

Meeting Notes

Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

February 13, 2012, at 10 am, President's Conf Room, 19th Floor, IIT Tower

Participants: David Baker (External Affairs), Siva Balasubramanian (Stuart School of Business, Committee Chair), Matt Bauer (College of Science & Letters), Russell Betts (College of Science & Letters), Anthony D'Amato (General Counsel's Office), Carol Emmons (Staff Lead, Institutional Research), Mike Gosz (Undergraduate Affairs), John Kallend (Armour College of Engineering), Noreen Kozak (Provost's Office), Anijo Mathew (Institute of Design), Scott Morris (College of Psychology), Sudhakar Nair (Graduate Academic Affairs), George Schipporeit (College of Architecture), Kristin Standaert (Galvin Library), Margaret Stewart (Chicago-Kent), Ophir Trigalo (Office of Technology Services), David Ulaszek (Finance).

1. Meetings

A. Recent Meetings

- *Meeting with Deans' Council:* Siva Balasubramanian reported that he and Carol Emmons made a presentation about the proposed process for selecting a Quality Improvement Initiative to the Dean's Council on January 10, 2012. The Deans expressed no concerns about the process.
- *Meeting with President's Council:* David Baker reported that Siva Balasubramanian, Anthony D'Amato, David Ulaszek and Carol Emmons made a brief presentation about the new accreditation process to the President's Council on January 26, 2012. David Baker explained to the vice presidents that three of the five new accreditation criteria concern non-academic issues (such as the university mission, planning, governance, and ethical conduct) and that the Administrative Criteria Subcommittee (i.e., Anthony D'Amato, David Ulaszek and himself) would be coming to them for information and evidence. He stressed the need to create a culture in which certain types of evidence are routinely documented and stored in a way that staff can access. The vice presidents asked to be given a list of the types of evidence they need to keep track of. David also noted that he has asked them to think about extending the current IIT Strategic Plan (which runs out in 2014) through 2016.
- *Meeting of the Administrative Criteria Subcommittee (Jan 12, 2012):* David Ulaszek reported that the Administrative Criteria subcommittee met on January 12, 2012 to prepare for the January 26 President's Council meeting. This group will begin to meet with the vice presidents and create a process for gathering evidence as soon as the HLC finalizes the criteria.

B. Upcoming Meetings – Siva Balasubramanian

- *University Faculty Meeting:* Siva Balasubramanian is working to get on the agenda of the next Faculty Council meeting on March 27, 2012. The goal is to disseminate information to the University a concise summary of our committee's activities since

September 2011, and to outline our plans regarding the quality initiative and the assurance of learning process.

- *HLC Annual Meeting (March 31- April 3, 2012)*: Siva Balasubramanian also reported that Provost Alan Cramb has agreed to cover the registration fees for three committee members to attend the HLC Annual Meeting. Siva Balasubramanian noted that this annual meeting is the only opportunity provided by HLC/NCA for our committee members to interact with representatives from Pioneer Schools that will pursue the Open Accreditation Process in the coming years (before IIT does). If three members of our committee attend this annual meeting each year, we can collect perspectives and information from Pioneer Schools that will be valuable to our deliberations. This approach will also provide an opportunity for most members of our committee to attend the HLC meeting at least once before 2016. Members interested in attending this meeting should contact Siva Balasubramanian.

2. Student Learning Assessment

A. Learning Objectives from the 2006 accreditation cycle

Kristin Standaert brought photocopies of the materials concerning program and course objectives from the 2006 HLC site visit to the meeting. The scanning of the complete set of materials will be completed by the end of the week. The original documents will remain in the library. Siva Balasubramanian and Kristin Standaert noted that, in order to protect privacy, any information about students/instructor should be deleted from these documents. The file containing appropriate scanned documents will be sent to the person in each academic unit who was named by the Chair or Dean as their contact person for student learning assessment. Committee members who wish to review the documents from 2006 were invited to take the documents with them, or contact Carol Emmons for copies.

B. Adding Program Learning Objectives to the Bulletin

Mike Gosz reported that production of the undergraduate bulletin is underway, and Carole Orze is collecting program descriptions and goals, and course descriptions from the academic units. John Kallend noted that it would be desirable for the online version of the bulletin to contain more detailed information about program and learning outcomes than the printed version. Mike Gosz agreed, and noted that the number of printed copies under production has declined over time, and that the online version is likely to be more useful in future.

C. Technology Update

Ophir Trigalo reported that due to the recent acquisition of SunGard by Datatel, the sales representatives he had spoken to from SunGard were not able to answer his questions about using DegreeWorks or Banner to store course and program goals. Ophir will continue to pursue this.

D. Assessment Practices Survey

Carol Emmons distributed the survey results to date. Ten out of 18 academic units have responded. All but one of the 10 (i.e., Humanities) reported having documented program learning goals for at least some of their programs. However, even some units with specialized accreditation report having documented program learning outcomes for only some of their programs.

John Kallend noted that ABET accredits only undergraduate programs, so there has not been as much pressure on Armour College to document learning outcomes for graduate programs. Siva Balasubramanian noted that AACSB accreditation process includes graduate business programs at the Stuart School of Business. Given the university wide focus of the NCA accreditation, we need an inclusive approach to all programs/academic units.

John Kallend also noted that ABET distinguishes between programs *objectives* (which are post-graduation outcomes like getting a job in engineering) and learning *outcomes*, which are the more immediate results of completing a program of study. He stressed the need to define program objectives and learning outcomes clearly. Objectives have a longer time horizon when compared to learning outcomes. That is, program objectives often require two or more years to assess progress while learning outcomes can be evaluated more immediately, often as soon as a given course is completed. This distinction needs to be preserved in the language IIT uses for student learning assessment.

Carol Emmons will distribute the unit record survey data to committee members and save it on the website. She will also send a reminder to those chairs and deans who have not yet completed the survey. In response to suggestions at the recent Deans' Council meeting, Siva Balasubramanian will work with Deans and respective committee members to follow up on any issue discussed in our committee that requires a coordinated response or action from that College/School.

There was discussion about the role of committee members in the student learning assessment process. The consensus was that committee members need to ensure that there is a process in place for ongoing assessment and improvement of student learning outcomes. Scott Morris said that each academic unit will need to know exactly what it needs to be doing and the types of evidence that it needs to be collecting. Russell Betts volunteered to provide examples of student assessment materials from UIC (where he formerly worked). David Baker noted that the materials from the 2006 site visit, which Kristin Standaert has so generously photocopied and scanned, are intended to serve as the starting point for re-visiting student learning assessment. Committee members felt that it is desirable to establish a subcommittee to review (a) the materials from 2006, (b) the materials from external sources such as UIC, and (c) the feedback from the Assessment Practices Survey to formally establish the criteria/minimum standards and the process to assess and improve learning outcomes. Matt Bauer graciously agreed to serve as head of this Learning Outcomes Assessment sub-committee. Scott Morris also agreed to serve on this sub-committee. Siva Balasubramanian thanked Matt Bauer and Scott Morris for their willingness to undertake this important task.

3. Quality Improvement Initiative

Carol Emmons explained that now that the process for selecting a Quality Improvement Initiative has been approved by the Deans and Vice Presidents, the committee needs to launch this process as soon as possible. She asked the committee for ideas about how to generate interest in the process among students, faculty and staff so as to get people actively thinking about ways to improve IIT and contribute ideas. The following is a list of suggestions made by committee members:

- Limit the request to a single question.
- Put an announcement and link to the website in IIT Today.
- Put reminders on the computer monitors in MTCC, the computers labs and the library.
- Ask the President to talk about the process at the next All Staff Meeting, scheduled for February 29, 2012).
- Ask the President to address it in his next newsletter.
- Look into posting a link on the students' "I wish" website.
- The website used to submit ideas should allow visitors to see all previously-submitted ideas and to vote for these (in the same way that you can "Like" someone else's post on Facebook).
- Keep the IIT community informed at each step of the process by communicating which ideas were chosen for further development and which idea was selected as the winner.

4. Action Items

- A. Committee members who want to register for and attend the HLC Annual Meeting in late March should contact Siva Balasubramanian (sivakbalas@stuart.iit.edu).
- B. Committee members who would like to work on the Student Learning Assessment Subcommittee should contact Matt Bauer (bauerm@iit.edu).
- C. Russell Betts will provide samples of UIC student learning assessment materials to the Student Learning Assessment Subcommittee.
- D. Kristin Standaert will finish having the evidence from the 2006 accreditation site visit scanned and will alert Siva and Carol when it is available for distribution.
- E. Ophir Trigalo will follow up with SunGard about using Banner and Degreeworks for capturing program and course learning goals.
- F. Carol Emmons will send a reminder to the Chairs and Deans who have not yet completed the Survey of Current Assessment Practices at IIT, and will distribute the unit record data collected to date to committee members.
- G. Carol Emmons will contact the Web Services team about creating a website for Quality Improvement Initiative ideas.
- H. Carol Emmons will contact the President's Office about the next All-staff meeting and the next President's newsletter.
- I. Mike Gosz will investigate putting a link to the Quality Improvement Initiative Ideas site on the student "I wish..." website.
- J. Carol Emmons will create a message to students and contact Nima Nemaei about advertising the message on the monitors in MTCC and the computer labs. Kristin Standaert will coordinate the dissemination of the message via computers in the library. As discussed previously, Siva Balasubramanian is exploring ideas for a coordinated campus level marketing campaign with Jeanne Hartig.
- K. Carol Emmons will contact Evan Venie about putting an announcement about collecting ideas for a Quality Improvement Initiative in IIT Today.

5. Next Meeting: Monday, March 12, 2012.