Program Review Committee
November 16, 2009
Minutes

Present: John Blondell, Alister Chapman, Barb Kennedy, Kim Kihlstrom, Rick Pointer, Ray Rosentrater (chair), Lesa Stern, and Bill Wright

Absent: Tim Wilson

John Blondell opened the meeting with prayer. Minutes from 11-2 were reviewed and approved.

Ray reported that he and Rick met with the Communication Studies Department to review their 6 Year report and the Committees’ Response. They have requested some changes in the wording of the response which Ray will craft and circulate to the committee. The response should carry the same observations and suggestions.

PRC Meetings times for Spring Semester will be on Mondays from 2 to 3:30 every other week.

The Committee reviewed the draft response to Biology’s 6 Year Report. It was agreed that this document should be formalized after the meeting between Ray, Rick and the Department to assure the meaning and acceptance of the document. The Committee debated the issue of whether to ask them for a short addendum providing a plan for their next 6 year report and proposed future action. No agreement was reached. We need to assure this requirement is clear on the 6 year template.

The Committee raised the question of training for committee members? Typically, Westmont Committees have been trained by the more senior members of various committees. Perhaps the new dean will have the time and resources to put together a handbook containing general assessment principles and how Westmont defines “best practices”. It seems that we do not have time this calendar year to embark on such a project without setting aside some of our objectives.

The Committee discussed how to proceed with writing departmental responses to annual reports. Responses will not be reviewed by the entire committee, however, Ray noted he is glad to read any from those requesting guidance.

- All departments need to have clearly identified benchmarks. Are the benchmarks reasonable or are they too high/too low? Lesa will be offering some example rubrics to some of her departments.
- Has the department addressed concerns from last year’s report and are there any changes in their timelines?
- Committee members should request minor changes from the departments for clarity.
- Ray suggested that Committee members meet with the department first and then email copies of the response to all department members.

Bill Wright suggested that the annual report template be modified to add the previous year’s response to assure that this document is not lost and hopefully considered during the annual report writing.
The Committee re-visited the issue of what to do with departments who have not complied with filing reports. As a next step, Rick expressed willingness to meet with departments if needed. Lesa noted that her former institution withheld faculty development funds to departments who were in non-compliance. She found that offering “incentives” proved more effective for morale. Her university created an “Assessment Development Fund” which helped support assessment work and was applied for much like our professional development grants.

For our next meeting, Ray asked the Committee to read Education’s 6 Year Report and be ready to comment on it. He would also like members to consider the 9 areas of institutional goals (From the Multiple Alignment Chart) and chose 2 areas we could look at for assessing institutional goals.

Recorded by, 

Barb Kennedy 

Revised 12/1/09