

(Draft) Meeting Notes

NCA Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 18, 2015, 2 pm to 3:30 pm, Conference Room, 17th floor, IIT Tower

Participants:

Siva Balasubramanian (Chair, *Stuart School of Business*), David Baker (*External Affairs*), J. Kempt Ellington (*Lewis College of Human Sciences*), Carol Emmons (*Office of Assessment*), Ed Harris (*Chicago-Kent College of Law*), Walter Hazlitt (*General Counsel's Office*), Xiaofan Li (*College of Science*), Anijo Mathew (*Institute of Design*), Devin Savage (*Galvin Library*), Phil Troyk (*Armour College*), Ray Trygstad (*School of Applied Technology*), Charles Uth (*Galvin Library*), and Liad Wagman (*Stuart School of Business*).

Approval of Draft Meeting Notes for meeting on November 21, 2014:

Members unanimously approved the draft meeting notes for the last committee meeting (November 21, 2014) that was previously distributed.

Announcements

Siva Balasubramanian announced that the HLC team has planned the accreditation visit to our campus during September 26 and 27 of 2016. Going forward, this visit timeframe will inform all our planning activities and deliberations. A key implication is that the accreditation report prepared by our committee has to be submitted to HLC approximately during March 2016. Since we need approximately three months to complete internal reviews of this report by the Deans Council/Provost/President, our committee should plan to get the draft report ready by end of November 2015. We will organize the work of our committee and subcommittees to reach this goal.

Siva also mentioned that Julia Chase has put together a website for our committee that contains documents reflecting all deliberations (meeting notes since 2011), all documents that we have reviewed, including those provided by HLC (please visit <http://web.iit.edu/nca-accreditation-committee>).

Subcommittee Reports

Subcommittee on Student Persistence and Completion/Quality Improvement:

Ray Trygstad expressed a concern that there are two faculty subcommittees that are tackling much of the same material as the Quality Improvement subcommittee. One of them is the subcommittee of the Undergraduate studies committee that is looking at the Introduction to the Profession which was also a focus of the Quality Improvement sub-committee; the other one is the Kaplan Institute Committee that is also examining the first year experience which is also again an area that was being considered by the Quality Improvement Sub-committee. Members shared the sentiment that despite the overlap, an argument could be made that the different committees give us different perspectives. Ray agreed that any of those committees may come out with a better solution. But he stressed that the committees need to proceed with an awareness of the overlap and try to achieve coordination across committees.

Siva observed that this consideration motivated the invitation extended to Tayyab Arshad (from the Retention Task Force) to join the Student Persistence and Completion subcommittee. Tayyab is now providing the perspective of some of the subcommittees mentioned by Ray.

Siva also mentioned that some progress has been made on analyzing data for presentation to HLC on behalf of this subcommittee.

Assessment subcommittee:

Carol Emmons reported that the assessment subcommittee is focusing on the pilot test of the blackboard outcomes assessment module. There are three academic programs participating in the pilot, (Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry, the Master's Degree in Finance and the Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering). These programs have agreed to collect the student artefacts for assessment in blackboard in the spring semester and the subcommittee will use blackboard through the entire process to produce a report on how well the students met the learning goals for each program.

Carol is also following up with programs that have yet to submit an assessment report from last year or not have submitted an acceptable assessment report from last year. She is meeting with the faculty on an ad-hoc basis when they have questions about assessment. Provost Cramb and the Deans have agreed that assessment belonged to the academic units, that academic affairs is providing a structure for it, but the responsibility for implementation ultimately rests with the academic unit. So the Deans have to be involved closely in reaching the timeline goals associated with assessment. Carol also reminded that she is available to meet with faculty on an invitation basis to talk about assessment.

After meeting with BlackBoard representative in March, the assessment subcommittee will proceed with the pretest which involves configuring Banner, waiting for student artefacts to roll in for the faculty's assessment, entering rubric scores etc. The subcommittee expects to complete the the pilot pretty much by the end of the spring 2015 semester, and then begin work over the summer to develop a training program for faculty.

Siva stressed on the Provost's message that everybody academic unit should fully participate and complete assessment tasks as per HLC requirements in a timely fashion.

Carol said that since visitors from the HLC are coming on Sept 26th 2016, assessment reports are to be made available at least a month before that date.

Phil Troyk suggested a pilot program at the graduate level because it would be a significant factor to get that culture of assessment in place at the graduate level. He suggested that it would be helpful to pull in at least one graduate program from Engineering to be included in the pilot program.

Siva noted that an important component of establishing this culture is that IIT faculty have to be as mindful of assessment related deadlines as they are about deadlines for submitting course grades. Carol mentioned that Katy is now requiring assessment from her staff for her perspective functions.

Criterion 1 subcommittee:

David Baker is providing leadership in the Criterion 1 subcommittee. David had shared with Siva the document titled Handout for Core Component 1. Siva also said that the committee is very fortunate to have David leading this charge as this is the exact type of responsibility he had for previous report submitted to HLC in 2006. As a result, David is serving on subcommittees for three criteria.

David is working with members of the President's office and the Provost's office for documentation and evidence preparation (to provide the URL for the evidence related to headline items in his handout).

David discussed the draft outline prepared by his subcommittee. The next step would be a meeting to put together a plan. The resources needed to complete Core component 1 are in place and now it's just the question of doing it.

Members then focused on how the committee will coordinate across criteria and work collaboratively within the HLC assurance system. There needs to be somebody in charge of the system to enforce standards and naming conventions for different files and folders. If the same piece of evidence is used in multiple places this approach will prevent its redundant duplication. There was agreement regarding the importance of integration across different components to make sure that the whole document looks like one piece. Given the difficulty involved in gathering evidence, it was agreed that if multiple people work several hours to find same piece of evidence, that will be unproductive.

Siva asked each subcommittee to decide who within each of the subcommittee needs access to the assurance system, how that process is going to be navigated within each subcommittee in terms of developing drafts and uploading it to the system needs consideration. In this regard, it is important that the chairs of each of these subcommittees should meet separately and coordinate the process.

In response to question from Phil Troyk, members pointed out that there was no limit on the number of evidence documents that can be attached, but each evidence document has to be tightly coupled with text.

Siva mentioned that when Sunil Ahuja from HLC had stressed that we should focus attention on recommendations made by HLC team in 2006, and how they were subsequently implemented. David Baker observed that the committee had previously discussed a summary document on this topic that was prepared by Carol Emmons.

Sunil Ahuja has expressed willingness to review our draft report and provide suggestions. At the next meeting, Siva will share a chart that provides timelines for the HLC assurance report preparation process.

Criterion 2 subcommittee:

Siva noted that Walter Hazlitt has taken responsibility for this subcommittee and put together an initial draft. Carol said that if Walter is already going to upload the faculty handbook for Criterion 2 then she does not need to worry about the same.

Ed Harris observed that since the law school is independently regulated by the American Bar Association, they have certain ethical guidelines within their regulation that are independent of the university guidelines. Members agreed that it would help to supply their code of ethical conduct that applies to student and faculties *only* within the law school.

Criterion 3 subcommittee:

Jamshid said that Lauren is doing most of the work and that the document that was distributed to members appears self-explanatory. Charles Uth mentioned that the Criterion 3 subcommittee is relying on documentation coming from several different sources.

Carol suggested that criterion 3 was the most challenging criterion.

The subcommittee needs to identify and hyperlink the important sources. This would be a pretty substantial task because a lot of information exists at the university, but it is important to know where to look and who to ask.

Ray noted that ABET has accepted the application of Information Technology and Management (ITM) for accreditation. Going forward, there is a need for coordination between Computer Science, different engineering colleges and ITM.

Criterion 4 subcommittee:

Carol mentioned that the Criterion 4 subcommittee has changed a little bit since the document was actually created. It now includes Carol, Phil Troyk, Ed Harris from the Law school and Matt Bauer who has agreed to be a part of this subcommittee. A lot of it has to do with assessment and progress has been made in the last two years.

Carol mentioned that a lot of effort has been focused on retention but less so on the graduation rate. So an increased effort is needed on graduation rate given the magnitude of the problem. Although several schools are represented by members of Criterion 4 subcommittee, this criterion itself does not deal with individual schools, it deals with university-wide efforts.

Criterion 5 subcommittee:

David Baker reported that the subcommittee draft prepared last summer actually holds up pretty well. A couple of paragraphs are missing, however, and David has already talked to the Provost about that. David suggested that criterion 5 section may serve as a model for work that sub-committees for other HLC criteria will have to complete between now and Fall 2015.

Federal Compliance Subcommittee

Carol mentioned that this is a two-person subcommittee consisting of herself and Virginia Foster. Virginia is the Higher Education Act (HEA) compliance officer for the university, so that's why she has been tasked with working on this. This is different from other HLC Criteria in that HLC provides a worksheet that the subcommittees fill in and then provide a list of the documents that the HLC requires. Much of the work of this subcommittee is prescriptive.

Carol said that although Katy of student affairs maintains a process for student complaints about sexual harassment, there is still a question of whether that is sufficient and this subcommittee is in the process of determining it.

It was suggested that incorporating the Students Speak survey as a component of tracking student complaints and identifying solutions would be helpful. This is because this survey rates every administrative office during the complaint process and requires the administrative people to come up with solutions and present it to the students. So it's a much more orderly approach to administrative quality issues than just the individual complaints.

Meeting adjourned.