

Sonoma State University  
Accreditation Steering Committee

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Monday, January 25, 2016, 3:00-4:30pm, Academic Affairs Conference Room STEVI040

**Agenda**

1. Web page materials – Introduction and FAQs
2. School Assessment Coordinators
3. Report on Student Success from Faculty Retreat (Richard Senghas)
4. Publishing Program Learning Outcomes on Dept. webpages
5. Assessments – senior level courses

**Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Richard Senghas, Richard Whitkus, Thaine Stearns, Sean Johnson, Laurel Holmstrom-Keyes, Emiliano Ayala, Melinda Milligan, Deborah Roberts, Cathy Kroll

Co-chair Richard Senghas called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

1. **Minutes** from prior meeting on 11/30/15 were reviewed and approved.
2. **Web page materials – Introduction and FAQs**
  - A. ALO Rich Whitkus informed the committee that WSCUC requires the university to have a public website to report on the accreditation process and provide a location where documents are stored.
    - 1) The website is currently under development in the same location as the prior accreditation portfolio: Ac Affairs -> Ac Programs -> Accreditation: <http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ap/accred/>.
    - 2) Prior accreditation documents have been archived on the new “Resources and Links” page.
  - B. Initial content was drafted for an introductory page and a “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) page and sent to the committee for review – a discussion resulted in feedback for revisions, and additional suggestions for the site, including:
    - 1) Have a landing page that is continuously updated with current information
    - 2) Using graphics and visuals for things such as a timeline/minimizing text heavy content
    - 3) Archived documents should be prominently linked and easy to find, not buried in FAQ
  - C. Rich asked the committee for input on who should be responsible for orchestrating the website content, and who would guide website development.
    - 1) No one offered to lead or participate, but agreed that as a group they would provide periodic review of content generated by the Academic Programs team (Rich and Jill).
    - 2) It was suggested that University Affairs and Public Relations be involved with regard to content review for compliance with University policy, and to coordinate the broadcasting of information to the campus community – faculty committees should be utilized as well.
3. **School Assessment Coordinators** –Rich announced that as part of the campus-wide effort to improve assessment progress at SSU, the Provost has moved forward with the approval for each School Dean to assign a faculty member to serve as the School Assessment Coordinator.
  - a. The faculty member receives release time of one course/semester for the next four semesters.
  - b. Faculty have been assigned in Science & Tech (Susan Heron), Arts & Humanities (Andy Wallace), Business & Economics (Jane Sutanonpaiboon), and Education (Emiliano Ayala), while Social Sciences is not yet confirmed.

Sonoma State University  
Accreditation Steering Committee

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c. Committee discussed whether Assessment Coordinators will be assigned for the Library, International and Extended Education, and General Education.

**4. Report on Student Success from Faculty Retreat** - Richard Senghas reported on some of the highlights from the faculty retreat, and led the committee in discussions about how these topics relate to and support our current accreditation effort.

A. Student Success – one of the several sessions on Student Success included an alumni panel discussion that focused on defining success in terms of preparing students to master soft skills to help them in life, as well as preparing them to find jobs that will provide a living wage.

1) Rich noted that SSU is close to establishing a clear definition of student success based on commonalities across Programs/Curriculum, which would provide a solid basis for preparing the institutional report.

B. Program Review – there was a lively discussion about the frustration faculty are experiencing with the existing program review policy - both implementation and what happens with the results. It does not work well and is due for a major overhaul. Some of the goals are: a consistent reporting format, and a consistent location so Program Learning Outcomes can be easily found.

**5. Publishing Program Learning Outcomes on Department Web Pages** – Question posed on whether Programmatic Learning Outcomes should be part of the new template design for Drupal?

Rich explained the need for greater consistency in program review data as it relates to mandatory reporting requirements, including WSCUC accreditation. He suggested that the Steering Committee forward a recommendation to the Web Development Team asking that they create a standard for Departments to report their Program Learning Outcomes in the template currently under development for the new Drupal web platform. The Committee discussed the issues around program learning outcomes and General Education learning outcomes. There was consensus that publishing Program Learning Outcomes on Department Webpages should be required to make the data more accessible. Rich will communicate this to the Web Team.

**6. Assessments – senior level courses**

Rich reported on the status of the ongoing assessment activities that are planned for spring 2016 semester and will be utilized in the accreditation self-study. A memo was distributed to the Deans and Department Chairs at the start of the semester seeking faculty who can arrange for their students to participate. The assessments are targeted at students who are at or near graduation.

A. Collegiate Learning Assessment

1) The goal of this project is assessing the core competencies of critical thinking and writing of students at the beginning and completion of their education. WSCUC requires this assessment for students at or near graduation.

2) We are seeking at least 100 students to take the exam. It requires the students to be out of class for one meeting period to take the assessment test in a computer lab.

3) Asking for faculty with majority of senior students in their class to volunteer, with a goal of achieving diversity.

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Accreditation Steering Committee

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- B. Core Competencies Assessment - the other assessment effort is based on assessing three core competencies – Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Writing – from a project that is completed for a course requirement.
- 1) The project type is open, and students will not be identified.
  - 2) It will be assessed over the summer using a rubric that is being developed.
  - 3) Again, we are asking for faculty with majority of senior students in their class to volunteer. Students will have the opportunity to opt-out if they choose.
  - 4) Benefits faculty in that the assessment results can be used as part of their program review.

The Committee discussed how to increase faculty participation, and agreed that having the request come from faculty committees and not just the administration would be a good tool to communicate the need and importance, as well as the benefits to students and faculty. **ACTION ITEM:** Richard to coordinate broadcasting a request for participation with the Academic Senate and Program Review Committee.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, February 29, 2016, 3:00 pm in the Academic Affairs conference room  
Meeting adjourned at 4:30, minutes prepared by Jill Hunter