

Senate Assessment Committee (AC)
Meeting Minutes, September 14, 2025
Lehman College

Members Present: Julissa Adames-Torres, Karin Beck, Martin Downing, Yaswantie Persaud, Henry Williams, Robert Utzinger, Devrim Yavuz (Chair); Guests: Donald Sutherland

1. Introductions: new and returning members

Given that the committee had three newly appointed members (two were new and one was returning), the committee members introduced themselves to the group. Everyone was reminded that representatives from the Student Government Association (SGA) would join later in the semester.

2. Administrative planning

This was the first meeting of AY2025-2026. Most of the session was spent planning to have a productive year.

- a. The committee Chair mentioned that the *minutes* from the last meeting (March 19, 2025) would be made available along with the current minutes before the next meetings.
- b. ***Choosing a Chair.*** Given that there were new members, Devrim Yavuz mentioned that he would be happy to have elections to choose a Chair at the next meeting when there was a full committee. He also encouraged anyone who might be interested to give it some thought. In particular, he mentioned being able to attend some but not all Senate meetings to present the report, in which case he would be happy to share chairing responsibilities as co-Chair. Members of the committee volunteered to help with the presentations.
- c. ***Choosing a timeslot for meetings.*** It was decided that an online poll would be conducted to pick a time that might work for everyone, with the caveat that it might change when SGA members were selected. Given that this is a Senate Standing Committee, members were reminded that the AC needed quorum if it ever wanted to make official recommendations to the Senate or wanted to bring items to a Senate vote. In the past, the AC managed to increase the length of the Lehman College assessment timeline in this manner.
- d. ***Sharing documents.*** It was stressed that with the work of the committee becoming increasingly important (with official resolution and its potential supporting/advisory role in MSCHE accreditation below). Members of the committee discussed that the existing Dropbox folder may be more user-friendly than Teams for now. However, the question will be revisited in the future.

3. MSCHE (aka “Middle States”) Accreditation and the Assessment Committee

- a. Donald Sutherland and Karin Beck drew the rough outlines of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s visit and accreditation process. The campus visit will take place in the Fall of 2027 or Spring of 2028 and the assessment of educational effectiveness is a big component of it. The AC was told that a Steering committee would get the campus ready for the visit, including a Steering sub-committee which would be in charge of documenting educational effectiveness. It was stressed that various programs and units on campus, including the AC might be called on to provide support and documentation to help the latter. Moreover, Donald Sutherland reminded members of the AC that some of the committee’s charge may also align with other dimensions being assessed by MSCHE. Thus, members of the committee agreed that part of the AY25-26 would be spent defining the ways in which we could help.
- b. Devrim Yavuz provided more context by pointing out that one area the Lehman College community was improving in was to document assessment efforts at all levels of the campus more systematically and to describe in which ways they had informed changes such as curricular decisions. Perhaps, the AC noted that one way to improve even further was to really seek out assessment-related information wherever it was generated. Members with assessment experience, including Henry Williams and Robert Utzinger, mentioned that providing templates and guidance in how to present the information could help programs and units comply even more effectively with the need to document.

4. General Education report AY2024-2025

The need to document was further discussed with Devrim Yavuz presenting the AY24-25 General Education report that he prepared for the Provost’s office (unrelated to his AC membership). The report adopted a bottom-up approach to document assessment-related activities that instructors were already doing in flexible core courses they were teaching (for instance a rubric used to evaluate written communication skills in an English essay). Members of the AC found the report effective and felt that it was a good idea to keep the approach moving forward. It was further discussed that the report should be shared widely to encourage more participation (overall 7 departments/programs had provided information about 25 courses and 35 sections). Some members mentioned that staffing issues caused by assessment-related personnel taking on more responsibilities because of leave and other factors was noted as causing potential problems for some programs. Overall, it was agreed that getting a decent response rate would be enough. The AC will revisit ways to help in the endeavor.

5. The Creation of a General Education/MSCHE subcommittee

The meeting concluded with mention that the creation of a general education subcommittee could help provide the types of support the college needs with the MSCHE visit and with general education assessment.

