

LEARNING OUTCOMES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (LOOC)
Minutes from Wednesday, February 18, 2009
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Alumni Center

In Attendance:

Faye Boudreaux-Bartels	Jayne Richmond
Laura Beauvais	Deborah Rosen
Gary Boden	Robert Shea
Bette Erickson	Judith Swift (Chair)
Elaine Finan	Kathleen Torrens
Anne Hubbard	Chip Yensan
Mary MacDonald	

Judith Swift called the meeting to order. Minutes from the meeting of February 4, 2009 were approved as submitted.

1. Wabash Update (Bob Shea and Elaine Finan)

A team from the *Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education* will be visiting URI on **April 1st**. A tentative visit agenda was distributed and LOOC agreed to a working lunch session with the visiting team. Appointments had been made with the Council of Deans, JSPC, and the Faculty Executive Committee to set additional sessions for the visit. Judith Swift suggested that Laura Beauvais inform the Provost. The visit will include a student focus group session. Assessment instruments will be available on the SLOAA website.

2. Committee Update: Judith Swift announced that LOOC is required to submit an electronic report to the Faculty Senate by April 29, 2009 and to be at the Senate meeting on May 14, 2009. LOOC will still plan to meet, as regularly scheduled, on April 15th to discuss reactions to the Wabash Team visit.

3. SLOAA Update: (Bob Shea and Elaine Finan)

The LOOC charge was distributed to provide context for the planning and goal-setting process taking place in the SLOAA office. Immediate planning and assessment activities are identified and underway. Long-range planning needs to be done within the context of institutional strategic planning process. Bob Shea and Elaine Finan have a meeting scheduled with Laura Beauvais next week to discuss office planning and its relationship to the Provost's Vision Statement and the themes emerging from the Academic Summit. Key areas for the office that are ongoing include:

- Financial oversight
- Personnel management
- Resource development

Assessment Activities

Outreach efforts are underway to help programs move forward with their assessment plans. Bob Shea and Elaine Finan attended the last ASAC (Academic and Student Affairs Committee) meeting and will be doing so going forward. They have also been in contact with OHE (Office of Higher Education) with regard to clarifying program reporting dates. They distributed an updated OHE handout which included a column for the date for next approval. OHE has indicated that programs receiving a level 2 or level 3 will be their immediate focus and are due to report on progress by 11/13/09. LOOC members had questions about the meaning of the rankings, the program ranking process, and the reporting schedule. The SLOAA office will provide LOOC with the OHE rankings rubric and reporting schedule. It was agreed that a LOOC subcommittee would compile a list of concerns and send a memo to OHE.

Judith Swift noted that departments are aware of their level, but she requested the committee to keep the OHE status sheet confidential.

Elaine Finan explained that the SLOAA office is currently working on:

- Wabash administration
- Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)
- GenEd assessment and support
- Administration, funding for SAGE group
- SLOAA Website enhancement
- Supporting Conference Attendance: two faculty are presenting at the AAC&U GenEd Assessment Conference in Maryland; four faculty are attending NEEAN Dialogues in the Disciplines Conference in March in Amherst, MA.
- Development and use of mini-grant money: target assessment efforts in some areas: work with the IDP to develop workshops to address teaching and learning issues emerging from assessment efforts.

Bob Shea noted that the university had migrated to TrueOutcomes version 2 and that most of the bugs are worked out. Cengage is sunsetting this product, though it appears that URI will own the code going forward and computer personnel are confident that it can be sustained locally for the foreseeable future. We will soon need to explore new e-portfolio products including SAKAI.

Judith Swift reminded the Committee that NEASC is returning in fall of 2010 to look at the areas we need to improve on. She also asked Elaine Finan and Bob Shea to discuss the SLOAA office situation and fiscal stability.

4. Letter to the Provost

Judith Swift explained that she feels the letter is still pertinent and noted that URI needs to embrace a culture of assessment. Several committee members raised concerns about the content and timing of the letter.

Bette Erickson stated that she could not endorse the appointment of an acting director as a positive step given that it came at the expense of the IDP.

Jim Kowalski suggested that given the current fiscal climate at the university, it might be time to look at combining the Assessment Office with IDP.

(Discussion that followed included general agreement that there needs to be a full time director in SLOAA and full time assistant director in IDP.)

Cathy English asked whether the letter needed to define exactly what we want from the Provost (i.e., fill the director position, more money, more people, etc.).

Laura Beauvais added that until we have goals and plans in place, it may be premature to ask for specific resources. She suggested the letter include a line that SLOAA is in the process of developing a strategic plan and is working on determining budget needs.

Elaine Finan suggested removing reference to the SLOAA office and only address the culture of assessment.

Judith Swift stated that the letter is from LOOC, not SLOAA. She added that SLOAA will be able to detail what it needs. She will revise a paragraph in question and forward the letter to LOOC members for review.

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 11, 2009, Alumni Center Board Room