

MINUTES: University Self-Study Steering Committee

DATE: June 13, 2001
10:00am - 12:00noon
327A College of Pharmacy

PRESENT: T. Birdwhistell, Co-Chair (presiding), B. Berdine, C. Currens,
L. Edgerton, D. Harley, J. Hougland, R. Jordan, D. Kalika,
R. Mitchell, L. Nora, C. Peck-Heath, J. Picoro, H. Schach, C. Vaughn

T. Birdwhistell called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of May 30, 2001 were approved as distributed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

New SACS Liaison

We recently received a letter from the Executive Director of SACS outlining some changes they are making with regard to personnel assignments. We have been assigned a new liaison, Dr. W. Donald Crump. Dr. Crump participated in a conference call with us about a month ago when we discussed distance learning. He has been on the UK campus before and worked with former Chancellor Hemenway. Dr. Crump has a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. He will visit campus next Friday and meet with the Executive Committee. At this point in time, we still do not have a Chair for our visiting committee. Dr. Crump has indicated that this will be one of the first items on his agenda. He wants to get someone at the level of President or Chancellor from an institution of similar size to UK.

New Location

The Self-Study Office is now located in rooms 232, 233 and 235 of the CATS Center in Memorial Coliseum. We made a trip into the Administration Building yesterday to retrieve things that could be saved. We have not yet had any documents come back from Chicago, where they are being processed. It is our understanding that, when the documents do come back, we will have to photocopy anything we wish to keep. Otherwise, we may have a mold outbreak at some future time. The Young Library recently had an outbreak of mold in documents that were treated 17 years ago.

Meeting With New President

J. Picoro met with Dr. Lee Todd on Monday, June 4th. The purpose of the meeting was to give Dr. Todd an update on SACS. He has had no involvement with SACS. J. Picoro provided an idea of the scope of the project, the number of people involved and that the project had been off track because of problems with the survey. The President-elect is very interested in our process. He wanted to know the various groups we had surveyed

and the results. We provided him a copy of each of the surveys, the results and a couple of our draft reports that he had asked to see.

D. Kalika asked if the survey would be publishable at the time we release the self-study report to the University community. C. Currens has talked to people at the Computer Center. They will re-run the survey for us so that it is in a more reader friendly form and is easier to understand. The survey will then be made available electronically. Our goal is to have this available at the same time we go public with the final report.

J. Picoro provided L. Todd with a timetable of when things are to occur with the self-study. Dr. Todd will send a letter to all committee members expressing appreciation for everyone's hard work thus far. At the appropriate time (September), the President's office also will send an e-mail asking the University community to review the finished report posted at our web site and request that comments be sent back to the Self-Study Office.

President-elect Todd liked the idea of a fix-it committee and wants recommendations from us on who should serve. He will also meet with the Steering Committee soon after taking office. He wanted to attend today's meeting, but had previous commitments at the Medical Center. We will try to have him attend a meeting in July or August.

Supporting Documentation

J. Picoro reminded everyone that we must have supporting documentation for all individual committee reports. This is to be submitted to C. Vaughn as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

C. Currens distributed a list of recommendations and suggestions that he had compiled from the various draft reports. He noted that this list is in draft form and that committees are in different stages of developing recommendations. A number of committees are now studying whether we meet the Criteria. C. Currens asked individuals to look for similarities between recommendations of the different committees and any similarities to the recommendations of their specific committees. We are trying to find ways to make the final report more manageable for the SACS visitors to read, so we are trying to shorten the report by combining information where possible. Some recommendations may cross several different chapters. Where we have recommendations from several different groups about the same matter, we need to decide where in the report to deal with the issue. We would then reference that section of the report from other chapters.

Committees need to look at recommendations vs. suggestions. Several groups have not made that decision and they need to do so. Recommendations deal with something that does not comply with the SACS Criteria. If there were something that a committee thinks needs to be changed for any other reason than noncompliance, that would be stated as a suggestion. These will need to be reworked as we edit the final report. The recommendations and suggestions should be able to stand-alone and make sense if taken out of context of their place in the report. If a committee has no recommendations/suggestions they need to state in writing "no recommendations or

suggestions submitted at this time”. This will change as editing the report progresses. C. Currens will try to post an “ongoing” version of the report on the web so that committee members can check for the most current version as needed.

H. Schach asked if the Steering Committee will review recommendations and suggestions submitted in all the individual reports and make the decision on whether they should remain as recommendations or be downgraded to suggestions. C. Currens said this would ultimately be the case. L. Nora said that recommendations and suggestions are pretty clearly defined but that some suggestions seem to be more important than others. We need to have a way to express that. B. Berdine stated that in the case where changes are needed to the administrative regulations, the manner in which this is stated could be improved. Where something tangible can be done to effect a change, it may need to be stated as a recommendation to ensure that it is done. C. Currens said that there are instances where we meet the Criteria but may be in actual violation of a law such as the federal laws dealing with students with disabilities. When changes such as this are needed, it should be stated in a manner that would ensure the changes would be made.

L. Edgerton asked why we could not make something a recommendation if we think that it really needs to be done. D. Kalika said that SACS had locked in what a recommendation would be. The numbers of recommendations we receive from SACS will be important. If the SACS visiting committee gives us 18-20 recommendations, that is a successful visit. If we receive 50 recommendations, then the visit is unsuccessful. We should put forth what we want back. L. Nora agreed with this statement but also said that she does not want us to lose our chance to make needed changes or to make a difference with the Self-Study. B. Jordan said that we do not want to undermine the work of committee members who have worked so hard to point out changes that need to be made.

T. Birdwhistell said that he thinks that the way in which suggestions are written can ensure that they are done. The Steering Committee can reword those suggestions that may need it once they are submitted to the group. Any kind of designation between suggestions with some being more important than others also undermines the work of those groups whose suggestions are not redefined as “strong” suggestions. The importance of suggestions in general can be noted in the beginning of the report.

J. Piccoro stressed that the Steering Committee also needs to take Dr. Todd up on his request for recommendation of members to serve on the fix-it committee.

H. Schach asked if recommendations and suggestions would be circulated to the appropriate sectors so that they can make an effort to fix those problems that they can. J. Piccoro said that the final draft of the report would be submitted to the President who will share it with whomever he wishes. The administration will review the draft for “errors of fact” only. T. Birdwhistell noted that, at this point, the fix-it committee should take the recommendations and suggestions from the draft and begin working on them. After being reviewed by the administration, the draft will be made available to the entire University community for review and input. The report will be revised appropriately and will then go to the Board of Trustees for their approval. The final report will go to SACS

in December. C. Currens said that groups need to spell out their recommendations. He did not go through each committee's report and try to interpret their intentions.

STRUCTURE OF REPORT:

C. Currens said that we have already discussed most of the report structure. We talked about a broad table of contents that this group approved. The final document will basically follow the pattern of the committee reports. Our big concern is to par down the size of the report to make it more readable. We need an Introduction that includes a description of the University, its history and programs. This will serve as a brief outline so that everyone on the visiting committee can look at the Introduction and get an overview. Those who need more detail can find that in the specific chapters. Some things such as methodology, which is included in most reports, may be moved to an appendix so the major report flows smoothly. Prior to the first week in July, C. Currens plans to send each chair an edited version of his/her report so the changes can be reviewed. These will also have any questions raised by reading the reports. Reports need to be simple enough that everyone who reads them (whether internally or as external reviewers) can understand what is being said.

L. Nora suggested a grid with all criteria on one axis and all recommendations/suggestions on the other axis. This would allow a visual picture of how many groups made particular recommendations/suggestions. C. Currens said this would be possible, but that a number of suggestions are not closely tied to the Criteria. He is trying to find a way to link them.

SCHEDULE:

J. Picoro asked that everyone e-mail C. Vaughn with a list of times they would be gone this summer. That way we can determine when to schedule meetings. We have a lot of work to do between now and August when we have to submit a draft of the completed report to the President. L. Nora asked what specific tasks we have to complete. J. Picoro said that we have to finalize the report and turn in the supporting documents. C. Currens will edit the report for format and to reduce the size where some narrative is duplicated and where recommendations/suggestions are made by more than one committee. Edited reports will be sent back to chairs for their review.

J. Picoro asked if anyone knew of additional rooms that we could use for meetings. D. Kalika said that the Graduate School conference room would accommodate our group and that we were welcome to use it if it was not previously scheduled.

J. Picoro will keep the group informed about his meeting with D. Crump. We know D. Crump is concerned about distance learning and which locations they will visit. He will discuss that with the Executive Committee during his visit to campus.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

C. Vaughn, Recorder