

MINUTES
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE MEETING
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
ADAMS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Monday, November 9, 2009, 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Holly Adams, Sohail Agboatwala, Kang Bai, Brenda Campbell, John Dew, Candice Howard-Shaughnessy, Tish Matuszek (vTel), Jack Miller (phone), Tracy Newvine, and Dan Tennimon (vTel)

Members Absent: Larry Blocher, Meryem Boulale, Bill Grantham (with notice), Mary Ann Hooten (with notice), Kim Jones (with notice), Judy McCarley (with notice), Lance Tatum (with notice), and Lisa Vardaman

Others present: Wendy Broyles, Somer Givens, and Edith Smith

Handouts: IEC Meeting Agenda, Changes & Alterations for IEC Review, Assessing HOMER Materials using the ADLI model

Meeting Report: The meeting, held in the Executive Conference Room in Adams Administration Building, was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Status on Approvals:

Dr. John Dew passed around the handout of Changes & Alterations for IEC Review, briefly discussing each item listed on that handout. He reminded the committee that he has been given the power to approve minor changes to keep the committee from completing paperwork for such minor changes during regular committee meetings. No major items have come along for committee review. These recent approvals were reviewed and approved by the committee.

2. Proposed revisions for IRPE Handbook:

Dr. Dew shared a draft copy of the IR handbook with the committee. Current revisions are heavily reflective of feedback from the SACS review, though regular information and general statements are still included. Information now in the draft handbook includes information about planning cycles, strategic planning back to 2000, and a more in-depth section on change management. This information about change management is critically important for the things IEC does, with specific information about cohorts, inactive programs, ACHE and SACS requirements, internal routing slips and processes, etc. Another section of the handbook, which is currently in Latin, will address the role of the IEC. Also, the section about HOME is not complete. Wendy will email this PDF draft of the handbook to committee members for comments, which we hope to have back by Thanksgiving for further revision. At our December 14 meeting, we will have a more official review of this document, and we will have feedback from SACS by then.

3. Adding new members to IEC in 2010:

Dr. Dew suggested to the committee that Dr. Deb Gearhart be asked to join IEC, bringing her eCampus perspective with her. The committee was pleased to approve this addition. Dr. Dew hopes to add new academic administrators with HOMER assessment specialties to the committee in the New Year, but plans to keep the current faculty perspectives.

4. Teaching courses at eCampus Support Centers:

The committee had some discussion about eCampus support centers within Global Campus, or A-Sites. The original definition of an A-Site was a location for counseling and advising eCampus students only. For example, the A-Site in Sri Lanka will only provide support for online students. This discussion of teaching courses at A-Sites has been and will continue to be a very carefully controlled option. Very few courses will be allowed in a face-to-face format, and substantial evidence of need and demand will be required. This may become a vTel model classroom situation, but there must be careful control of which classes are offered (general studies type classes) as well as the total number of classes taken by a student in this way (must be less than 25% of a student's program). If an A-Site begins to offer more than 25%, we must tell SACS with a letter of notification. Clarification was made that the 25% applies to baccalaureate programs, while associate programs would allow 50% or less without a letter of notification to SACS. If a Site begins to offer 50% of a program, a complete Substantive Change Prospectus will be required to SACS.

In January, we will send a letter to SACS telling them exactly which courses are possible to be taught at an A-Site. By no means will 25% or more of a program be offered at these sites. The question of assessment activities was raised, for the Institutional Effectiveness side; online delivery ... Expand or contract based on rules... Sohail asked for greater clarification on the definition of an A-Site; it is an office and maybe a classroom with vTel hookup. For the last six months, we have been in consolidation mode. Now, we are retooling to comply with new rules, especially in our overseas locations, but some things may become more flexible. A-Site teaching also depends on the laws of the state in which the A-Site is located; site directors must be mindful of what their state allows. Also, evidence of need and demand must be worthwhile to invest in the technology required. Overseas sites will have absolutely no face-to-face classes unless stringent argument proves otherwise.

Three perspectives were gathered to approve and limit which actual courses will be offered: the market perspective with the involvement of site directors, the administrative perspective (Dr. Fulmer), and the institutional effectiveness perspective (Dr. Dew). A formal document of agreement has been drawn up. It will be Dr. Fulmer's decision to send this formal document for approval of the undergraduate council. This does not apply to graduate courses at all. Once courses are approved, no specific rotation will be set; because we are talking about 25% of any individual student's degree program, the same courses could be offered each term. This decision will rest with the site director, who will also have financial concerns to consider in making this decision. Even by taking every course offered face-to-face at an A-Site, Somer said, no one student will reach 25% of his or her degree program in this format. Developmental (remedial) courses will also be offered but will not count towards that 25%.

Dr. Smith suggested that hybrid courses may be a good transition into eCampus for students rather than taking so many face-to-face courses. Somer said that many region sites that do teach use many web-enhanced courses. The difference between hybrid and web-enhanced was discussed. Dr. Dew clarified that a web-enhanced course has Blackboard supplements, while a hybrid course meets less face-to-face due to more online work. Also, the level of certification is different, Dr. Smith said; Blackboard certification is necessary for an instructor to teach web-enhanced, while more intensive online certification is required to teach a hybrid course. Tracy Newvine added that hybrids are more difficult to get approved; Dr. Dew said that may have been due to SACS and may change, though there is institutional effectiveness concern when opening hybrids that courses should be roughly equivalent whether face-to-face or hybrid. We may have to do more work to prove equivalency on a yearly basis; we will see what SACS has to say before changing any such current practices. Dr. Smith added that the deans are concerned that face-to-face courses opening as hybrid courses are really just face-to-face courses meeting half the time.

5. Reviewing HOMER information for CHHS, CCFA, eCampus, and Student Services:

Dr. Dew reminded committee members that we will continue reviewing college by college as previously decided, though we have changed from using Dashboard to review these units. Now we will use HOMER. Some brief discussion about having a consensus for methodology took place. The committee decided to review what has been presented by each unit in their submitted HOMER file.

Dr. Dew passed out a handout on the ADLI model. Wendy will also email this document to committee members. Dr. Dew reviewed the handout with the committee. The ADLI model includes very specific questions for reviewing these areas.

Members with faculty background are to review colleges, while members with administrative background are to review eCampus and Student Services; members should not review their own organization. Dr. Dew also had a sign up sheet for committee members to volunteer to review one of the designated colleges or units.

The question was raised how to find everything to review eCampus. Student learning outcomes are by colleges. The committee decided to look at eCampus as administrative support, not as an academic unit. In this first use of HOMER to assess colleges and units, we may say we really cannot tell from only one year or clearly there is some organizational learning going on but the new approach has not been fully deployed. HOMER is more geared towards assessment of programs, and we are looking at assessment of the assessment. Looking at HOMER files, though, no evidence of assessment will be evidence of a big gap that needs attention. These files need more eyes going over them than just IRPE and the college or unit that creates the files. Dashboard did not move us far enough fast enough, so we have high hopes for HOMER.

We know that HOMER will have to be revised for the future, but we want to hear what SACS says about standardizing or completely revamping the concept. So we will hold off on reviewing these colleges and units until after the SACS conference in December; we will look for deadlines in the spring – April or May completion – to give us time after hearing the SACS response to make necessary revisions to the format and information presented in HOMER.

This review process will be explicit in the revised IE Handbook, with provision for a monitoring report and request that the dean respond within six months on what changes have actually been made. Somer suggested a mechanism be developed for follow-through such as some type of repercussion for not responding to IEC review. We will recapture the thought of a revolving cycle.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:55 p.m. The next meeting is set for December 14, 2009.