

MINUTES: University Self-Study Steering Committee

DATE: April 11, 2001
1:00 - 3:00 pm
Old Board Room, Administration Building

PRESENT: C. Havice, Co-Chair (presiding), T. Birdwhistell, D. Boyd, C. Currens,
A. Doyle, L. Edgerton, L. Grabau, D. Harley, C. Peck-Heath, J. Hougland,
G. Hoyt, R. Jordan, D. Kalika, P. Kelley, R. Mitchell, L. Nora, W. Pfeifle,
J. Picoro, D. Watt, C. Vaughn

C. Havice called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and distributed copies of the Minutes and Agenda. Since the Vice Chairs were in attendance, everyone introduced his/herself. C. Havice thanked the group for making time to attend.

MINUTES

The Minutes of March 7, 2001 were approved as distributed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – J. Picoro

Chair of Visiting Committee

J. Picoro talked with D. Carter at SACS. Dr. Carter indicated that he has sent a letter to a possible chair for our visiting committee. If this individual agrees to serve, we will be happy with him.

Faculty Credentials

J. Picoro began reviewing faculty credentials in the College of Pharmacy. The first file he reviewed was his own. The transcript for his terminal degree was not in the file. He has now obtained an official copy and placed it in his file. It is possible that we will have a problem with faculty credentials. One faculty member who obtained his Ph.D. degree from the University of Minnesota in 1972 has a transcript that appears to be photocopied on plain paper with handwritten entries and grades which were difficult to plainly identify (looked like strikeovers from a typewriter, but were handwritten). The stamp on it is "Issued to Student" which will not meet the SACS Criteria as an official transcript. J. Picoro circulated a copy of this transcript to the Committee. He will get in touch with the registrar's office at the University of Minnesota to inquire if they have updated transcripts they now supply.

J. Picoro will shortly begin visiting other colleges to review their faculty folders. He will probably request assistance with this effort.

Many colleges also have faculty members from other countries. A lot of those institutions do not issue transcripts but do issue certified diplomas. J. Picoro discussed this with D. Carter. If a faculty member has a certified diploma bearing the seal or embossed by the institution, he/she can bring that to the appropriate individual in the

college. That individual can make a copy of the diploma and place it in the faculty file along with a note stating that this is a copy of the faculty member's certified diploma, that the original diploma is in the faculty member's possession and is available for review. That will satisfy the SACS requirement.

Supporting Documentation

J. Piccoro reminded everyone that we need supporting documentation for their reports as soon as possible. We currently have very little documentation. The documentation needs to be submitted to Connie Vaughn in the Self-Study Office. Ms. Vaughn also should receive an electronic copy of the second draft of your reports. She will then forward them to the appropriate individuals. This will also serve as our back up.

C. Havice commented that C. Currens has been formatting the drafts as he receives them. Lines on each page are being numbered to make it easier to refer to a specific page number, line number for editing. C. Currens then forwards these drafts to C. Havice who posts them to the Self-Study web page.

DISCUSSION OF FIRST DRAFTS – C. Havice, T. Birdwhistell, C. Currens

C. Havice, T. Birdwhistell, C. Currens and, where possible, one additional member of the Steering Committee have been meeting with committee chairs/vice chairs to review first drafts of committee reports. Since there are a total of 17 reports, C. Havice and T. Birdwhistell divided the drafts and each has been meeting with/reviewing half the total number. The review process has been very helpful in getting the committees' viewpoints of their reports, frustrations, etc.

We are requesting a second draft of committee reports by the beginning of May (sooner if possible). One reason for this is to get as much input as possible from committee members who are on ten-month contracts. Chairs and vice chairs were asked to let their committee members know this and to also ask for ways to get in touch with them over the summer to request feedback. Some groups are still waiting on data that has not yet come in to be able to complete their reports. Reviewers are also concentrating on content at this point rather than style.

Reports need to address both must and should statements. If committees were working simply from the Clemson list, the "should statements" were left out of that. It would not be a huge problem to go back and add the should statements. This had been a valuable process for judging where we are with the self-study.

T. Birdwhistell stated his agreement with everything that C. Havice said about the review process. He also thanked everyone for all their hard work in completing first drafts.

Report Format – C. Currens

C. Currens spoke to the group about the suggested format for the final report. The Executive Committee recently held two meetings of over two hours in length to discuss this issue. The suggested format was not easy to reach. Our final report has to

accomplish several things. We have to address the must statements in the SACS Criteria for Accreditation in order to be reaffirmed. This is the "letter" of the self-study. However, we also want to keep the spirit of the self-study as expressed in the individual reports. C. Currens then distributed and discussed a handout outlining the suggested format. A copy of the handout is attached to the official Minutes. He then asked if the group agreed with the format or if they had suggestions/changes.

C. Havice noted that some must statements apply to several committees so there will be overlap. At this time we choose to look at how reports are emerging. We will decide at a later time if some pieces need to be copied and moved so that they appear in more than one section of the report. L. Edgerton asked if there will be an index of must statements so that the visitors know where to look for all the reports that deal with the must statements they are assigned. C. Havice replied that there will be an index.

D. Kalika said that a clear distinction exists between the terms suggestion and recommendation. A suggestion is something that needs to be done. A recommendation is something that **must** be done to bring the University into compliance with the Criteria. However, he feels that in editing the final report, some suggestions may be deleted. C. Currens said that he does not like the term "suggestion" and asked if anyone had a different term. D. Watt asked if we could just use the term recommendation. In the instance where we are not in compliance, we would use Recommendation (tied to must statement # ____). For other recommendations, we would just state the recommendation.

C. Havice pointed out that another category found in the first drafts is "emerging compliance". This term is used in the Institutional Effectiveness report to indicate situations where the University has not previously been in compliance but has begun procedures that will bring us into full compliance. One example of this is the annual report. This has now been instituted university-wide and we will be in full compliance with the Criteria when several cycles have been completed. Some committees wrote reports where they did not specifically state whether the University is/is not in compliance. Several reports do not include recommendations. Second drafts need to address compliance. In instances where the University does not comply, recommendations to bring us into compliance should be included.

A. Doyle said that SACS language assigns special meaning to the terms recommendation and suggestion. She pointed out that members of a visiting committee reading our report would see a recommendation and think that we had found the University was not in compliance with a specific must statement.

In the lengthy discussion a question arose concerning colleges and programs, which have separate accreditation standards. J. Piccoro said that D. Carter indicated, where programs have specific accreditation from other agencies, our committees could use those reports as documentation. However, these committees still have to examine/address the must statements in the SACS Criteria, state whether we are in compliance, and provide complete documentation (not just the accreditation report) as to why.

C. Havice said that it seems there may be instances where the Steering Committee needs to discuss individual committee recommendations. In one instance, a group was interpreting the Criteria in an overly strict manner and saying that the University was not in compliance when we actually did comply.

D. Boyd asked if we would have the opportunity to suggest members of the visiting team. J. Picoro asked J. Hougland if that took place during the last self-study. J. Hougland did not specifically remember. D. Boyd suggested that we prepare a list of names in case we are given the opportunity to submit suggestions. J. Hougland stated that some members of the visiting team for the last self-study were not from our region. That would broaden the possible pool of visiting team members – and individuals who could be suggested. J. Picoro said that when the chair of our visiting committee has been appointed, we would ask that question of the chair. If the response is yes, we will then ask everyone for recommendations.

DEADLINES – C. Havice

If you look back at our schedule, the deadline for second drafts is set for the 21st of April. We have extended that. If committees can submit second drafts by early May, that will be sufficient.

D. Watt asked where we are with the survey data. J. Picoro responded that he spoke with R. Langley at the Survey Research Center yesterday. R. Langley said that the staff and faculty surveys are basically complete. He does not expect enough additional returns to affect the outcome of either survey. The Survey Research Center is still coding written comments. The TA/PTI survey is out. Anyone who needs results from a particular survey can get in touch with either the Self-Study Office or the Survey Research Center.

D. Watt asked if it would be possible to review the raw data instead of waiting for the SRC to finish coding. J. Picoro asked if D. Watt wants to go through the actual survey instruments. D. Watt responded that he/his committee members could go through the surveys and pull out the data they need to complete their report. J. Picoro will call R. Langley and ask if members of the Steering Committee can come to the SRC to review the surveys.

DOCUMENTATION

R. Jordan stated that she has all the supporting documentation for her committee's report but that she has been holding on to it. The identifying numbers of documents keep changing as they revise their report.

G. Hoyt asked how we want the documents to be named/numbered. C. Currens said that as long as we have a way to identify which reference a particular document goes with, that is all the committees need to do.

D. Watt asked if we could scan hard copies of documents if that was all that a committee provided. J. Piccoro said that the Self-Study Office plans to hire someone to do scanning and work on the electronic library of supporting documentation. C. Currens said that we must have a hard copy of each piece of supporting documentation. If committees can also provide an electronic link so much the better.

NEXT MEETING – C. Havice

Our next meeting is scheduled for April 25, 1:00-3:00 in the Old Board Room of the Administration Building. If anyone has questions before that time, please get in touch with C. Havice, T. Birdwhistell, or J. Piccoro.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Connie Vaughn, Recorder