

5/24/2005

HLC-III Minutes of the 5/24/2005 meeting.

1. May 11 Working Session on Assessment

Background: At the request of Joe Massey CEO, Richard Nelson, and Bill Peterson, who attended a conference on the upcoming accreditation process, the HLC –III committee undertook an effort to gather current campus-wide data related to the assessment of student learning at UMC. It must be noted for the sake of clarity that the HLC-III committee understands that this assignment lies outside of its role, but that it accepted the assignment at the request of campus administrators.

It was determined that in order to gather and synthesize a substantial amount of data in a very short period of time that a database specifically for this purpose needed to be constructed. After a period of inquiry with several offices and individuals, it was determined that Tom Mulvaney would construct the database in consultation with Marilyn Grave who would develop the criteria for the information.

Available time allowed for the development of a database that permitted faculty to initiate the first three steps of a larger process. 1. Formulating statements of intended learning outcomes at the Institutional Level, 2. Formulating statements of intended learning outcomes at the Program or discipline level, 3. Gathering statements about how well students are learning and how that information is used.

Thirty eight faculty including four Department Heads participated in the working session. Two faculty signed in under two departments because they teach courses under both which accounts for the initial count of 40 faculty in attendance. One individual who teaches an internship seminar course for the Business Department also participated in the working session for part of the morning.

HLC-III committee members observed conscientious effort by faculty throughout the morning and received many favorable comments regarding the potential of this tool towards the goal of strengthening student learning. It was determined that the database would remain open throughout the summer for faculty who wanted to continue working with it and contributing to it. The database will be maintained by Tom Mulvaney, and at the present time any content changes or additions to it should be reviewed and approved by Marilyn Grave who was designated by the HLC-III committee to direct this activity.

HLC-III is recommending that the features of this database be expanded to permit: a) the linking of electronic syllabi information including course objectives to the database b) the integration of the database with program reviews conducted on a three year rotation and c) that summative information available from an analysis of the gathered data be thoroughly reviewed by faculty, academic departments, Academic Affairs and campus PIAC committees to allow for feedback and continuous improvement.

2. Critical Thinking Database

Committee members discussed the future of the collection of information related to the “critical thinking” core component. Collected data is presently stored in a SASS

database managed by Bill Peterson. Numerous strategies for voluntary collection of follow-up assessment data at the 2nd and 4th years have been tried with only marginal success. HLC-III is recommending that a campus policy be formulated to make follow-up assessment at the 2nd and 4th year mandatory for students.

3. Resources available for the HLC-III chapter

Committee members reviewed the four primary sources of information available for use in drafting chapter III of the HLC document. Those sources include:

- Assessment Database (current, and emerging documentation)
- Bush Faculty Development Data on Student Engagement and Effective Teaching
- Critical Thinking Cohort Database
- Evidence file related to a broad range of internal and external resources and activities that support student learning and effective teaching

4. Committee recommendations related to compilation of information relevant to chapter III

Committee members asked to whom these assembled resources would be turned over for writing? It is the consensus of committee members that close familiarity with the work of the last three years is essential to completion of a substantive document.

Marilyn Grave has served as co-chair of the HLC-III committee since it was first formed, and is identified as the Criterion Committee Representative for the UMC Self-Study Steering Committee. She served as the coordinator for the Bush Faculty Development grant, and spearheaded the development of the assessment database. She is well acquainted with the content of the evidence file assembled earlier by the committee. Because of the significance of this chapter to the document and to the accreditation process, committee members present on 9/21/2005 expressed concern about this data being assembled into a draft document by someone less well acquainted with the resources. It was proposed that the HLC-III committee recommend to administration that Marilyn Grave be named to write the draft document for chapter III, and that a designated period of time and appropriate reimbursement be provided to accomplish this work since it was not possible to bring to completion by the end of the term of appointment (May 20).

Marilyn proposed that Dr. Sargeant be provided the four designated resources and that his expertise as an HLC reviewer and as member of the campus community be utilized to draft the document.

Minutes of this meeting will be reviewed and forwarded to appropriate campus administrators for consideration.