

SUMMARY

HLC Self-Study Steering Committee

Tuesday, February 22, 2005—3-4pm-President's Conference Room

Present: Drs. Guy Farish, Teri McCartney, Ed Crowther, Carol Guerrero-Murphy, Janice Denton, David Svaldi, Frank Sanchez, and Frank Novotny. Ms. Glenda Geu, Mr. Bill Mansheim, Mr. Mike Nicholson, Ms. Barbara Friese, and Mr. Paul Tigan.

- I. Announcements
 - a. Dr. Svaldi had the long-awaited conversation with the Higher Learning Commission
 - i. The site visit has been set for approximately February 26th, 2007.
 1. This is a few months later than expected.
 2. The self-study is due 8 weeks prior to the site visit (January 1st, 2007).
 - ii. The HLC Staff liaison, Dr. Mary Breslin, will be visiting the campus September 14-15, 2005.
- II. Visiting Higher Learning Consultant, Dr. Janice Denton
 - a. Dr. Svaldi introduced Dr. Denton to the committee
 - i. Professor of Chemical Sciences at the University of Cincinnati
 - ii. UC's Faculty Director of General Education
 - iii. HLC's first recommendation as consultant for the self-study process
- III. Conversations with the Consultant
 - a. Impressions of Adams State so far
 - i. Things are not as bad as we thought, in fact; they are better than many others.
 - ii. Number of good conversations during open times.
 - iii. Program assessments seem to be in good shape.
 - iv. Lack of conversation so far regarding General Education requirements
 1. Need to focus current situation in time for future visit
 - a. ASC still working out outside "influences" on general education offerings (CCHE, etc.)
 - b. Hopefully approval to changes will happen by fall and strengthen footing on general education offerings
 - b. Structure of Self-Study
 - i. Dr. Denton advised the committee to remember to integrate our institutional goals into the evaluation of each criterion.
 - ii. How do we assess "non-student learning" outcomes and goals?
 1. Assessment is the piece that cuts through all the criteria.
 2. Rating non-student services (facilities, computer services, etc.) can be a matter of setting target goals. Methodology can include examples like:
 - a. X% of student will receive requested transcripts within x amount of time.
 - b. X number of purchase orders will move through system with x degree of accuracy.
 3. The key is coming up with non-invasive or time-intensive assessment methods—support staff is has the least amount of time to take on a new large project like self-study.

4. Use NSSE in collaboration with target-setting methods. Be aware (and explicit in the self-study) about the shortcoming of the NSSE being a *self-reported* student survey.
- iii. How does each self-study sub-committee decide what exactly they are covering?
 1. Develop an outline of the responsibilities that each sub-committee is going to cover.
 2. Use other schools' self-study reports as models. There will be more than the UNC report available in the coming months.
 3. Don't be afraid to re-use data throughout the study. This will bolster arguments about the institutional goals, mission, etc.
- c. More Questions on Assessment Methodology
- i. Student Learning Outcome Assessments
 1. ALCP data is available for CELT Scholars
 2. NSSE and the FSSE
 - a. Gauging the student's perceptions of themselves and the faculty's perception of the students produces a noticeable disconnect.
 - i. Faculty members hear from students that they are being overly challenged—but FSSE shows that faculty think that that students are not being challenged enough.
 - ii. The NSSE, however, seems to show that students think they are not being challenged enough in their courses.
 - iii. It is believed that students rise to the occasion when they are challenged beyond their perceived boundaries.
 3. It is important that data is always given its proper context in the self-study.
 - a. It is unlikely that unaccompanied data will be interpreted for the reasons it included.
 - b. *NSSE reports that ASC students work significantly more than peers groups.*
 - i. This is the kind of statement that shows a “unique situation” for the college.
 1. These instances should be used to elucidate institutional goals, explain perceived shortcomings, and set apart ASC from other institutions.
- d. More Ideas for Assessing Non-Student Learning Areas
- i. Performance Targets
 - ii. Staff Development efforts/results
 - iii. Accuracy tracking
 - iv. Mission/Goals fulfillment
 1. It's important that these areas implicitly support/enhance the overall mission/goals of the institution.
- e. Don't Bite Off More Than You Can Chew
- i. This is the key for every section of the self-study
 1. It is more important to show effectiveness in two areas than ineffective ambition in ten areas.
 - ii. The process is supposed to be sustainable.
 1. Can ASC continue to improve in this manner for the next ten years?

2. Will it just jumpstart this process 18 months before the 2017 review?
- iii. The University of Cincinnati only looked at two pieces of their General Education program (Writing and Critical Thinking) rather than the whole package.
 1. The test was to see how effective they could be at addressing the next two areas after the HLC process was over—and it's working.
 2. A big part of the success in the General Education piece is making sure the college examines where the goals of the Gen. Ed. program are being met outside of the Gen. Ed. Offerings.
 - a. Writing should be happening in every course, as with critical thinking, etc.

f. How to Use Data

- i. Dr. Denton introduced a document (pgs 4-5 in her booklet) that her institution uses to connect the budget process with the student-based outcomes.
 1. Instructors and Department Chairs use this form to explain how external forces effect learning outcomes. (i.e. classroom supplies, capital expenditures, etc.). An example:
 - a. Testing of Biology students shows a lack of knowledge about x biological concept.
 - b. This concept is usually taught through the use of microscopes.
 - c. Instructor/Chair demonstrate this outcome on the form and request that new microscopes would improve understanding of said concept.
 - d. Microscopes are/are not purchased and Chair demonstrates improvement/lack of improvement tied to funding decision.
 2. This process would allow for appropriate use of data as well as bring that data off the shelf and make it useful.

IV. Timeline

- a. The current DRAFT timeline for the accreditation process is now available
 - i. Department Chairs and other Area leaders will create intermediary timelines to complete their internal self-study processes.
 - ii. The Self Study Draft is due to be complete in July 2006.
 1. The writing should be accomplished in small segments rather than one push at the end. The voicing of the document, however, should be left for the later editing stages.
 2. Again, do not be afraid to recycle important data in multiple criteria areas.

V. Data and other Questions

- a. It is never too early to begin researching for evidence that supports the institutional goals
 - i. The suggestion was made to compile all available data in one place for committees to research.
 - ii. There is a large gap in data for ASC alumni.
- b. The Final Bit of Advice
 - i. The Higher Learning Commission will give the benefit of the doubt when ASC sides with the students and their learning.
 1. ASC must clearly explain state-mandated decisions that haven't benefited student learning, i.e. our current General Education situation.

VI. Adjournment

