**Soft-Skills Minutes Assessment Committee Meeting, Friday, October 16, 2020**

Zoom Call

Attendance: Dr. Gina Kamwithi, Justin Tickhill, Dr. Karen Reed, Christine Lynch, Beth Franz, Deb Hysell, Michelle Slattery

1. **Call to order**

Justin called the meeting to order at 12:05pm. Justin suggested that we approve meeting minutes in a staggered fashion. Consequently, the initial conversation began with putting off the approval of the minutes, because this is a new group of people in this meeting, and most had not attended minutes from the previous meeting. This will be rectified once the bifurcated meeting schedules are consistent.

1. **LinkedIn Learning Discussion**

Justin then shifted the discussion to the Business, Industry and Technology Division’s use of LinkedIn Learning, and how all of these modules are being used in light of the pandemic.

Justin wanted to present this set of tools to the assessment committee to help faculty with assessing soft-skills and perhaps use the modules to increase their own growth in soft-skill development, particularly in relation to meeting students’ needs in the middle of this pandemic.

There was a short discussion to consider the deployment of these modules in the FYEX courses. However, it was noted that doing more in this one course, and forcing these soft skill modules into the course seems to be overwhelming. Students already report being inundated with material in FYEX.

The discussion then shifted to soft-skills related to keeping in contact with students in an asynchronous learning environment.

The feeling of some students in this new online setting, is that the content they are being sent to explore outside of the LMS, is too much, and a type of busy work. QM, helps the development of an organized set of learning outcomes that may combat this ‘firehose’ type of delivery of content.

The question was then posed, *“what is the role of the Assessment committee and what type of input can we give related to this entire push to online during the pandemic?”* And *“ How effective are we being, in this new environment?”*

In light of those questions the meeting then went on to focus on a review of the soft-skills list and the definitions of each of the soft-skills. The team would like to evaluate the importance of each of these skills in an online environment, during the pandemic, and the ability to assess these skills in the online environment.

As the conversation about the soft skills and the experience of the pandemic overlapped, faculty described a few of the soft skills that seemed to increase in importance during this crisis. As an example, initiative and resiliency seem to be chief skills needed in this new environment. Justin then asked if any of the current 12 soft-skills that might not be easy to teach/assess in the online environment we have been forced into because of the pandemic.

Christine L. countered that it does not matter as much the environment we are teaching this in, the Soft skills are for employment, thus we must teach/assess irrespective of whether we can do this effectively in an online environment. Justin then questioned how you can teach professional appearance in an online setting? Christine countered with zoom etiquette and not being in our bed clothes and the imperative that you must have professional dress/appearance even in the online environment.

There was significant discussion about students’ ability/willingness to reach out to their faculty members when they are struggling. This led to a discussion about faculty comfort in addressing students needs, in areas that are not their content area. (such as Michelle described about a student’s MH struggle). It was concluded that faculty still need to reach out, and practice a bit of ‘intrusive’ probing to identify needs, and arm themselves with the tools to speak to those needs.

This came down to how do we develop collateral soft skills. That focus on soft skills could potentially make a significant difference in students’ lives. Because much of the falling off of students is not content, but the other numerous life issues.

This is why we may need to encourage faculty/staff to explore the LinkedIn learning soft skills modules.

The discussion ended with an idea of adding Growth Mindset to the list of 12 soft-skills. Pros and Cons of adding this to the list were discussed.

There was an idea brought forward to consider swapping outgrowth mindset for lifelong learning. This was rejected. Additionally, the skill assessed as Professional appearance was suggested to be changed to ‘professionalism’.

A variety of definitions were suggested for both lifelong learning, and professional appearance. Final thoughts- the committee decided to have everyone give their definition of growth mindset, by sending an email to Justin.

Meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

Next Meeting: 12:00p.m. Friday, November 06, 2020

Submitted by Gina Kamwithi