HLC Steering Committee

Fall 2013 Accomplishments

1) The HLC accreditation site was designed and launched in October. The site is updated each week with information about progress on the materials being developed for the accreditation process. A feedback/question area was developed as part of the website to allow anyone to ask a question of the steering committee at any time. A protocol was established for responding to questions. Steering committee members are asked to provide details about group presentations to Dawn or Tara so they can continue to add this information to the site.

2) The steering committee reviewed each criterion in detail, so questions could be addressed prior to the criteria teams being formed. This allowed people from the entire steering committee to give input to good pieces of evidence that would help with the assurance argument for each part of the criteria. The group also reviewed the open pathway booklet in detail and discussed any outstanding questions that were identified. We then met with our HLC liaison to review questions and get clarification on these items.

3) An organizational structure was developed for the accreditation process. A communication plan was developed for the HLC process. This includes meeting with a variety of groups on a semester basis, providing press releases each semester, updating the website on an ongoing basis, and providing a summary of accomplishments each semester. In addition, a timeline for the accreditation process was developed. Finally, a timeline for the criteria teams was developed. In both cases, a list of deliverables (by semester) was identified for the steering committee and the criteria teams.

4) To further help with the organizational structure of the accreditation process, an executive committee was formed to review procedural issues surrounding the accreditation process. The group consists of Sharon Klavins, Matt Roberts, Dawn Drake, and Dominic Barraclough. This group makes recommendations for the steering committee to consider and also makes decisions to help the process flow smoothly. Some of the work that this group has been involved with includes: identifying training materials for criteria teams, developing protocols and naming conventions for the work being submitted by the criteria teams, developing presentations, identifying materials that need to be developed for distribution, organizing steering committee meetings, organizing criteria team memberships, etc.

5) Several discussions were held about the purpose of the quality initiative, which is the second part of the accreditation process, and is not specifically linked to the assurance argument. After much discussion about a variety of topics, a sub-committee comprised of Sharon Klavins, Dominic Barraclough, and Christina Curras developed a Quality Initiative proposal for
consideration by the group. The concept of the QI is the new APC program review process. After review and updating, the proposal was submitted in mid-December to HLC for approval.

6) The majority of the steering committee participated in the online training associated with using the online assurance system. Matt Roberts is the assurance system administrator for campus.

7) Several members of the steering committee were involved in presenting information about the HLC process to various groups across campus, including: governance groups, academic affairs, college councils, college meetings, individual departments that requested information, APC, Deans, Graduate Council, etc. Each of these meetings involved identifying the major differences between the old accreditation process and the Open Pathway model.

8) The chairs of the criteria teams were identified and various individuals were invited to join the criteria teams. A kick-off meeting for the steering committee and criteria teams was planned. The chairs of the criteria team are as follows:

   Criteria 1: Christina Curras
   Criteria 2: Jim Mueller
   Criteria 3: Shane Drefcinski
   Criteria 4: Colleen McCabe and Laura Bayless
   Criteria 5: Matt Roberts

9) Originally, the group discussed obtaining a software system to use for storing content in preparation for the assurance argument. Since the assurance system is where this information will officially be stored and only a limited amount of people can have access to it, it was determined that we would just use the “S drive” workgroup area and have people submit the information gathered within each criteria team to an individual criteria folder in the workgroup.

10) Several members of the steering committee had a conference call with Jeff Rosen, our HLC liaison to ask questions about the new process, get information about his role with the steering committee and to get input on any concerns we have about the documentation and assurance argument.