

Meeting Notes

Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 12, 2013, 10:00 am, President's Conference Room, Suite 1900 IIT Tower

Participants: David Baker (*External Affairs*), Siva Balasubramanian (Chair, *Stuart School of Business*), Carol Emmons (*Director of Assessment*), Walter Hazlitt (*General Counsel's Office*), Noreen Kozak (*Office of the Provost*), Jim Meyer (*Office of Technology Services*), Jamshid Mohammadi (*Graduate College*), Robert Krawczyk (*College of Architecture*), Phil Troyk (*Armour College of Engineering*), Alan Mead (*Lewis College of Human Sciences*), Ray Trygstad (*School of Applied Technology*), John Twombly (*Stuart School of Business*), Charles Uth (*Galvin Library*).

1. Approval of Meeting Notes from 5/2/13 Meeting

Siva Balasubramanian opened the meeting by asking for approval of the meeting notes from the last meeting on May 2, 2013. A voice vote was taken, and all those present voted in favor of approving the version of the meeting notes distributed by Siva prior to the meeting.

2. Siva introduced two new members.

Bob Krawczyk represents College of Architecture, and John Kallend rejoins the Committee in his new role as the Associate Dean responsible for Assessment at Armour College. John Kallend is now preparing the college for the ABET visit in 2014, so Phil Troyk will represent Armour on other items of interest. Siva mentioned that Ralph Brill and John Kallend could not attend the meeting because of teaching conflicts. Siva promised to resolve the conflict before the next committee meeting.

3. Siva summarized his presentation at the Deans' Retreat on behalf of the committee.

A key item discussed was the chart depicting the timeline of activities for each of the three subcommittees (shown in the PowerPoint file distributed earlier). HLC - NCA has announced that their new liaison for IIT is Dr. Sunil Ahuja, who recently took over as VP of Accreditation from Andrew Lootens-White. Siva plans to meet with him in early October, and will invite him to visit with the committee soon. Provost Alan Cramb will attend our October 10 meeting.

4. Activities during summer:

Carol has conducted several assessment workshops. The co-chairs of the QII subcommittee have worked hard to reconcile the two proposals into one integrated proposal. This has proved to be a formidable task. Siva will request Dr. Ahuja to preview the integrated proposal (when it becomes available) in order to provide guidance. The idea is to respond to potential objections that HLC may have to the integrated version of our QII proposal. Siva also met with David Baker's Administrative criteria committee.

HLC has announced a call for submissions for presentations at its conference (deadline is Sept 30). HLC has also opened up the initial seminar on its Assurance System (software interface that will help us to prepare the report for the HLC team prior to its campus visit in 2016-2017). Siva participated in their initial online workshop, and has requested more information from them that will authorize 15 individuals on our campus to access this System after suitable training.

5. Timeframe for System, Dedicated Website:

David Baker asked about the timeframe to build up the digital evidence. Siva observed that the Assurance System is expected to go online later this year. Since the IIT strategic plan will be wrapped up in October, we could begin by integrating the strategic plan into the Assurance document, as soon as the Assurance System becomes accessible.

Siva mentioned that having a dedicated website for the accreditation process, outcomes and other evidence documents has emerged as a "best practice." This approach provides ready access to information for all stakeholders, in addition to transparency. Examples of this practice are here (Pittsburg State - see <http://www.pittstate.edu/office/provost/hlc/index.dot> and <http://www.pittstate.edu/about/accreditation.dot>).

6. Subcommittee Reports

Student Learning Assessment Subcommittee

Carol announced that her position has changed from Director of Institutional Research to Director of Assessment, and she now reports to Chris White. She spent last summer analyzing data from the assessment survey conducted last spring. She wrote college-specific reports that were distributed to the deans. Some deans were a bit surprised by the findings in the report (that was expected). She has conducted several workshops for faculty (20 faculty have attended), and plans to continue the workshops until all assessment coordinators from each school/college have attended.

Carol noted that the survey conducted indicated that, while many programs reported having established learning goals, the quality of those goals was uneven. This was the key reason why all assessment coordinators should be required to attend the assessment workshops.

This was followed by discussion about Blackboard. The question was raised if that would be a suitable system for launching the assessment drive on campus. The consensus was that we can gather assessment data with the current version of Blackboard, but we will not be able to aggregate assessment data for effective monitoring of assessment activities across campus. Jim Meyer noted that we do not own the Outcomes Assessment piece within Blackboard.

Phil then suggested that we consider AMP, a program developed by a faculty member at Wright State University that aids data collection/reporting while avoiding the limitations of Blackboard. He noted that AMP can add features as needed, is available for free, and has levels of hierarchy for monitoring. The committee then agreed that functionality and ease of use were key considerations in any assessment system adoption. There also was agreement that we needed an assessment system. Carol mentioned that CampusLabs, TK-20 and LiveText were other options that could be considered. Noreen noted Provost Cramb's comment from the Deans' Retreat: any system adopted should be simple, easy to use, and at minimal cost. The system also should have the ability to evolve as technology changes. Phil noted that issues of compliance and maintenance were also important.

Alan Mead asked if we could do this "by hand" for the first year just to see how that system worked. In other words, postpone adoption of a system till we learned more about our needs. Others felt that a software-based system is quite important.

David Baker asked about the experience of pioneer schools. Siva noted that Pittsburg State navigated their accreditation visit with basic assessment tools in the form of Word and Excel

documents. Phil observed that the Word and Excel approach could become a nightmare because that does not adopt well to variable size classes/different disciplines/differences in courses etc. There was consensus in the committee about the need for an assessment (software-based) system.

Siva noted that after the initial wave of assessment workshops where assessment coordinators could learn about assessment, there may be a need for a second wave of assessment workshops focused around learning about the assessment system. That is, in addition to the cost of the assessment system, we also had to reckon the costs of training.

The discussion then moved to assessment of co-curricular activities. Carol agreed to meet with Katherine Stetz (Dean of Students) in order to develop ideas for an assessment workshop to cover co-curricular activities. We need to find out if such activities involved learning goals. Jamshid observed that the goals will be different than for curricular activities. David raised the issue of documenting community outreach activities. Although there were many examples of outreach from each college in 2006, we need to discuss and plan how outreach activities will be assessed by HLC this time, and what kinds of evidence are needed. These issues are not obvious from reading the criteria that HLC has developed. What is HLC looking for as evidence for outreach activities? Siva observed that Dr. Ahuja could provide clarity on this when he visits with our committee later this year. David mentioned that he will investigate if programs such as Boeing Scholars and the Toyota program are conducting formal assessment. Carol noted that David Ulazek had shared a document from the HLC conference that documented examples of various types of evidence that would be acceptable to HLC. She will upload this document to the Google site.

In response to Siva's question, there was consensus that we should have representation for co-curricular assessment on our committee. Siva will follow up on this idea.

Administrative Criteria sub-committee:

David Baker noted that the strategic plan for the university will be presented to BOT in October. If the Assurance System becomes available soon, we can use the exercise of uploading the evidence into the Assurance document. For example, Walt is collecting evidence of policy changes and could upload them into the system. He mentioned that Leroy Kennedy will come on board in his sub-committee. Noreen asked if the campaign materials should be integrated as well. David responded that the campaign's impact on the endowment, buildings and scholarships should be documented. Athletics will tie into the document as well (that should be addressed in the co-curricular section). David noted the building of three innovation clusters in Chicago, with significant IIT involvement. That would be documented as well.

Quality Improvement Initiative subcommittee:

Charles Uth described the subcommittee's activities over the past summer that was focused on reconciling the two original proposals. The first proposal (developed by George primarily) focused on enhancing the first year student experience through the program/curriculum and by leveraging technology (approaches such as course flipping). The second proposal (developed by Mike Gosz) also leveraged technology (DegreeWorks) to track students' academic progress, and to improve retention/graduation rates. Noreen suggested that the subcommittee seek inputs from John Leever and Carole Orze (who are experts on DegreeWorks).

Ray observed that George Schipporeit's ideas were visionary. Committee members agreed that the final version of the QII proposal should be dedicated to George, in recognition of his

fundamental contributions to it. It was also agreed that Dr. Sunil Ahuja should be asked to review the final proposal before it is formally submitted to HLC.

Other items:

The October meeting will be held at the MTC Ballroom. The time of the meeting might be adjusted to avoid teaching related conflicts for all members.

This was followed by a spirited discussion about developing a robust assessment culture/system on campus. Phil stated that last year the committee wanted all programs to identify learning goals, and that we wanted all programs to collect data. He was concerned that this year we are repeating the same idea, expect that we are now one year behind.

Members noted that some progress has been made. Several assessment workshops have been offered, the Dean of each college/school has received an initial report on how their unit is currently placed on assessment. This initial 'report card' has generated concerned responses from some Deans, and to some extent that was expected.

Phil felt strongly that we need to establish concrete deadlines on assessment and that we should enforce accountability. Phil also felt that, given the ABET visit in 2014, the overwhelming focus at Armour College may be on undergraduate programs (that ABET requires) but not on graduate programs. Phil stated that he was not trying to cast his concern about assessment as a graduate engineering-focused problem, but his concern was about establishing a strong campus culture on assessment quickly. David Baker observed that we need to rely on the Provost's leadership, and on the Provost working closely with the Deans. Phil stated that good intentions are not enough, and that a good assessment structure, concrete timeline and accountability had to be put in place. Carol observed that we need to institutionalize assessment. Noreen suggested that it will be useful for each Dean to identify one person within his/her College that would be entrusted with the responsibility of assessment. That would encourage accountability. There was consensus that this approach would work well, and that this person could function as the chief assessment coordinator for the College/School. Noreen also noted that Siva will be attending the Deans' Council meetings on a regular basis, and that she will set up a meeting for Siva with Provost Cramb to discuss the specific assessment-related issues raised at the committee.

Siva reiterated a success-factor that has emerged from the experiences at pioneer schools that had to struggle with establishing an assessment culture on campus, much as we are struggling to do at IIT. To succeed quickly on this path, this critical success factor is to start with a barebones, one-pager assessment document that has a maximum of two learning goals, a simple rubric and an unpretentious curriculum map. Phil agreed that this would be a great way to begin assessment at IIT. Carol agreed to distribute this simple template at her assessment workshops. There was also consensus at the committee that Carol's workshops should be made a mandatory requirement for all program assessment coordinators. Jamshid felt that the faculty are more likely to cooperate with assessment if they are given specific set of expectations on what they need to do to complete assessment. This idea should be incorporated into the workshop.

Meeting adjourned.

Fall 2012 Assessment Survey Preliminary Results

Prepared by Carol Emmons, 5/2/2013

Survey Population:

- 156 degree programs
 - 34 Undergraduate programs
 - 122 Graduate programs
- 40 faculty program Assessment Coordinators
 - 30 (75%) responded to survey
 - 26 responded for all their programs
 - 4 responded for only some of their programs (19/40 programs)
 - 10 did not respond to survey

Survey Results:

- 90 programs reported on in survey
 - 63 (52%) of the graduate programs
 - 27 (79%) of the undergraduate programs
- The table below summarizes the number of programs reported as having each main component of assessment:

Assessment Components	Graduate	Undergraduate
Learning Goals	35/63 (56%)	22/27 (82%)
Curriculum Map	31/63 (49%)	18/27 (67%)
Assessment Plan	32/63 (51%)	16/27 (59%)
Have used results	28/63 (44%)	11/27 (41%)
Have documented changes	0/63 (0%)	1/27 (4%)