Program Review Committee
Minutes
September 5, 2007

Present: Marianne Robins, Warren Rogers, Tim Wilson, Andrew Mullen, Eileen McMahon, Ray Rosentrater, Mark Nelson, Bill Wright and Barb Kennedy

Warren Rogers opened with prayer.

Marianne opened the meeting to state that she would chair the meetings. She thanked all for serving and noted that we should be in compliance with the faculty handbook in terms of representatives which was not necessarily possible with the WASC Steering Committee. She asked everyone to quickly review the 15 goals for the year which were developed at the end of last calendar year. Andrew suggested that we add the goal that each department should specify a rubric (like Biology has). Although Marianne would like to review all 15 today, she would address only 3 points.

WASC Commission Letter – The letter indicated that our new president should have met with Gayle Beebe within 90 days of the receipt. Dr. Beebe has met Ralph Wolfe at WASC. Bill felt it was important for him and perhaps Marianne to debrief him on what was said at that meeting. The group discussed at some length the proviso that the letter be distributed in a diffuse manner across campus. After some discussion it was agreed that Bill would send a copy of the letter by email to faculty and Ray would find a way to make the Team Evaluation available to faculty but be protected from outsiders. At the next Forum, dedicated to Program Review, the Committee elected to take a low-key approach in terms of reviewing the letter and evaluation. They agreed to do a question/answer session which would allow faculty to ask as many questions as they like but in a less formal, forced setting.

Revised Template for 5 Year Reports – This report is an attempt to bring planning, budgeting as well as assessment into a thorough review for a department. Marianne would like to add one item to the template under Assessment Activity, Section V. Identifying an area from institution-wide surveys like the Senior Survey or NSSE where students have consistently indicated problems areas in teaching/curriculum. Each department should address the question, in terms of what they might be doing in their department to improve. She noted that advising may be a possible theme. Marianne expressed the thought that the Academic Secretaries might be able to assist department chairs in gathering information. Marianne, Bill and Barb can meet on this question as well as identifying themes from NSEE or Senior Survey that the whole college might address.

The cycle of reports was debated at length. While the current proposal is for 5 years, that would be out of sync with our chair cycle. Since chairs are essentially responsible for completing these reports, we have to be really mindful of when these 5 year reports are
due and try to foresee conflicts with sabbaticals, trips abroad etc. which interfere with the timely completion of reports.

The group debated the uncoupling of the chair from the writing of the report but the major con to that would be that Chairs really have to supply the vision and budgeting information. Compensation in the form of release time or stipend was also debated but affordability was also raised by Bill Wright. A two course reduction would cost $8,000. Bill noted that course reduction tends to take our best faculty out of the classroom which should be seriously contemplated. One proposal was to consider offering $5,000 as a summer stipend for writing the report. If we went to a 6 year cycle, all departing chairs should have to complete a report which systematized departmental goals with regard to budget and assessment. Within the next 4 years, before the WASC visit, we ought to have half of the departments completed and by 8 years, all departments with a few having completed a second one.

The group also discussed strategy for helping departments prepare for these reports. Marianne shared a Biola document which stipulates a timeline for departments to follow and a sort of “how to” which we might consider as a model, perhaps plagiarize from. She will send out the link to the committee for review before next week’s meeting.

For the next meeting Marianne asked everyone to think about the review cycle. She would like to have a final template to take to Senate so everyone should review the categories. Finally, we should strategize on how we can advise departments in how to get the reports done as well as consider again the compensation issue.

Recorded by,

Barb Kennedy