

Sonoma State University Accreditation Steering Committee

Monday, November 30, 2015
Minutes

Agenda

1. Review Status on Steering Committee Progress on Standards 1-4
2. Report from WASC Workshop – The Big Five: Addressing Core Competencies
3. Assessment Planning: short term and long term proposals

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1. Review Status on Steering Committee Progress on Standards 1-4

Rich Whitkus called the meeting to order at 3:05pm. Minutes from the October 26 meeting were reviewed and approved. Actions items were reviewed and discussed – still pending is response from Christopher Oberg on Criteria 3.5 – Rich to follow up.

1. Standard 1: ACT reviewed this standard and reported their findings at the last meeting.
2. Standard 2: Data received from School of Ed, School of A&H, and the Academic Senate Executive Committee. A request was made for other Schools to send in their completed worksheets before the end of the semester. ACTION ITEM: All schools that have not submitted the Standard 2 worksheet are requested to submit the data by the last day of fall 2015 classes.
3. Standard 3: A draft prepared by the Administration & Finance workgroup was reviewed at the prior Steering Committee meeting. ACTION ITEM: A&F group was asked to submit the file electronically.
4. Standard 4: Sean Johnson is overseeing review of this standard. ACT is also reviewing.

2. Report from WASC Workshop – The Big Five: Addressing Core Competencies

Rich gave a synopsis of the workshop attended by him, Andy Wallace, Cathy Kroll, Brigitte Lahme, Chiara Bacigalupa, and Scott Miller. It was a good forum for discussion of assessment planning including how to select the assessment methods that will work best for our campus. It was noted that the five core competencies can be assessed in combination where appropriate. The workshop information binder on Core Competencies was passed around the table. Rich also handed out a WASC document entitled “Core Competency FAQ’s”.

Some assessments are underway while others still need to be planned and/or implemented. A team was formed for the Critical Thinking and Information Literacy competencies last year. The group includes Felicia Kalker, Caitlin Plovnik, Andy Wallace, Jeremy, and Kirsten Ely. The team met last week to strategize, and assist with developing short term and long term assessment plans.

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3. Assessment Planning: short term and long term proposals

Rich provided handouts on the short term and long term proposals, and presented on each.

- A. The short term proposal includes a summary of the timeline for assessment of the core competencies in relation to the WASC review process. It was emphasized that the Institutional Report is due to WASC by January 2017, leaving insufficient time to conduct and evaluate all of the assessments before the report is written. The proposed assessment timeline is as follows:
- Critical Thinking and Writing (CLA) conducted in fall 15 and continues into spring 16
 - Information Literacy assessment begins in spring 16 and continues in fall 16
 - Quantitative Reasoning & Oral Communication starts in fall 16 and continues in spring 17

The timeline for reporting to WASC necessitates expediting the assessment process, and proposed strategies for accomplishing this were discussed. Utilizing existing rubrics is one key factor to success. Karen Thompson noted that the School of Business has some good rubrics already developed. ACTION ITEM: Karen to send the rubrics to Rich.

The group discussed what other existing resources are available. For the writing competency assessment, WEPT data and the “writing across the curriculum” initiative currently being implemented in the School of Arts & Humanities are two areas that could be utilized.

- B. A key goal of the long term proposal is to have an ongoing process that closes the assessment loop, so new strategies are implemented as information is gained through evaluation. This will require defining what students should be learning and determining how well they are learning it. Planning decisions should serve both Institutional assessment and program review - allowing for flexibility in design so departments can conduct assessments in ways that work best for their programs while still informing the institutional process as a whole.

The proposal covered the following topics: what to assess, level of achievement, why assess, when to assess, ways to assess, and a timeline. Oral Communication was used as an example to illustrate how and why determinations in creating a long term assessment plan could vary.

A request for feedback led to lengthy discussions on a number of points, including: alternatives to the generally used model; automating the process by incorporating it into what we already do; using the faculty retreat to discuss student success and how to cross disciplines & departments; using analytics based on activities that faculty want to do; utilizing data from other external accreditations; how to overcome faculty resistance to conducting assessments and reinvigorate efforts through renewed practices (such as reactivating the Academic Planning Committee); and working toward a cultural shift so faculty view assessment work as a benefit to student success and the institution, as opposed to a burden that creates a bigger workload.

Meeting adjourned 4:15 pm

Next Meeting is on ~~December 14, 2015~~ January 25, 2016 in STEV 1041, minutes prepared by Jill Hunter