

Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2009

The meeting began at 3:00 p.m. in the Provost's Conference Room in the administration building.

Present: Steve Barney, Bryce Christensen, Randy Christensen, Patrick Clarke, Deb Hill, Jerry Bowler for Prent Klag, Lee Montgomery, Dale Orton and Bonny Rayburn.

Excused: Said Bahi, Mikhail Bouniaev, Jeff Fisher, and David McGuire.

- I. **NWCCU Recommendations Regarding Assessment/Modification of 5-Column Assessment Plan and Report** – Lee handed out copies of the interim evaluation report prepared by Dr. Philip Backlund and Dr. Patricia Miltenberger. He stated that he wanted to bring a couple of items included in the report pertaining to assessment to the committee members attention. The first has to do with student learning outcomes assessment. The visiting team's criticism stemmed from the fact that there seemed to be some confusion between assessing program outcomes and student learning outcomes. To rectify this problem, Lee proposed that a change be made to the five column plan now being used as a template for the departmental assessment plans and reports. On the modified form, a sixth column will be added titled student learning outcomes. Making this change would force department heads to specify which goals relate to the success of the program and which are actually measures of student learning. Copies of the original form and the updated forms were passed out for review. Committee members voted unanimously to adopt the new form. Use of this form will begin with the call for departmental assessment plans in fall semester 2009.

The other concern expressed by the visiting team regarding assessment was that there didn't seem to be a body which was directly responsible for reviewing the assessment efforts of the departments. There needs to be an entity responsible for giving feedback on the assessment plans and reports. Lee proposed that the Institutional Effectiveness Committee would be the logical entity to provide this feedback. Committee members agreed and discussed how this could be done effectively. It was decided that Bonny will e-mail these plans and reports to committee members as they are received. Deb Hill, Steve Barney, Gerald Bowler and Patrick Clark agreed to come up with a rubric to assist in their assessment. Once committee members receive the documents, they will review them and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss their findings. The committee's feedback will then be reported to appropriate department chair along with the provost.

- II. **Participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)** – Lee stated that the schools in the Utah System of Higher Education are looking at participating in this system. This system includes information on student demographics, student engagement, and mastery of student learning outcomes. It is a national system that allows students and parents to see how well participating institutions are performing in these areas. Most of the information is already being collected. The expense involved to participate is said to be minimal in addition to the cost of survey instruments already being used. Committee members suggested that before SUU commits to participating in this system, we check with other institutions who are already participating to determine what the advantages are and how much it actually costs.

III. **MAPP Follow-up Options** – Lee stated, at this point, SUU is collecting information on all incoming freshmen by having them take the MAPP test through the UNIV 1000 courses. It costs approximately \$12 per student and, for the last two years, the number of students taking the test has been over one thousand. With budget cuts, this practice is not going to be sustainable. At this point, the MAPP test is the only instrument SUU has to assess general education so we don't have the option of discontinuing its use. Committee members discussed the two options SUU can use to use the MAPP test to assess general education.

A. **Growth Model** - Would entail surveying a random sampling of incoming freshmen of approximately 150 to 200 students to determine a benchmark. Then, survey an exit sampling. Either juniors or seniors. Approximately 200 students.

B. **Mastery Model** – Would be only given to seniors.

Committee members agreed that the best option would be the mastery model. A discussion followed regarding how we could entice students to participate in the survey. The following options were mentioned:

- A. Food
- B. Cash
- C. Drawing to win prizes
- D. Include survey in capstone courses (too expensive)
- E. Waivers for cap & gowns (too expensive)
- F. University Studies course (not in current catalog)
- G. SUU T-shirts
- H. Bookstore coupons

The freshmen surveys that have already been taken can serve as a benchmark right now. Then, down the road, we could randomly sample another group of incoming freshmen to establish a new baseline. Committee members agreed that the first sampling of seniors should be tested in the spring of the 09/10 academic year. The best time in the spring for the Student Success Center to administer these tests is in February. The committee also agreed that participants should be gathered either from students taking capstone courses or graduating seniors, randomly contacted via e-mail. These students would be invited to participate with incentives being offered: ipods via a raffle, t-shirts and bookstore coupons. Tests could be administered on Saturdays and not any earlier than 10:00 a.m. There should be more than one option available to them for test dates and times.

IV. **Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey Results** – Copies of the summary of survey results were handed out to committee members. About 40% of faculty members chose to participate. Lee highlighted a few specific items that were cause for celebration and also drew attention so some that were cause for concern. It was interesting to see that, given the choice to begin their career again, 49% of SUU's participating faculty members stated that they would definitely still want to come to this institution. A copy of the survey summary is accessible on the SUU Institutional Research website.

<http://www.suu.edu/general/ir/>

V. **Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey Results** – Lee handed out copies of the survey results summary. Again, Lee reviewed the survey results with

committee members. He stated that the results showed that SUU was the first choice of 77% of the students that came to school here and that 35% of the students didn't even apply at any other institutions. This summary is also available on the SUU Institutional Research website. <http://www.suu.edu/general/ir/>

- VI. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be next fall.
- VII. **Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.