

**Program Review and Assessment Committee**  
**December 12, 2013, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., CE 307**  
**Minutes**

**Present:** K. Wills (Chair), R. Aaron, K. Alfrey, P. Altenburger, T. Banta, R. Bennett, K. Black, T. Davis, C. Gentle-Genitty, S. Graunke, M. Hansen, L. Houser, K. Johnson, S. Kahn, J. Lee, S. Weber Lupton, K. MacDorman, M. Meadows, K. Norris, W. Orme, G. Pike, T. Ribera, T. Roberson, M. Rust, S. Scott, G. Shaker, A. Teemant, C. Toledo, C. Walcott, S. Weeden, W. Worley

**1. November meeting minutes:** approved unanimously as circulated

**2. Subcommittee reports**

- L. Houser reported that the Grants Subcommittee recommended three proposals for funding (from Physical Therapy, Center for Service and Learning, and Social Work). They have asked the other proposers to revise and resubmit. The subcommittee recommendation constituted a motion that was approved unanimously.
- G. Pike stated that the Performance Indicators Subcommittee had reviewed indicators for two goals, designating Teaching as a “yellow” and Student Success as “yellow” with an upward arrow indicating progress. The subcommittee also suggested that PRAC address issues of centrality of teaching in tenure and promotion decisions. It would be interesting to obtain data on the number of faculty going up in the various categories, and it might also be useful to add some questions to the next faculty survey regarding satisfaction with support for teaching and learning. PRAC might suggest four or five questions for incorporation.
- K. Black reported that the Program Review Subcommittee had identified several suggestions to help chairs prepare for Program Review self study.
- R. Aaron described discussion in the Advanced Practice Subcommittee regarding how our work and reports are used in decision-making. The Subcommittee hopes to develop some tips to discuss with all PRAC members next semester. T. Banta suggested the subcommittee also consider combining the PRAC and Dean’s annual reports.
- K. Alfrey reported that the PRAC Reports Review Subcommittee would meet immediately following this PRAC meeting for orientation of new members and norming in use of the review rubric. She added that several reports have not yet been submitted; if they arrive late, review will be delayed.

**3. Appreciative Inquiry exercise**

- T. Banta led a short discussion explaining the process known as Appreciative Inquiry, which is used for varying purposes depending on context. At its simplest, the process seeks to identify initiatives that work well and to understand why they work so that the programs can be replicated successfully. Johnson will join PRAC as her schedule permits.
- Explaining that her own research suggests that Appreciative Inquiry can be useful in assessment, Banta asked members to test the approach by applying it to PRAC and its

effectiveness. Individuals reflected briefly on three guiding questions, then discussed their responses in small groups, followed by reports back from each group.

- Groups reported that members identified numerous similar aspects of PRAC's work as being effective, including development of the PUL assessment process, small-group discussions, creating opportunities for members to learn from one another, and providing opportunities for members to understand nuances of assessment and program review.
- Times when members felt especially proud of PRAC included the very positive feedback from the Higher Learning Commission visitation team regarding PRAC's role with assessment and the self-study, taking the pulse of the institution, the ability to help new members learn, seeing PRAC members step up to present at the Assessment Institute, observing growth in common understandings over time, being part of a group so committed to improving student success, and the ability for members to be resources for their units because of their PRAC roles.
- Elements of PRAC that have been particularly meaningful and valuable included collegiality, opportunities to learn from different kinds of experience, opportunities to learn through sharing tools and methods, providing space to converse about how to use data, excellent presentations by other members (with the note that we should consider archiving and/or streaming to expand the audience), and the extent to which learning through PRAC helps members frame their own challenges.

#### **4. PRAC Grant Report**

- Kristina Sheeler, chair of the Department of Communication Studies, thanked PRAC for providing a grant that proved instrumental in helping her department collect data to prepare for program review in February 2013. Work began with a graduate research methods course to develop and pilot a survey based on departmental learning outcomes. Following the pilot, the instrument was revised to become a 65-item questionnaire on all undergraduate SLOs. Students in the course also conducted two brief focus groups for qualitative information, then analyzed results.
- One student became so engaged that she continued work to send the survey to all introductory and capstone students as well as undergraduate and master's alumni. The department has continued to use the survey in Spring and Fall 2013 to capture ongoing feedback.
- Results helped faculty identify areas of excellence, particularly the advising program, along with continuing needs such as improving help for students in understanding career possibilities. Clear strengths were the program, faculty, applied experiences, and training to apply their learning in a variety of settings. In addition to career preparation, students suggested that comprehensive exams may need improvement.
- Sheeler added that it was helpful to see example PRAC proposals and follow-up reports. It would also help to have more robust ways to store and massage the data collected from these kinds of surveys.

#### **5. Election of Vice-Chair**

- T. Banta thanked Kathy Wills for her leadership as PRAC Chair during 2013. She also thanked Peter Altenburger for his willingness to serve as Chair in 2014.
- The nominating subcommittee put forward the name of Stephen Hundley to be elected Vice-Chair for 2014 (and Chair in 2015). On a motion by G. Pike seconded by M. Meadows, Hundley was elected by acclamation.

**6. Adjournment at 2:50 p.m.**

Minutes recorded by S. Scott and respectfully submitted by P. Altenburger, 2013 Vice Chair