenn Tilford (ex-officio), Marco Valtorta (ex-officio), Ernie Wiggins

Members Absent:
Brittany Ashley (ex-officio), Claudia Benitez-Nelson, Ron Cox, John Gerdes (ex-officio), Brian Habing, Doug Meade, Ed Munn Sanchez

Specialty Team Chairs Present:
Panayiotis Doutis, Daniel Freedman, David Hitchcock, Leah Lindsey (for Judith Kalb), Adam Schor

Specialty Team Chairs Absent:
Holly Crocker, Mindy Fenske, David Lankes, Sarah Williams, Jeff Wilson

Guests:
Sabrina Andrews, Latrice Small

Handouts (double click to open):

SACSCOC
Reaffirmation Timeli

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Welcome and Introductions
Sandra discussed the different purpose of the committee over the last year, with a focus on getting assessment moving forward. The purpose of the committee may need to be discussed further. There is currently no Faculty Co-Chair and a volunteer will be needed, if we are to appoint one.

Overview of the Core (Sandra Kelly)
The Carolina Core went live in 2012 with the original intent on one common Core. However, there are many variations on Carolina Core across the colleges.

The Carolina Core across the University (Jenn Tilford)
Many colleges have additional hours and/or specific requirements.

1. Business is the closest to a basic core with no additional hours and only one specified requirement (ARP).
2. Arts and Sciences, Education, Engineering and Computing (extra 1 hr. lab), Music, Nursing, Palmetto College, and Social Work have additional hours required beyond the basic Carolina Core.
3. Business, HRSM, Information and Communications, Pharmacy, and Public Health have no additional hours required beyond the basic Carolina Core.
4. All colleges include some specified requirements. (Usually for ARP and SCI, but sometimes also for GSS and CMS)
    a. Even though Public Health doesn't specify any requirements in the Carolina Core section, at least half of their College requirements fulfill Carolina Core requirements and are listed on their curriculum sheet under specific Carolina Core components.

Because there are specified and additional requirements, it makes it difficult for students to transfer between colleges.

Assessment Process (Donald Miles & Sandra Kelly)
SCI, GHS, and CMW are collecting artifacts this spring, and will be doing artifact review in fall. GSS and ARP will be collecting artifacts in fall. VSR and CMS are doing data review and learning outcomes review and revision in the fall. Currently, every Carolina Core learning outcome has at least 2 rounds of assessment complete. We must submit our report in 2020. OIRAA responded to feedback from the academic planning council in CAS.

<u>Common Problems with the Current Assessment Process</u> (Sandra Kelly)
- Difficulty in collecting artifacts from faculty who are teaching Carolina Core courses.
- Sometimes the assessments for the Carolina Core courses don't reflect the learning outcomes.
- Faculty reviewers are difficult to find.
- Faculty reviewers have a difficult time agreeing on how to review.

According to SACS, a flawed process is ok, as long as we are assessing. The assessment process generates discussion about what we are doing and how we can improve.

Sandra attended SACS training last summer and has done some research on core requirements at other institutions. It was suggested by a SACS representative that a core curriculum have 3-5 learning outcomes. USC has 10, which makes it more difficult to assess and more complex, in comparison with other institutions. Because colleges wanted to have their courses included in the Core, they each include their own requirements. There is a lack of cohesiveness to the Carolina Core.

<u>Plans for 2020 SACS Review</u> (Donald Miles)
OIRAA has provided a timeline for the next few years as we approach reaffirmation (attachment). We are in the class of 2021 for SACSCOC Reaffirmation, but the compliance certification is due in September 2020. The attachment describes the off-site and on-site peer reviews, as well as the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), which must be submitted six weeks in advance of the on-site reaffirmation review committee. Also, SACS recently adopted new standards, which are summarized in the attachment. This will be the first time that we have a review that includes the Carolina Core.

We must move toward continuous compliance, which means that we have a system and cycle set up for reviewing every single standard each year. Expect in the next few months for OIRAA to visit with those in each of the various Core areas. OIRAA will then set up clear deadlines before review. We have a strong case for SACS that we are in compliance.

<u>Discussion of Assessment going forward</u> (Sandra)
There is a lack of cohesiveness in Carolina Core and lack of understanding from Faculty that there should be cohesiveness. This is the time to start re-thinking the Carolina Core with regard to how we do assessment and make it more efficient and useful and how we make the Carolina Core as strong as possible.

Our current practice of looking at student artifacts has a serious flaw in giving an assessment in the middle of the semester, instead of at the end, and expecting the result to be satisfactory. Another issue with our current practice is the amount of outcomes (10) requires an enormous amount of work on faculty. Sandra has looked at other institutions, many of which only have 3 or 4 learning outcomes. Then, she looked at our Carolina Core objectives and making them broader (attachment). They fit into 3 categories:
1. Interpret different kinds of information
2. Communicate information
3. Use different methods for analyses

The goal would be to look at the above 3 aspects as outcomes, regardless of the course. This would require looking at student abilities before the Carolina Core (as freshmen) and then after completing the Core (as seniors). This method would not give discipline-specific information. Focus groups within disciplines could be formed to discuss their learning outcomes. The idea would be to have pilot data in 2020 to communicate where we are going. Our current practice may not be sustainable with the amount of work that it requires.

<u>Pilot Assessment/Studies in Academic Year 18-19</u>
The Pilot would start early in freshman semester after the first-year reading experience as a pre-assessment in either UNIV 101 or ENGL 101. It would be an essay format. For the post-test (for seniors), an idea would be to include more capstone-type courses that include an essay. The final assessment would have to be included as a part of a class, otherwise students wouldn't take it seriously. There could be a templates developed by focus groups that instructors can use to create their assessments. The idea is that the 3 categories of learning objectives be used as a way of reporting to SACSCOC, instead of actually changing the Carolina Core course requirements.

Issues with this assessment format:
1. Students who transfer in credit for ENGL 101 don't have to do the first-year reading experience.
2. It would be difficult to incorporate languages into this assessment format.
3. Some students don't complete their Carolina Core until their senior year.
4. In measuring seniors, we would be measuring their entire experience, including experiential learning, not just Carolina Core.
5. The assessment may not cover all of the Carolina Core learning outcomes.
6. There may not be enough data from a single pre and post assessment.
7. Giving feedback on a specific Carolina Core component would be difficult.

Sara Corwin described a senior writing assessment for Public Health students that includes reflecting back on Carolina Core courses and how they have integrated the skills learned and how they are going to help going forward. She will provide Sandra with those writing prompts. Those who teach capstone courses in the fall, could be a pilot.

There was a discussion of the concept of fluid intelligence, which is not included in our Carolina Core currently and would require a complete overhaul of Carolina Core and how it's taught. Since Carolina Core has only been in place for 6 years, it seems too soon to do a complete overhaul. A culture of student ownership of learning was also discussed.

We need to think about the next steps. There has been no push to completely redo the Carolina Core. Going forward, this committee may be more focused on the vetting of some ideas of what kinds of questions that we could ask for assessment.

Conclusion
Next meeting early in the fall. The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jenn Tilford.