

MINUTES: University Self Study Steering Committee

DATE: March 24, 2000
1:00-3:00 pm
Old Board Room, Administration Building

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

T. Birdwhistell called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of Feb. 2, Feb. 25, and March 10 were reviewed. J. Hougland had previously forwarded comments regarding the March 10 Minutes. A motion was made and seconded and the Minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dr. David Carter, our SACS liaison, will make a preliminary visit to campus April 3 and 4, 2000. The Steering Committee will meet with Dr. Carter on April 4 from 8-10 am in room 231 of the Student Center.

In preparation for his visit, Dr. Carter has asked that the University submit dates when they would like the actual committee visit to take place in 2002. Dr. Carter had previously suggested April as a good general time for the visit to occur. During discussion, Committee members noted that the Foreign Language Conference takes place during April. The Keeneland spring racing meet could also make it difficult to book rooms unless that is done far in advance. Following discussion, the Committee recommends that the committee visit take place either the week of April 14 or April 21, 2002.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

J. Picoro called for committee reports from those groups which had met.

C. Havice's Educational Programs Committee had their initial meeting Wednesday, March 22 from 2:00-3:00 pm. She has also set up a listserv and will post all Minutes and correspondence to this site. During this meeting, question was raised about how to determine which programs would fall within the purview of the Professional Programs Subcommittee. For the last self-study, any programs which admitted students through the Graduate School were considered graduate programs. Committee members asked about ways to minimize overlap between groups. Not all overlap can be avoided. It was also noted that different groups may look at the same issue from different perspectives. During the last self-study, where questions of overlap and duplication of effort were

brought up, some issues were referred to the Executive Committee and handled on an individual basis. The best action is for groups to keep in touch about those areas where they think there may be duplication of effort.

D. Boyd's Institutional Purpose Committee had their initial meeting Wednesday, March 15 from 10:00-11:00 am. Two additional meetings of this Committee are scheduled prior to the end of this semester. During this meeting, Committee members inquired whether LCC will be included in the SACS self-study and if we should have representatives from LCC on our various committees. Members of the Steering Committee stated that LCC goes through a separate accreditation process and will not be reviewed during the SACS self-study. However, since LCC is part of the University of Kentucky, we should include representatives from LCC on our various committees if they choose to take part. D. Boyd also reported that both the undergraduate and graduate *Bulletin* are being updated to include the University's Mission statement.

M. Molinaro's Education Support Services Committee held its initial meeting Wednesday, March 8 from 11:00-12:00.

Dr. David Watt's Research Committee will hold its initial meeting the week of April 27.

ASSESSMENT:

Medical Center:

Dr. Terry Turner, Director of Institutional Research and Decision Support, spoke with the Steering Committee regarding the status of assessment efforts at the Medical Center. These efforts go beyond just those things required by SACS. The Medical Center has identified six critical success factors. Associated with each are measures and performance factors which will be monitored on a regular basis. The feeling across programs at the Medical Center is that this approach is current and effective for looking at outcomes and how well you achieve them. This effort is going into Colleges. Each has taken the six critical factors and interpreted them at their College level.

Apart from this, there are additional efforts in place. The SACS requirements fit well with the professional programs offered by the Medical Center. Accreditation requirements for these are significant. Since each of these programs goes through individual accreditation, they are already conducting self-examination. However, the Medical Center has also put together a group to address assessment needs specifically for SACS. The Medical Center Committee for Institutional Effectiveness began meeting last year. The group, originally comprised of academic deans, has now expanded to include people from RGS and Information Technology. The group has established a series of dates/deadlines for submission of assessment plans. The first deadline date is June 15th of this year. By that date, every unit within the Medical Center is to submit an assessment plan which includes objectives and measures. Other dates extend to the end of the calendar year. Each unit is required to complete a full cycle including results and what has been done because of these outcomes.

Many people thought this was going to be easy to do because of existing accreditation reports, unit plans, etc. but now understand it is not going to be an easy task. The Medical Center is not as far ahead in this effort as thought. It is particularly hard to define plans for support units outside the academic area. There is a lot of variation in how these units should be defined. If an area is defined as a unit, it must come up with objectives, measurements, follow-up measures, etc. To facilitate this, T. Turner has been conducting workshops on an individual basis for units who request help in coming up with assessment plans. In a recent workshop for one such unit, they were very close to completing an assessment plan by the day's end. Some units want to develop plans on their own.

Chancellor Holsinger is very aware of the need for assessment plans and is a strong supporter of this effort. By the time of the SACS visit, the Medical Center hopes to have two cycles in place.

One member of the Steering Committee asked if the Lexington campus should duplicate those efforts taking place at the Medical Center. T. Turner said that the Lexington campus is a different environment. At the Medical Center, his office is responsible for seeing that plans are developed and implemented.

Committee members asked if ending the first cycle in December of this year would give units sufficient time to develop assessment plans. T. Turner said that his committee had determined that this would be sufficient. Measures are to be finished by the end of summer. When asked if next year's schedule will be based on a calendar or fiscal year, T. Turner said that has not yet been determined.

A Steering Committee member asked if Dr. Turner's office would review measures as units develop them. T. Turner replied that his committee is the group formally charged with reviewing plans. His office will be seeing all reports and meeting with people as needed.

Committee members asked how this data can be accessed. J. Piccoro asked that all requests for information from either T. Turner or C. Ray be directed through the Self Study office.

Lexington Campus:

Dr. Connie Ray, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, from the Office of Institutional Planning, Budgeting and Effectiveness spoke with the Steering Committee about assessment efforts on the Lexington campus. In response to questions from the Steering Committee, D. Ray responded that the entire University is supposed to be conducting assessment as required by the Administrative Regulations. Units should have been completing Forms 1, 2, and 3. As each unit came up for their next periodic review, the plan was that the unit would get a student learning and achievement plan in place and begin to implement it. The assumption was that this was being done. In 1996, we responded to the Council's Performance Model. This included response to indicators of educational outcomes which defined learning outcomes, determined how they would be

assessed, results gathered and used. This was required for every baccalaureate program. Our report indicated that for both Lexington campus and the Medical Center, 89% of our programs were in compliance.

Following the change in the Office of Assessment and Institutional Data, the decision was made to bring Dr. James Nichols to campus. We asked him to do both a workshop and an evaluation of where the University is in meeting assessment criteria. His assessment is that we are not in good shape. We had made plans but had not systematically implemented them. For those units which had developed plans, it was hard to review them and document whether they were being used. Dr. Nichols originally visited in July of 1999 and then made a campus wide presentation in September.

Due to Nichol's recommendations, we developed an Institutional Research and Effectiveness Improvement Plan. The purpose of this plan is to put into place more structured annual review processes which are part of the Administrative Regulations. Annual reviews occur systematically at the administrative and vice presidential level. How systematically this occurs at lower levels depends on department administrators. It has been happening, but has not been done in the way it should. Units need to have an annual report and administrators need to ensure these get done. This was not being done on the Lexington campus. The recommendation was to move this function away from the Registrar's Office and have it report to S. Raines as Vice Chancellor for Academic Services. Until a full-time Director can be named, P. Kraemer will serve as interim Director. P. Kraemer also chairs the Lexington campus Assessment Committee. At this committee's first meeting with faculty and administrators, a lot of resistance to the idea of assessment plans was reported. People did not understand what was being asked of them or why. The Assessment Committee's charge is to review objectives, measures, and criteria that various units set up to make sure it is in line with what SACS requires as part of institutional effectiveness criteria. The committee structure is in place at a lot of institutions.

We have developed an on-line reporting system that will be ready for use by the end of this month. The College of Arts and Sciences is currently in good shape for reporting purposes but they have a full time staff person to take care of this. Some colleges give this function to their associate deans. Other colleges have made no contact regarding the requirement to develop assessment plans. Institutional Effectiveness has some money available to support plan development but has not had many inquiries about this. The money is to support the actual conduct of an assessment.

One Steering Committee member asked why there has been so little activity between Nichol's visit and now. C. Ray responded that she thinks part of the reason for this is that units have no full time person designated to organize this effort. She has been to several meetings talking about this and telling people what they should be doing. If units are doing a periodic review, they can look at that data to be sure they are doing the things they need. Department Chairs are asked to take on many tasks when they assume the position. They often don't have the training needed to conduct assessment and there are usually more immediate things which must be done.

A Steering Committee member observed that faculty members often do not know this process should be occurring and asked if that is cause for concern. C. Ray responded that this is cause for concern. The announcement of the Nichol's workshop was distributed to all colleges, deans, and associate deans. How widespread knowledge is in each department depends on who attended the workshop and what information they took back. There seems to be an effort in some colleges/departments to protect faculty from this additional requirement. We don't need to protect faculty. They must be involved in the assessment process. When the SACS visiting team comes, they will talk to faculty members at random and will ask them to discuss their department's assessment plan. There is an assessment workshop scheduled for April 19 in room 230 of the Student Center. Deans need to designate someone to attend this workshop and tell these individuals that they must attend.

Committee members asked what would be covered in the April 19 workshop. C. Ray said that there will be sessions on the undergraduate program, graduate program, research and public service.

APRIL 7 MEETING:

The survey will be the topic of the next regularly scheduled Steering Committee meeting. T. Birdwhistell will speak with individuals about working with this group. R. Langley, Director of the Survey Research Center will meet with the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Connie Vaughn, Recorder