

MINUTES
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE MEETING
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
ADAMS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Monday, December 14, 2009, 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Holly Adams (phone), Sohail Agboatwala, Kang Bai (vtel), John Dew, Deb Gearhart, Candice Howard-Shaughnessy, Kim Jones, Tish Matuszek (vtel), Judy McCarley, Jack Miller (phone), Tracy Newvine, Edith Smith, Lance Tatum, and Dan Tennimon (vtel)

Members Absent: Larry Blocher (absent with notice), Meryem Boulale, Brenda Campbell (absent with notice), Bill Grantham, Mary Ann Hooten, and Lisa Vardaman

Others present: Emily Brewer, Wendy Broyles, and Somer Givens

Handouts: IEC Meeting Agenda, Changes & Alterations for IEC Review

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

1. Update on SACS reaffirmation:

The good news is we have been granted a ten-year reaffirmation. The bad news is we were barely reaffirmed. We must have enough full-time faculty to provide adequate oversight of academic programs. SACS is not questioning the quality of our adjuncts. Apparently there was a furious debate about our reaffirmation. Dr. Silver won the argument with our plan to hire additional faculty and with heavy reference to section one on integrity in the SACS principles of accreditation. There were people in the room who wanted to sanction us or put us on probation.

They will certainly hit us with a recommendation for 3.7.1, faculty credentials; we will focus on face-to-face teaching locations in Global Campus to fix the problem. There is little concern for numbers of full-time faculty on our Alabama campuses. Hiring full-time faculty will be our top priority. Kim will generate credit hour production reports for several years to create a trend line, and we will use that data to put faculty on the ground where they are most needed. The first step is a surge of converting long-time adjuncts to full-time faculty; the paperwork will go to the Chancellor in early January to transition 25 adjuncts to full-time faculty. The next step will be to fill the eleven vacant positions in Global Campus; we need to expedite hiring those individuals, then perhaps a second surge of converting adjuncts to full-time faculty can take place in Global Campus as well. January 20-21, there will be a planning session for regional directors; decisions will be made from Kim's reports as to whether each site looks good to continue as is, needs additional full-time faculty, or should be converted to an A-site.

The timeline we are working on is tight. We will be reviewed again in December 2010 for our one-year monitoring report. This report will be submitted in September. Hiring new full-time faculty must begin as soon as possible in the spring. We will also need to replace any faculty we lose. The target we have told SACS is 557; we have 525 now. That number plus the 25 in the initial surge and 11 vacant positions means we are looking at 561 soon, but we must anticipate attrition and create a cushion on an arbitrary number. The Chancellor will provide us his target cushion number soon, but none of this has gone to the Academic Steering Committee yet. We will ask Mr. Bookout to report to the Chancellor's Cabinet each meeting about hiring full-time faculty. A letter is being prepared from the Chancellor to solidify some things.

The second area SACS has identified problems for us is consortia oversight. Dr. Silver fought for us on this issue as well; he is leaving SACS, so a group that hates us will review our monitoring report without Dr. Silver there to defend us. We expect consortia oversight will continue to be a major issue, and Dr. Roach has agreed to chair the Consortia Relationship Review Committee beginning in January. The level of management emphasis must change for more adequate, timely progress. We will also continue our Quality Assurance visits overseas.

Not surprisingly, SACS also had comments for us about assessment, 3.3.1. We are headed in the right direction, but we need more. Dr. Dew talked about a SACS research session at the conference. One survey of on-site review teams regarding institutional effectiveness found team members were all over the page in their expectations of assessment. Only about one third of SACS institutions do any serious national assessment on general education like MAPP. Attention to assessment is inversely relational to cost of tuition; one attendee from Vanderbilt was outraged by the comments being made about the necessity of assessment. On-site reviewers don't agree about what to expect: one year of data or three, student surveys or faculty expectations, nationally standardized exams, etc. The moral of the story is that your review and the team's expectations depend entirely on who is on your on-site review team. 3.3.1 is an area SACS needs to work on. This is the area of greatest heartburn, with such a lack of consistency. SACS changing their policy on 3.3.1 won't save us, though, as they will vote in December when we hear the response to our monitoring report. We can expect to provide assessment of every program at every teaching location and of all administrative areas and programs. We have made a good start, but we need more information. We must conduct on-going comparison of online courses versus face-to-face delivery.

Before hearing we were reaffirmed, we were asked "When will the proliferation stop?" All the Substantive Change Prospectuses we have been sending SACS for cohorts and overseas locations have been hurting us. The number of SCP documents we have sent in has created the impression that we are all over the place. Most likely the CNR committee members who hate us the most are from Georgia and Florida where all of our cohorts are popping up around them. We must halt the cohorts off teaching locations and bring them back to the approved teaching locations. There will be no new sites overseas or domestically in 2010, unless we solve the daunting issue of assessment.

We will have a major push for online equivalence assessment. Hybrid courses will have to be discussed openly. Dr. Gearhart noted that hybrid courses may be the best of both worlds. Dr. Tatum replied that we cannot handle the assessment we have now; many highly specialized tasks have to be done, and unapproved hybrids keep popping up; there is no way to know everything that is going on in a college – we need a defined structure. Dr. Smith asked if we are required to send notification to SACS for a course change to hybrid. Not yet, was the response; Emily Brewer noted that SACS is basing new decisions on what they learn from TROY. Dr. Smith said we may need to force a routing slip to document that change, and Dr. Dew replied that this was an issue for the Academic Steering Committee. The group went on to discuss how this SACS reaffirmation will translate into changes in the Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and our use of HOMER. After our 2010 review, we may move more courses online and to new locations, etc., but our priority right now is assessment. This monitoring period will make us stronger and will help us define, track, and control consortia agreements. We need more faculty, and we need more assessment. Dr. Dew also mentioned that the model has changed for five-year reporting to SACS; our next review will be almost like the full review we have just survived.

2. 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.

One major item has come to Dr. Dew for approval: a Proposed Revised Academic Program – P-12 Theatre Education, combining existing theatre program with a second major in P-12 education. The committee discussed this major change and identified a precedent. Dr. Dew questioned why this was “approved with stipulated changes” by the Academic Council; Dr. Tatum replied that two critical assignments for each new course are required for state standards. All recent approvals were reviewed and approved by the committee.

3. Proposed revisions for IE Handbook:

Dr. Dew said the IE Handbook is still in the revision process. We will do one more round of reading and revising, and then the committee will review a final draft in the next meeting on January 11. Any comments for revising the Handbook should be forwarded to IRPE by early January.

4. 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. A sign-up sheet circulated among the members in the meeting; members with faculty background are to review colleges, while members with administrative background are to review eCampus and Student Services. In the January 11 meeting, Dr. Dew will present a rubric for assessing HOMER based on the ADLI model. Then, in January, we will begin assessing HOMER to report in April or May.

5. Other Business:

SACS will be back to review our level change to begin the Doctorate in Nursing Practice. In early January, Dr. Dew will have a meeting about DNP to assure we are ready for this coming review. We expect to stay in perpetual compliance mode for SACS. Our intention is to never stop collecting data. This will also align well with specialized accreditations that are reviewed every eight years with yearly monitoring reports on areas for improvement. SACS will make TROY a stronger institution; we can do this.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m. The next meeting is set for January 11, 2010.