

# Program Review and Assessment Committee

Thursday, October 19, 2006

UL1126

3:00-4:30 p.m.

Karen Johnson, Chair

Joshua Smith, Vice Chair

## AGENDA –

1. Approval of the September Minutes .....K. Johnson
2. Discussion of Course Evaluation  
    Methods and Options .....H. Mzumara and M. Palmer
3. Discussion of the Program Review Subcommittee's  
    Report on Outcomes of Reviews..... T. Banta and D. Boland
4. Discussion of Recommendations Arising from  
    Annual Reports of IUPUI Committees ..... T. Banta
5. Committee Reports
  - Grants.....L. Houser
  - Advanced Practitioners.....J. Smith and M. Hansen
6. Adjournment .....K. Johnson

## MINUTES –

**Members Present:** William Agbor-Baiyee, Drew Appleby, Rachel Applegate, Trudy Banta, Karen Black, Donna Boland, Elaine Conney, Elizabeth Goering, Michele Hansen, Amanda Helman, Linda Houser, Karen Johnson, Craig McDaniel, Howard Mzumara, Megan Palmer, Gary Pike, Kenneth Rennels, Ingrid Ritchie, Elizabeth Rubens, Joshua Smith, Randi Stocker, Mark Urtel, Russell Vertner, Debra Winikates, and Nancy Young.

K. Johnson led an overwhelming thank you to Drew Appleby for providing “goodies.”

**Minutes** from the September meeting were approved without corrections.

### Discussion of Course Evaluations

H. Mzumara and M. Palmer facilitated a discussion on course evaluations. A list of potential discussion items was presented. Generally speaking, course evaluations are decentralized. Schools and units are responsible for evaluation form content and students are not necessarily required to complete the forms. Concerns were voiced about current evaluations. For example, there is no systematic procedure for using course evaluation data to improve teaching and learning. Another concern is the extent to which the evaluations are appropriate to a wide range of teaching styles. Units and faculty members can specify items for P & T evidence of quality of teaching. Testing Center personnel are concerned that there are multiple forms of course evaluations; many items have not been tested for reliability and validity. L. Houser talked about the

fact that the School of Education considered changing some items, but there is concern about year-to-year comparisons and comparisons with university-wide averages. K. Johnson indicated that the School of Liberal Arts is concerned with clustering effects: specifically a few students reporting uniformly low scores in a small class. Mzumara noted that instead of using the mean scores, IUPUC and Purdue University use a different reporting statistic to account for skewed data. G. Pike asked for clarification about the extent to which faculty members are ranked and compared with other faculty members. Johnson said the School of Liberal Arts used to weight the scores by class size. Mzumara suggested that classes with less than 10 students could be assessed more effectively by using open-ended questions rather than mean scores. W. Agbor-Baiyee made the point that different instructional approaches (e.g., problem-based learning) are not equally valued/measured by the current evaluations. M. Palmer added that co-teaching and online instruction need a different approach. The reliance on the instruments for summative and comparative evaluation was attributed to pressures of P & T requirements. E. Cooney mentioned that P & T drive the course evaluation process, and changes in courses and teaching approaches—even real improvements—end up hurting individuals who can no longer track their progress.

Houser pointed to a perceived relationship between course grades and evaluations. Pike cited research that only 10 percent of the variance is accounted for by actual course grades. I. Ritchie recommended that PRAC generate a list/inventory of current practice, evaluation tools, and peer reviews. Mzumara described a brief inquiry on the evaluations for 15 units. K. Rennels asked about schools using online systems and indicated that they are experiencing a lower number of raters and a concern for bias among students who have a problem or grudge. E. Rubens mentioned a project at Brigham Young University that rewards students who complete the evaluations by letting them see their grades one or two days ahead of time. A. Helman reported that students do not believe that faculty and schools will ever use or read course evaluations. Palmer mentioned that the Center for Teaching and Learning offers a formative evaluation process that could potentially help. Faculty members who use that report that they are getting a lot out of it. M. Hansen noted that she uses a formative evaluation process and in turn gets good feedback from the final course evaluations. Pike cited a Georgetown University study reporting an 85 percent response rate for paper-and-pencil forms and a similar response rate on the web. Georgetown experienced slightly more negative comments online than when the evaluations were administered in paper and pencil form. They post the course evaluation responses on the Web so that students can access the information.

C. McDaniel brought us back to the issue of grading and course evaluations. He made the case that “hard graders” who get high scores on teaching evaluations are likely excellent teachers, but it is hard to tell if “easy graders” with high scores on evaluations are really good or not. Pike cited a relationship with the amount of work and found a curvilinear relationship. D. Appleby surmised that the conversation revolved around “Who is the audience?” T. Banta continued by pointing to a dichotomy: Some items are for P&T and other items are more appropriate for improving teaching and learning. Additionally, one can use course evaluations to support program evaluation processes. Ritchie reiterated that her original question was global. SPEA uses the course evaluations for raises, awards, etc. Banta made the point that we should have separate

surveys for differing purposes. Examples of evaluation instruments from IUPUI and other campuses were distributed. The University of Tennessee was identified as a positive example. Specifically, they have a good track record on validating items and effective use of the Internet. Agbor-Baiyee expressed concern that IUPUI was using evaluations that have not undergone systematic analysis for evaluation. Johnson asked if it would be helpful to gather evaluation tools from each unit and share these with the group. Rubens also wanted units to include information about the ways in which units used course evaluation data for P&T.

### **Discussion of the Program Review Subcommittee Report**

D. Boland presented the results of a Program Review Summary. The subcommittee members looked at all reviewers' reports completed between 1994 and 2004. The committee specifically examined recommendations embedded in the reports and identified themes that emerged. Also, the committee looked beyond the commonalities and identified school-specific recommendations that might affect the entire campus. The report was organized by categories, issues, and report recommendations following a meta-evaluation process. Some trends that were noticed over the years disappeared, indicating that actions by the university/units may have addressed these issues. Banta thanked the committee members for their work. She indicated that the campus central administration is looking at some issues identified in the review (and gave examples of each):

- Campus-wide strategic planning (showed the cube presented by Chancellor Bantz)
- Facilities and buildings
- Oversight on advising
- Coordination of Ph.D. program development
- Partnerships and community involvement
- Focus on recruitment and retention
- Tenure and promotion process

Banta placed the Program Review Report in a broader context. She indicated that a similar process to that of the Program Review Subcommittee was conducted with nine annual reports of other committees on the IUPUI campus. She handed out a document that summarized the themes that emerged from all these reports considered collectively, including:

- Campus-wide planning and communication
- Teaching and learning
- Research, scholarship, and creative activity
- Civic engagement
- Diversity
- Resource Base

Banta highlighted areas where multiple constituencies noted the importance. The case was made that recommendations emerging from the program reviews are being addressed by units/administrators. Appleby was heartened by the reports and was glad to see that concerns raised by PRAC are being addressed. R. Vertner echoed the point and raised an issue of getting information out about what happens after the reports are submitted.

### **Committee Reports**

*Grants.* Tomorrow is the deadline for proposals for PRAC Grants. Houser indicated that only one proposal had been submitted. She said it would be possible to send an email extending the deadline for a few weeks. However, several PRAC members indicated that they knew of colleagues who were planning to submit proposals. (Note: 7 proposals were received by the deadline.)

*Advanced Practice.* Hansen indicated that Advanced Practice is a relatively large group consisting of members of PRAC as well as some who are not PRAC members. The group is planning to offer a workshop either on conducting focus groups or on the use of logic modeling. There were questions about what logic modeling is. Hansen gave a definition and some examples of logic modeling. R. Applegate stated that there were vast differences in how logic models are defined, developed, and guided. Some logic approaches focus too much on outcomes only, while others are more balanced, emphasizing both formative and summative evaluation. A vote on the topic of interest in a workshop yielded the following results:

- Logic model (9)
- Survey item writing (4)
- Focus groups (4)

#### *Program Review*

The Program Review Subcommittee hosted an informal conversation among representatives of units that recently completed program reviews and units just beginning the process. The subcommittee is reflecting on the value of holding such a discussion and will discuss whether or not to continue the process in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.