

## NCA STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

3:30 P.M., CN301

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

Absent: Rick Beck, Gail Bruce-Sanford, Julie Strasheim

1. The minutes of the July 20 meeting were approved with no changes.
2. *Role and Mission Statement:* Frieda reported that she had sent the revised role and mission statement to President Jordan; Steering Committee members were copied on the e-mail. The Criterion One group noted that “high academic standards” had not been mentioned in the rewrite, and Committee members discussed the pros and cons of including the phrase. One possible interpretation by the public of “high academic standards” might be that the college has high admission standards, which is not true for MSCD. The Committee was not able to find a good place to insert the phrase into the role and mission statement. It decided to leave the role and mission statement alone until it had an opportunity to discuss it with Dr. Jordan.
3. A possible date for Dr. Jordan’s meeting with the Steering Committee has not been set.
4. *Processes for Reaccreditation:* The Higher Learning Commission has established two processes for reaccreditation: PEAQ (Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality) and AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program). MSCD is following the PEAQ process. Some faculty and staff have asked why MSCD is not using the AQIP process. Frieda distributed a short hand-out about the AQIP process, noting that it required a seven year commitment, that to apply MSCD needed to have completed “some form of quality-based preliminary self-assessment that included an outside perspective,” and that each year the college would have to do three or four action projects. Linda mentioned that one could infer from the AQIP requirements that the college had a strategic plan. These observations were the reasons Frieda and Linda chose the PEAQ process early on.
5. *Staff Liaison with the Higher Learning Commission:* Frieda reported that The Higher Learning Commission has assigned Ingrid Walker as its “staff liaison” to MSCD. Ingrid started working at HLC on June 13. According to the HLC newsletter, she has “degrees from Saint Mary's College (CA) and the University of California, Santa Cruz (CA) where she did her doctoral work in American Literature (American Studies and Popular Culture). For twelve years she taught and directed programs at Transylvania University (KY).” In the past the staff liaison has visited the institution and commented on the Self-Study Plan.

6. *Questions Raised by the Criterion Groups:*

Various Criterion Groups had questions that resulted from their review. The questions and the answers were as follows:

Criterion One:

a. *Do we need a vision statement, values, goals, organizational priorities?*

Yes, the college should have a vision statement. Various units in the college have mission statements; some units have goals. Planning should establish organizational priorities.

b. *Can assessment reports help program faculty determine whether or not faculty are teaching what they are supposed to be teaching.*

Ellen Susman suggested that if faculty were not teaching what they were supposed to be teaching, then the assessment measures would pick up the discrepancy. It was noted that if just one or two faculty were not following the prescribed syllabus, then it might be difficult to pick up the problem when conducting assessment activities at the end of students' academic careers. Course assessment, such as standardized finals, might pick up a discrepancy.

c. *Should there be a Diversity Task Force to study all the programs we use to increase diversity?*

Committee members noted that, until recently, a Diversity Report and Plans were sent to CCHE each year. If that continued to happen, there was probably little need for a Diversity Task Force. Frieda will ask Percy. We need to collect those reports. Committee members thought it would be helpful to have statistics from other peer institutions to use for comparison. IPEDs data might be useful, but we need to determine a group of peer institutions. There has been some review of the success of the FRIP and TOP Programs. The Equity Task Force established by Interim President Kieft is about to make its report. Ellen will talk to A.J. Alejano-Steele about the work of that task force.

d. *Should we encourage conducting a college-wide survey about governance and other matters or should we let the various constituent bodies design their individual surveys?*

Committee members thought it best to let each constituent group design its own survey, encouraging a common set of questions regarding shared governance across the surveys. Each constituent group should have its survey reviewed by the Steering Committee prior to distribution so that the Committee can be sure its needs are being met.

e. *Who should be reviewing MSCD marketing materials for accuracy and consistency?*

In general all units of the college should review marketing materials for accuracy and consistency. The individuals who prepare the materials may inadvertently make some mistakes, but they may not know it until it is pointed out to them.

Criterion Four

- a. *What is the definition of co-curricular? Do faculty obtaining inexpensive tickets to plays for students, faculty taking students to conferences or announcing/encouraging local conferences in classes count?*

The definition of “co-curricular” was discussed briefly. After some confusion, it was decided that the only co-curricular activities that need to be discussed in the HLC Self-Study are activities that are substantial, e.g., conferences supported by programs, Math Day. Co-curricular activities that involve only a few students or that do not represent substantial investment of time or money do not need to be studied or included in the Self-Study. Co-curricular activities should be listed in annual reports along with the results of the evaluation of the activity and plans for the future.

- b. *What should we do about a college-wide requirement for global education?*

Committee members do not know how to handle the issue of global education. They observed that MSCD provides opportunities for global education, but there is no requirement. MSCD is a “college with opportunities” for global education.

- c. *Does MSCD need a policy about “freedom of inquiry”?*

The Examples of Evidence for Criterion Four seem to indicate so. There is a “freedom of inquiry” policy for students, but not for faculty and staff. Frieda sent an inquiry about including such a policy in the *Trustees Handbook* to Lee Combs.

- d. *Can we argue that students will have enough exposure to technology through the ENG 1020 requirement, the use of the Portal, and the fact that “e-communication” is the official means of communication?*

Committee members observed that more and more classroom materials are being placed online, and that “Turnitin” is available online and we could gather data about its usage. Larry and Vonda will investigate the use of technology in ENG 1020 to determine if we can argue that ENG 1020 prepares students for a technological society. However, many students do not take ENG 1020 at MSCD.