HLC Steering Committee
Minutes
April 27th, 2012

9:00 – 10:15
SC 206

Present: Betsy Desy, Jan Loft, Beth Weatherby, Scott Crowell, Lori Baker, Raphael Onyeghala, Dan Baun, Doug Simon, Alan Matzner, Betty Roers, Bill Mulso

Absent:, Chris Hmielewski, student representative, Corey Butler, Kathleen Ashe, Deb Kerkaert

Agenda

I. Reports from criterion teams

   A. Team #1 meet after the last Steering Committee meeting. They reviewed the draft table of contents for their chapter and discussed the timeline for next year and the task of analysis of data. Christine Olson is still gathering data about the student impact on the community via civic engagement; several students are crunching that data. The idea about how to invite faculty to link to the mission on their syllabi came up again for further discussion. The team meets again later today.

   B. Team #2 has met twice since the last Steering Committee meeting and walked through the table of contents and recommendations for their area.

   C. Team #3 had met just before the previous Steering Committee and created the table of contents at that time.

   D. Team #4 met last week and reviewed the new criteria again as well as revised the spreadsheet to match the new criteria. Members are collecting more data. They discussed the need for reflection and evaluative summary in their chapter. The table of contents shows what it will look like. In the fall, they will need to finish collecting their evidence; they discussed the timeline for fall and for the HLC visit. Members are coming up with questions for surveys and sending those in to Betsy. Betsy sent thank-you notes to her team members.

   E. Team #5 met the day before. They reviewed the draft table of contents and assigned subcommittees from within the team to gather data and bullet point it out as it comes in. They are going to meet yet at the end of May and keep going over the summer.

II. Planning for summer and fall semester and beyond

   A. Data and field research (surveys, focus groups, etc.) progress

      1. A primary issue that came up across the criterion teams was whether we need to scan documents, and if so, how far back do we go?

      Much discussion ensued. This will need continuing clarification due to the evolving nature of hard copy vs. electronic documentation and HLC's standards for what they require.

Beth will ask Winona about this since they just completed their HLC review. She will ask about syllabi and other materials such as datum reports similar to our old Datum that had been published in hard copy only, and old department reports or program reviews. Lori showed the appendix from Chap. 9 of the HLC's *Handbook on Accreditation* that lists materials needed to send in and to collect in the resource room. While many of these will now be digital instead of hard copy, these are still the things we will need to make certain are available for review. Bill noted that it would be useful to have some items scanned in for archival use anyway. Alan mentioned that PDF Acrobat Pro is searchable. Betsy noted that it is important and useful to see what we have in electronic form already and what isn't, and that this could be a good summer project. Dan and Bill mentioned that they would have student help available for this purpose; Bill said that they are getting in useful image software that would make the scanning task less arduous.

Action items that resulted from the discussion: Alan and Dan will figure out what the best approach is and consult with Marcy Olson in Communications and Marketing, as she worked with HLC's required formats for the online education change request; Lori will send everyone copies of 9.2 from the Handbook; and we will create piles in the resource room of items that need to be scanned, so that students workers can start on this if necessary.

2. An issue related to the general scanning question but more specific was the nature of data, data storage, and access to the data by the review team.

Alan noted that the Datum is no longer a printed book but a living document with history, with new information added each year. It is "updated" rather than annualized with "versions" or "volumes." He wondered if it is important to have point-in-time snapshots that are fixed? It is possible to grab a snapshot at points, but again, it is a living document. Dan wondered if a Datum (an older one that was in print only previously) is PDF'ed, is it searchable for specific types of data? Beth noted that part of the narrative of the self-study will be the evolution of our ability to make data-driven decisions. This is much improved from our past practices, and enabled by the technology. All universities are dealing with these types of data and access issues for HLC, so we can investigate what others are doing. The President's plan for annual data going out to programs will help with these matters, as does the program review data that is going to be coming in in a more standardized fashion.

3. Surveys and Focus Groups

Lori suggested that in August and September, the criterion teams need to shape any needed surveys or focus groups; they need to be distributed in October, so that data can be back in and useful before the end of the semester. It was suggested to convene a working group of the criterion team leaders in August before classes begin to come up with working drafts of these research tools. These questions should be funneled to Alan so that he can see if they are already being asked in other instruments or suggest ways to combine them.

Discussion that led to this included the following: Perhaps Professional Development day could be used in some way to either distribute, review, or

publicize survey instruments for faculty and students in particular. It was noted that next year is a NSSE year, with that tool being administered likely sometime in January. We have room for a few of our own questions to be added to that survey. Other instruments for teams to keep in mind are the Retention Office's survey of students who are leaving, the Senior Survey, and the possibility of using IDST 100 and IDST 400 populations. In the community, we have last summer's SW MN higher ed survey results to draw from that we should be able to get from MnSCU or from the consulting group who conducted it. We also have a survey of Foundation Board Members to draw from. Beth suggested that perhaps SMAC could do a tailored community survey that would also become a way to publicize the impending review from HLC.

B. Overall HLC timeline

Lori quickly reviewed HLC's suggested timeline from the *Handbook on Accreditation* and noted that we are still ahead or right on schedule with their suggestions. She reviewed the timeline that Mary Hickerson had started and that she had revised for the group at the beginning of the process; while the criteria revision kept the teams from getting to full drafts of chapters, much has been accomplished. The evidence-gathering is well underway, and tables of contents for chapters have been drafted by the teams. The analysis of the evidence and documentation will remain a primary task, along with surveys and focus groups, the data from which will need to be considered and incorporated. It is important to remember that the self-study will need to go through several rounds of revision, of the new president's review, and public comment.

Specifically next fall's Professional Development day was discussed. The date published on the academic calendar will shift slightly so that professional development will run over two mornings rather than all in one day; Beth will speak with Vicky Brockman about this change and publicizing it to the faculty. Lori noted that she is meeting with Marcy Olson and that the plan is to roll out an HLC branding/PR campaign in conjunction with Professional Development day.

C. Assessment planning

Betsy described the plan for the next academic year will be to focus on LEP assessment in the fall, with program assessment on-going and receiving more of a public push in the spring. Betsy has ideas for "Lunch and Learn" sessions to run throughout the fall in addition to the LEP assessment work that the LEC will be organizing. These "lunch and learn" activities will complement the Professional Development Day assessment work.
Some specific conversation took place on collecting information regarding professional development activities needed for Criterion 4. Beth noted that Tanya McCoss-Yerigan has good records from her work as CTL leader and the book clubs that she has continued running. Dan has a list of the D2L and other technology training sessions. Beth has put together a list of events and topics from past professional development days and strategic planning days.

III.   Any comments on the collated Table of Contents document

Lori noted that the chapter numbers in the collated TOC were simply placeholders, as the initial contextualizing chapters that need to be added in will change those. Overall the group felt that

seeing all of the teams' tables of contents put together was reassuring and a visual sign of the good progress made to date.

IV.   Other

A. Lori asked for updated names of team members so that thank-you notes can be sent to them.

B. Lori reported that she attended the last SmSUFA Exec meeting of the term along with Betsy and reported on HLC's progress to date.

C. Use of the spreadsheet on the t-drive: Lori noted that no team is putting in info into the data spreadsheet yet. Betsy said that Team #4 has its own full spreadsheet going in their team folder on the t-drive but simply haven't pulled it over yet. Lori noted that some of the tables of contents from the teams had some links in them. The primary concern however is that while data and evidence is being gathered, it isn't yet being centralized. Lori asked the teams to use the spreadsheet on the t-drive or to send her a list of their links and documents so that she can pull the together.

VII.   Next Meeting: to be announced at the beginning of fall term

Those remaining said that Fridays from 9:00 – 10:15 would continue to be a good time to meet next fall. Lori will arrange the meeting schedule.