

MINUTES: University Self-Study Steering Committee

DATE: August 16, 2000
10:00 am-12:00 noon
104 Gillis Building

PRESENT: T. Birdwhistell, C. Havice, Co-Chairs, (presiding), D. Boyd, D. Harley,
J. Hougland, D. Kalika, T. Lester, R. Mitchell, J. Picoro, D. Watt,
L. Williamson, C. Vaughn

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

MINUTES:

The Minutes of June 22, 2000 were approved as distributed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Committee Changes:

T. Birdwhistell announced that J. Picoro has agreed to serve as the new Director of the Self-Study. He replaces J. Schach who left the University to take a position at Clemson. C. Havice has agreed to move into the vacant Co-Chair position on the Steering Committee. T. Birdwhistell thanked both J. Picoro and C. Havice for their willingness to take on this additional responsibility. The Steering Committee agreed unanimously.

September 7 Kick-Off Event:

J. Picoro informed the group that the kick-off event previously scheduled for September 7 has been cancelled. We may plan an event for October. This event would be aimed primarily at our committee members but would also be open to any faculty who wished to attend.

September 5th Dean's Meeting:

J. Picoro has been invited to attend the President's annual meeting with the Deans and provide a progress report on the Self-Study. This will take place on September 5.

Update on Site Visit:

J. Picoro announced that the dates for our site visit have been set. The visiting committee will be on campus April 15-18, 2002. The visitors will be housed at the Radisson Hotel. Arrangements for this are being finalized. We will be using the Helen King Alumni House for the visitors' working area on campus. The location for the reception and dinner on the first evening of the visit has not been decided. During the last visit, the dinner was held at Spindletop. We are considering using Spindletop for the dinner in 2002.

New Subcommittee:

J. Piccoro announced that a subcommittee has been formed to develop writing guidelines for committee reports. C. Havice, D. Boyd, and J. Cabaniss will serve on this group. J. Cabaniss works in Computing Services. C. Havice has agreed to chair this effort.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Public Service – R. Mitchell

The Committee last met to finalize survey questions. R. Mitchell has also met with several people who have expertise in the area of public service.

Educational Programs – C. Havice

The Undergraduate Education Program Committee has been meeting over the summer and conducting interviews with resource people around campus. The Graduate Education Committee has met once. They were able to develop questions for the survey. Distance Learning has not yet met. B. Berdine has agreed to chair this group. B. Pfeifle, the new Director of Distance Education, has joined the group as an Ex Officio member. C. Havice met with the Professional Education group early in June. This group generated questions for the survey. The Faculty Committee also submitted survey questions and has been meeting over the summer.

Institutional Purpose – D. Boyd

The group will meet at the end of this month. They have been reviewing individual college mission statements to determine if these comply with the University's mission statement. The College of Agriculture has rewritten its mission statement in response to this review.

Principles & Philosophy of Accreditation – L. Williamson

The committee met in late June and identified information they would need to collect/review with regard to their must statements. Following this, L. Williamson met with Dr. Juanita Fleming to find out where needed documentation could be found. Dr. Fleming provided the group with the information.

Institutional Effectiveness – D. Kalika

The committee last met in May to finalize their survey questions. They will meet tomorrow. The committee has broken down into four focus groups and will be discussing plans of action for these four groups.

Research – D. Watt

This group has met once during the summer. A draft of the research report is complete. It is 20-25 pages in length.

Administration – T. Lester

T. Lester and R. Sandidge (Chair of the Fiscal and Physical Resources Subcommittee) met with the entire committee. The group discussed holding forums/focus groups.

J. Picoro asked each committee Chair to prepare and submit a written progress report. This should be one-half to one page in length and should be completed by the next Steering Committee meeting. J. Picoro also reminded the group that one of the SACS requirements is that each committee must have official Minutes of their meetings. A copy of these should be submitted to Connie Vaughn in the Self-Study Office.

When committees plan to interview groups or individuals, it may be helpful to prepare a list of questions/topics to be covered and forward these to the person(s) to be interviewed ahead of time. One of our subcommittee chairs reports great success by doing this. Meetings progressed quicker and were more productive.

SURVEY UPDATE: T. Birdwhistell, D. Harley, J. Hougland

The Survey Subcommittee, T. Birdwhistell, J. Hougland, and D. Harley met July 20. J. Picoro and C. Vaughn attended. At this meeting, the group briefly reviewed survey questions that had been submitted. J. Hougland volunteered to develop a draft of the staff survey. D. Harley volunteered to develop a draft of the faculty survey. Surveys for students will be conducted by telephone and can be developed later. These cannot be conducted until after the students return

J. Hougland stated that committees have generated some very good questions and thanked them for taking the process of developing questions seriously. One potential problem with both the faculty and staff surveys is their length. J. Hougland began the staff survey with questions submitted by the Staff Subcommittee. He then added additional questions submitted by other committees that were relevant to staff. D. Harley has a large number of questions for the faculty survey. She is grouping these and hopes to complete a draft by Monday, 8/21.

T. Birdwhistell expressed the Steering Committee's appreciation for the work that J. Hougland and D. Harley are doing developing these surveys.

GOALS: C. Havice

C. Havice distributed a reworked version of the Self-Study goals. She reviewed these for the Steering Committee. A motion was made and seconded to approve the goals without further discussion. The motion passed unanimously. [A copy of these goals is available outside this document; click on "Goals" listed on Minutes menu.]

FORUMS: C. Havice

The goal of the Steering Committee is to coordinate forums/focus groups that individual committees schedule. Suggestion was made that the forums be conducted on an individual college basis. Volunteers from each committee would be asked to attend. The sessions should be taped so that follow up can be done on issues/questions/etc that are raised. Facilitators are available through the Office of Performance Improvement in the

Medical Center. After discussion, the group decided that there was no reason that forums or focus groups could not be scheduled prior to the time that the survey goes out to the University community. Individual committees will begin to schedule these. Committee chairs will decide if they want to use a facilitator. Individual groups will need to develop a set of general questions/topics they want to cover in these meetings.

STUDENT MEMBERS: C. Havice

C. Havice has spoken with Edwin Orange, Student Government Association and provided him with a list of committees that need student representation. The SGA will attempt to find student members. In the meantime, if you know a student who would be interested in serving, feel free to invite that student to become a member of your committee. It is acceptable to have more than one student member per committee.

SELF STUDY PLAN: J. Picoro

J. Picoro discussed the Self-Study Plan with the group. At this time, we do not have a finished Plan. We have completed parts of the Plan, but must complete and submit the Plan to SACS soon. A handout listing individual parts of the Plan was distributed. This was taken from the "Handbook of the Institutional Self-Study". J. Picoro reviewed the parts of the Plan and identified those which the group still has to complete.

Following completion of the Self-Study Plan, the Steering Committee must develop a Self-Study Manual. This will be a working document of operating procedures for the self-study. J. Picoro stressed the importance of everyone being involved in putting both these documents together.

WEB SITE UPDATE: J. Picoro, C. Havice

J. Picoro spoke with David Carter at SACS regarding what should be available electronically via our web page. Dr. Carter said that they would prefer that everything possible be available for review electronically.

C. Havice discussed the web page. Randy Gonzalez in Student Affairs designed the basic page. The Steering Committee expressed thanks for Randy's willingness to donate his personal time to work on this project. C. Havice distributed and reviewed handouts that illustrate the page, as it currently exists on the web. There is a main/cover page with buttons that can be clicked to go to Committees, Links to Other Documents, Criteria, Goals, etc. Each of these connects to one or more pages providing information about that topic. Everywhere that is currently black can have text inserted. The procedure for submitting documents has not been finalized. These need to be submitted electronically whenever possible.

EDITOR: J. Picoro

J. Picoro reported that the Executive Committee met with Loys Mather, Director of the 1990-92 Self-Study. One matter discussed was an editor for the report. The Steering Committee has talked about this in the past. We can hire an editor for the report. J. Picoro asked for input from the group.

C. Havice stated that K. Carey, editor of the last report, was also employed full time as staff in the Self-Study Office. J. Hougland stated that K. Carey had multiple roles in the last self-study. They did find it useful to have an editor because reports from committees arrived looking different. These need to be worked with so that the format is consistent and easy to read/understand. A person with some training in this area would be able to do the necessary editing more easily. If we do hire an editor, this person should serve only as the editor and nothing more. D. Boyd suggested that we use a manuscript editor and that this be someone who is not close to the University or the Self-Study. This individual should look at the report the same way the visitors will in 2002.

A set of writing guidelines developed by Prairie View A& M University was available for Steering Committee members to review.

SCHEDULING FUTURE MEETINGS: J. Picoro

After reviewing individual schedules, the Steering Committee will meet every two weeks, Tuesday afternoon from 2:30-4:30. The next meeting will be August 29. Additional meetings will be Sept. 12, Sept. 26, Oct. 10, Oct. 24, etc. Meeting locations will be announced.

ADJOURNMENT: T. Birdwhistell

The meeting adjourned at 11:20.

Connie Vaughn, Recorder