IAC Meeting Notes – Thursday, January 8, 2015


Janelle first gave a brief update on the progress of the Standard 4 (Effectiveness and Improvement) committee, contributing towards the institutional report for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities’ upcoming accreditation visit. She reported the Standard 4 Committee is now nearing the end of their work – a draft of that report will be available soon for review and feedback by the IAC.

Discussion of the Proposed Assessment 2-Year Cycle

The agenda for the January meeting focused primarily around discussing the proposal to support the idea of a 2-year reporting cycle for assessment.

The discussion began with an examination of the language of the proposal and initial thoughts. The following are some comments/recommendations from the members:

- Make the connections clear and integrated as to reporting structures. How this report tie in to other current required institutional reporting (and example might be the Program Review) as well as how might this be tied into other mandatory discipline-related reporting for standards/accreditation?
- Describe briefly - what this department-driven reporting process might look like?
- Within the Rationale section– state positive results/in positive terms
- State who oversees the reports
- Anticipate concerns and how might we address that/reassure in the language.

There are really two perceptions of approaching assessment – sharing vs accountability – in this proposal can we set the expectation that tough questions can be asked or explored by departments and without fear of negative impact - is a mission safe to fail? How do we reward departments for embracing a level of transparency to achieve this type of real growth?

The group next discussed strengths, weaknesses, institutional facilitators and barriers connected to the proposed assessment cycle.

Strengths

- A 2-year cycle was considered a perfect length of time for a department to pose questions, set up assessment structure, gather and analyze results.
- Implemented correctly, this will contribute positively towards facilitating a culture of collaborative work and discussions within a department as well as a cross-campus sharing of assessment-related ideas/sharing of stories
- Rickards report revealed requests or recommendations from those interviewed to pursue this type/duration of reporting.
Weaknesses

- How do we insure that we have the infrastructure (technology, resources, budget and capacity) to make this initiative sustainable/do-able?

Additional Comments/Questions/Suggestions

- What stakeholders will be need to be consulted? (Ex-officio members will be here in February meeting to discuss this question – this reporting cycle has been discussed within the IAC for some years.)
- Resources – Establish a quality of assessments and how to begin – supports should be made available to departments.
- Templates – examples or tutorials on some standard data collection, case studies, exemplars for depts. to see what works – a planning of sharing of those stories.

After an active discussion, members voted unanimously work towards presenting this proposal to the university (the proposal will still need to be crafted further).

It was also agreed to wait until the next meeting to pursue discussing a strategic plan further. Members were asked to think about ideas – as to what a strategic plan might look like.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00PM.