

## NCA STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

11:15 A.M., WC 133

Present: Linda Curran, Rick Beck, Ellen Boswell, Gail Bruce-Sanford, Jennifer Caine, Joan L. Foster, Kathy Heyl, Roberta Hills, Frieda Holley, Jeff Johnson, Vonda Knox, Larry Langton, Cathy Lucas, Stephanie Moran, Abel Moreno, Ann Murphy, Ellen Susman, Hal Tamblyn,

1. The minutes of the February 24, 2005 meeting were approved with the suggestion that members be notified of the location of the next meeting at the end of the minutes.
2. Larry Langton and Abel Moreno were introduced to the other members. Frieda distributed updated lists of Steering Committee members.
3. Frieda distributed an official letter from The Higher Learning Commission stating that the visit will be March 12-14, 2007.
4. The relationship of The Higher Learning Commission to the North Central Association was unclear. Frieda handed out Section 1.1 of the *Handbook of Accreditation*. That section describes the relationship between The HLC and the NCA. She also distributed portions of 8.3 of the *Handbook*, which describes how MSCD's accreditation by The HLC should be described in publications about the college. Two phrases are suggested in the *Handbook*. The Committee decided to use whichever style is appropriate for the publication. It also decided to insert the word "is" in the first suggested phrase if it is used in a sentence: "MSCD is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association." Cathy Lucas indicated that she would make changes in the publications that pass through her office.
5. During the week several committee members researched the number of part-time faculty who had only baccalaureate degrees. Five MSCD programs can hire faculty with a bachelor's degree plus experience (Aerospace Science, Art (Commercial), HMTA, Journalism, and Music (performers, conductors, composers)). Frieda distributed an e-mail from Tamy Calahan stating that there is a place in Banner to record faculty degree information, and that, as time permitted, MSCD staff have been entering degree information for tenured and tenure-track faculty and for administrators. Resources are needed to enter the information for part-time faculty. It was also noted that sometimes part-time faculty earn higher degrees and the change is not always communicated to HR. The Steering Committee decided this lack of data needed immediate attention and formed a task force that will be headed by Stephanie Moran and will have as members Joan L. Foster, Roberta Hills, Kathy Heyl, and someone from HR. This task force will be investigating how to get the data entered, how to check it for accuracy, and how to keep it updated in the future. The Personnel Action Form (PAF) may need to be revised.
6. The role and mission statements (short college-wide approved version and Trustees' Operational Mission Statement (OMS)) were discussed. It was agreed that there was no conflict between the two statements. Frieda handed out a copy of page five of the college *Catalog*, showing that the page includes portions of the two statements. The two

statements were also examined in light of HLC Criterion One: Mission and Integrity. Discussion occurred about the following:

- Do the statements indicate a “strong commitment to high academic standards that sustain and advance excellence in higher learning” (Core Component 1a (3<sup>rd</sup> bullet))? The role and mission statement includes “Excellence in teaching and learning is MSCD’s primary objective” and the OMS includes “The College is a teaching institution where excellence in teaching and learning is accorded the highest priority.” Do those suffice? The statements do not mention “standards.” There is no indication that we value “academic excellence.”
- The use of “future” in paragraph 3 of the OMS: “. . . Inspire students to strive for the highest level of future achievement” was found to be confusing and unsatisfactory.
- Core Component 1a (4<sup>th</sup> bullet) mentions that mission statements often include goals for the learning to be achieved by students. The OMS states:  
The College is committed to a liberal arts foundation for all students by which each graduate develops the ability to communicate and reason effectively as a culturally and economically literate citizen in a multicultural, global and technological society. (4<sup>th</sup> paragraph)

Discussion ensued about how MSCD ensures that its graduates fit the description, i.e., they are “economically literate” and able to be effective in a “global and technological society.” What does “culturally literate” mean? What does economically literate mean? Goals for student learning are specified by the General Studies Program and economically literacy is not listed as a specific goal of MSCD’s program. Cathy Lucas will try to find out what “economically literate” means.

- The last sentence of the OMS states that priorities are established in accordance with the interests and needs of students, faculty, staff, employers and the citizens of Colorado. In reality, members of the campus community believe that priorities are established in accordance with the interests and needs of students only. Is this a concern?
- The OMS contains the following statement about shared governance “. . . faculty, staff and student participation through shared governance is encouraged and valued.” However, a challenge stated in The HLC’s 2003 report is that:  
A perception exists on the part of faculty and staff that the new board of trustees does not endorse or fully support the principles of shared governance and involvement of campus constituencies in decision-making processes. (p. 20).  
The 2003 report encouraged the board to hire an independent entity to evaluate the board.

The Steering Committee decided to make a list of concerns about the OMS and have that ready to be considered after the arrival of a new President. It also decided that the Trustees should be encouraged to have an evaluation in the spring of 2006.

1. Meeting times will now be from 11:15 to shortly before 1:00 pm to allow members time to come from other classes, meetings and/or get to other classes and meetings.

Assignments/Tasks for the March 10 meeting in Plaza 220C:

Read all the information about Criterion Two and continue reviewing Criterion One. Hunt for planning documents in your area.