October 13, 2016

To:   Undergraduate Program Directors

RE:   SAS Program Assessment 2015-16

Thank you for your contributions to the assessment of the SAS undergraduate program. The University Executive Council of Assessment has declared SAS to be an exemplary program. In a memo to Executive Dean Peter March, Gary Gigliotti, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Teaching and Assessment, described SAS as a “beacon for other schools within the institution to find their way to create meaningful assessment plans and methods.” The SAS report submitted to the Executive Council and the Council’s response can be found at the bottom of the SAS department and program assessment webpage:

http://sasoue.rutgers.edu/assessment/sas-department-and-program-assessment

The SAS Assessment Committee met in September to discuss how to support assessment efforts in the School. The Committee, which consists of undergraduate program directors and others directly involved in program assessment, recommended taking actions to promote the sharing of information and experiences across departments. Our departments have used a variety of approaches to evaluate their undergraduate programs. The Committee believes that all programs would benefit from hearing about these different approaches and learning about the methods that have worked as well as those that have not.

To that end, we are going to devote time at our undergraduate directors meetings throughout the year to have directors give short and informal presentations on their department’s assessment efforts. These presentations will highlight departments that have used assessment results to contemplate changes in courses and curricula. In assessment terminology, these departments are “closing the loop.”

We have also updated the “best practice” examples page on the SAS Office of Undergraduate website:

Although our “best practice” departments use many different assessment methods, the Assessment Committee noted that the most effective plans share three characteristics:

1. A faculty committee (as opposed to just the undergraduate program director) charged with developing and implementing department assessment efforts.

2. Program learning goals that are clearly articulated to students and linked to major requirements.

3. Practices and procedures in place to share assessment results with the rest of the faculty in the department.
Karen Dennis, the Assistant Dean of Assessment, and I are available to help you develop and implement your assessment plans for AY 2016-17. Please reach out to us to set up a meeting or request information or resources on assessment efforts underway within SAS or at our peer institutions.

Thank you again for your participation in the assessment of undergraduate education in SAS.

Regards,

Carolyn Moehling
Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education.