

MINUTES
Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)
Executive Conference Room
Adams Administration Building, Troy Campus
Monday, October 11, 2010, 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Holly Adams (phone), Sohail Agboatwala, Kang Bai, Larry Blocher, Brenda Campbell, John Dew, Deb Gearhart, Roy Hudson, Christina Martin, Judy McCarley, Tracy Newvine, Edith Smith, Lance Tatum, Dan Tennimon, and Brian Webb

Members Absent: Bill Belcher, Bill Grantham, Mary Ann Hooten, Candice Howard-Shaughnessy (absent with notice), Kim Brinkley-Jones, (absent with notice), Tish Matuszek (absent with notice), and Jack Miller (absent due to telephone technical difficulties)

Others present: Wendy Broyles and Somer Givens

Handouts: IEC Meeting Agenda, SACS 5-Year Report Problem Areas example summary, HOMER 2011 diagram, Changes & Alterations for IEC Review, and Writing/Editing Student Learning Outcomes presentation by Dr. Bai

Meeting Report:

1. **Call to order and approval of minutes** – The meeting, held in the Executive Conference Room in Adams Administration Building, was called to order at 2:00 p.m. The minutes from the August 23, 2010, meeting were approved.

2. **Update on SACS issues** – The Level Change visiting team were pleased by the DNP. The team found one issue with teaching load related to conducting research. The chair, Dr. Neal Armstrong from the University of Texas Austin, wanted to see a clear connection between faculty credentials and learning outcomes in courses taught. Previously we have considered program level outcomes to include Student Learning Outcomes; SACS-COC is now driving SLOs down to the course level. ABET methodology has been embraced at UT Austin due to a lack of clarity from SACS-COC.

Dan Tennimon picked up useful information about SACS-COC Five-Year Reports at the recent SAIR Conference in New Orleans in a presentation from SACS. Dan provided a handout of areas most cited of the criteria used in reviewing five-year reports. 58% of schools were cited on institutional effectiveness. 48% were cited on the new federal requirement for student complaints. 45% were cited on inadequate fulltime faculty. 34% were cited on qualified academic coordinator. 28% were cited on program length being comparable on site and online. Of 30 schools reporting QEP, 87% were cited. We are two or three years from our five year report, and we now understand we must include follow up on issues from our monitoring report; failure to adhere to the monitoring report may be cited as an issue of integrity.

While institutional effectiveness for academic programs will remain top priority, IRPE and IT will research student complaints to present to ASC. One student complaint from Vietnam was noted in our 2009 compliance report, and though we responded on that issue, use of technology was included in our recommendations for the monitoring report. Also when we called for syllabi to include in our

monitoring report we found there are courses in the catalog not being offered, so some clean up on that issue will take place in the near future.

Dr. Dew presented a handout on HOMER revision in the future. No decision will be made until January, but we speculate we will have one of two pathways. If we persist in our monitoring period, additional data will need to be included in HOMER by May, and a second monitoring report will be due in September. SACS-COC should accept our institutional effectiveness section, which make up half of the recommendations. We may have problems in 3.3.7 because of teaching locations dominated by adjuncts. Hopefully we will have good news from SACS and can prepare for 2014. In this case we will expand reporting as this handout indicates. We may have an option whether to keep HOMER or purchase another system, but budget cuts will likely dictate keeping HOMER. Some program level student learning outcomes are weak; we may look into adding syllabi and course level info to HOMER, as well as rubrics and assessment techniques. We must be able to connect assessment to student learning outcomes and to faculty credentials; digital measures may benefit these elaborate connections. Dr. Tatum noted he understands Digital Measures is in the final stages with details being worked out. Dr. Tatum also asked how the current AOP for faculty credentials will fold in to all of these connections. Dr. Smith clarified that we certify faculty by course; some clean up may be required to match student learning outcomes to credentials. Dr. Tatum added that coursework won't always match a new degree area; Dr. Smith agreed and added we can justify credentials based on exception; we should have the information needed even if it is not in a usable form. Dr. Dew said we can use the DNP as a model. Dr. Bai said he understands Auburn uses access to collect information and run reports. Dr. Dew said Word may be easier to use and format than PowerPoint, or we may choose to use some other program to create HOMER reports without much difficulty. Dr. Dew expects files will become lengthy but will show depth and must be kept up to date. Our five-year report must show evidence of every year. Dr. Tatum admitted HOMER is very labor intensive, and we should keep it in its current state or make it simpler to use. LiveText in the College of Education is not always easy to use but is a wonderful system for gathering information. Dr. Smith suggested we have used Trojan Web Express for attendance rosters to collect info, and perhaps we could use that feature for benchmarking assessments for student learning outcomes. Dr. Tatum said that may not work as we use a diverse set of assessments system-wide. Dr. Smith agreed but said interpretation would come after the report is run. Different programs use different methodologies, but all must be measurable. For example, in the College of Business' use of the major field test, data collection is the hard part, and once the data is collected, the report is fill-in-the-blank. Dr. Smith said she isn't familiar with the report side of Web Express, but we could involve Connie Tisdale and Greg Price. Dr. Tatum added that faculty must still discuss data; data analysis of our DNP faculty was praised by the on-site review team. Best case scenario will be that we have until November to revise and update HOMER.

Somer Givens added that the issue of student complaints was the second largest issue on the five-year report handout. Institutions were cited due to a lack of sufficient information; we must provide examples of both online and on site students. The nursing program should be in good shape, but the rest of the University may not be. Other new federal requirements are being added, but this may be our biggest issue this year.

3. Alabama Quality Award visit details – Dr. Dew said IEC's three year review process impressed the AQA examiners. We hope to receive recognition on silver level, but we expect about 50 Opportunities for Improvement (or OFIs), in the areas such as ethics, values, and workforce. Dr. Dew will form a team to analyze our data from the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Colleges to Work For" survey; this team also hopes to benchmark Eastern Kentucky, and we expect that institution to be willing to help us because we helped them when they wanted to benchmark eCampus. Suggested team members include Dean Herb Reeves, Dr. Toni Taylor, Ms. Donna Schubert, a faculty senate member, and a representative

from eCampus. We expect to receive the AQA examiners' report soon, and then there will be a vote in November; our review team will not have the opportunity to vote. Any recommended Opportunities for Improvement will come to IEC for review, and we will focus on key areas here. The timing of our application for gold level recognition will be based on our SACS review; we may wait until 2015 – and will still fit the parameters for the Strategic Plan – or we might be okay to apply in 2013. Our SACS five-year report will take six or seven months to write.

4. Status on approvals – Dr. Dew passed around a handout indicating one change that has come to him for review. This one change was related to the Health Education major in both College of Education and the College of Health and Human Services; this Health Education major replaces the Health and Physical Education Comprehensive major no longer certified by the Alabama State Department of Education. Dr. Dew approved the change because no changes were made in terms of assessment of the previous program. Dr. Smith said she knows of two changes that are coming to IEC. Catalog changes should come through the committee between December and February. Dr. Dew reminded the group he was entrusted with authority to review and approve minor changes for the committee to speed up getting those changes through Graduate or Undergraduate Council. The committee will be asked to review any changes that affect a program.

5. Student Learning Outcomes presentation by Dr. Bai – The committee reviewed handouts of Dr. Bai's PowerPoint presentation, which had been distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Dr. Bai admitted some areas still need work, and he has prepared a review form for each academic dean for that college. Some student learning outcomes in HOMER are not specific or clear enough. There are limited student learning outcomes in some programs. It is important to have a systematic writing process for student learning outcomes. Dr. Bai said many schools use Bloom's taxonomy, and he proceeded to describe the taxonomy to some detail. Dr. Bai's presentation provides clear guidelines for student learning outcome assessment. Schools use Bloom's taxonomy because of its focus on student skills and precise language, including a complete set of action verbs that are observable and measurable. Dr. Bai provides example verbs in his presentation. Dr. Bai recommends we use multiple assessment measures – not just one – as HOMER needs more valid data. Dr. Bai asked for the committee's response.

Dr. Dew suggested program level student learning outcomes need attention. Too often programs rely on grades without a rubric to interpret those grades. We need a framework to embrace. Dr. Smith added that HOMER examples need clarity; some student learning outcomes may actually be four different student learning outcomes lumped together. The trend leans toward more complex student learning outcomes – which are not necessary or clear – or we keep it overly simple; simple student learning outcomes can be difficult but are more beneficial. One good student learning outcome that can be measured is best; fewer assessments are more reliable, and simpler student learning outcomes are easier to interpret. Dr. Tatum said we have assumed faculty understand what goals to reach, but they often don't know the goal; the College of Education has seen overwhelming work done among the counseling faculty. Dr. Smith said this is a great topic for faculty senate; unity is impossible with multiple levels of freedom, but we could apply a forced structure to frame freedom. Dr. Gearhart spoke on the Quality Assurance process for eCampus courses, in which there are eight general standards for alignment, and student learning outcomes must be measurable and matched to assessments. The eCampus QA model could be used across the University. Dr. Tatum added that faculty members don't see all the connections; we went through forced alignment with the creation of One Great University, but now we have the opportunity to start with an assessment coordinator and sit down with faculty course by course. Program goals don't always agree across locations. Dr. Dew suggested student learning outcome connections to a major field test – one standardized exam at all locations, but Dr. Tatum said there are not major field tests for all disciplines. The CPCE for Counseling's standards align to core courses. Dr. Smith said

chaos typically happens in programs having no standardized test and no specialized accreditation. Dr. Tatum pointed out that great plans on paper often don't work in real time. Somer Givens said IRPE will work with faculty senate and then with the colleges, course by course, at the faculty level. Dr. Dew suggested we look broadly to target problem areas, and develop a campaign to make progress; we should not tell everyone to change everything, due to tightening budgets and higher demands. Dr. Tatum agreed the key is prioritizing demands on faculty. Dr. Tatum also pointed out that getting all full time faculty together is almost impossible, as the counseling faculty retreat still didn't help every member of that faculty group; training a shepherding core of faculty will better benefit all faculty. Dr. Smith said data collection is still the biggest challenge. Somer suggested we change outcome wording to make them more aligned to assessments or courses. Dr. Dew said SCOB is launching renewed efforts for major field test data collection. Dr. Smith said all programs don't have external benchmarks or major field tests. Dr. Dew said we will develop a plan that can be implemented with our limited resources.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m. The next meeting is set for November 8, 2010.