

MEMO

To: UTSA SACS COC Reaffirmation Leadership Team

Co-Chairs

Ricardo Romo, President (Executive)
Gerry Dizinno, SACS/COC Liaison (Operational)

Members

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Kerry Kennedy – Vice President for Business Affairs
Jude Valdez – Vice President for Extended Services
Gage Paine – Vice President for Student Affairs
Robert Gracy – Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies
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Robert Baron – Interim Dean, College of Architecture
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Betty Merchant – Dean, College of Education and Human Development
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Dan Gelo, Dean, College of Liberal and Fine Arts
Jesse Zapata – Dean, College of Public Policy
George Perry – Dean, College of Science
Richard Diem – Dean, Honors College
Dorothy Flanagan – Dean, Graduate School
Larry Williams – Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies
David Johnson – Vice Provost for Academics and Faculty Support/Interim Dean of the Library
John McGowan – Vice Provost for Information Technology
Sandy Welch – Vice Provost for Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness
Mansour El-Kikhia, Chair, Faculty Senate
Amy Jaspersen, Faculty Representative
Rena Bizios, Faculty Representative

From: Gerry Dizinno, Associate Vice Provost, Institutional Research; Co-Chair, Leadership Team

RE: Update on SACS COC Reaffirmation Efforts

At our last meeting we described our plans to you regarding both the Compliance Report and the QEP topic selection process. I'd like to take this opportunity to provide you with an update on our progress through the spring semester 2008:

- General Activities:
 - We have adopted a web-based system, called *Insight*, which is formatted for the SACS COC requirements and Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The information collected for reaffirmation of accreditation will be organized and submitted using the templates in this system.
 - Gerry Dizinno is addressing substantive change through ongoing communication with SACS regarding new programs added since our last reaffirmation, distance learning, off-campus locations, etc.
 - Five UTSA representatives will meet with the SACS COC staff and representatives from all other colleges and universities seeking reaffirmation in 2010 in Atlanta for a briefing/orientation.
- Compliance Report
 - Sandy Welch conducted sessions designed to orient/train those writing narrative responses for the Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements that compose the Compliance Report. These sessions covered information on how to construct effective “arguments” for our compliance, and the nature and importance of appropriate documentation of our compliance. Elaine Sanders compiled the compliance reports submitted by three other UT System universities whose accreditation was recently reaffirmed onto CD ROMs for the writers to use as examples of successful narrative and documentation. Each writer has received a personal copy for his or her reference.
 - The writing work is currently in progress. Some of the narratives for report elements that are relatively static in nature will be completed this summer. Others must wait for final data that won’t be available until close to the time of report submission. Our goal is for the writers to complete as many of the drafts as possible this year to free up time next year for attention to reports that cannot be completed in advance, for review and final editing.
 - Elaine Sanders and Janice Kramer are working with personnel in IT to develop a faculty information data base, *FAIR*, for use in compiling faculty activity information and workload for reaffirmation. Elaine also developed faculty credentialing forms for faculty members to provide documentation regarding their qualifications. She has met twice with the department chairs and other interested individuals to talk about the credentialing process. She is working with departments on an issue-by-issue basis to help them get the forms completed and submitted. Approximately 80 completed forms have been received to date. These forms will serve as the input for the faculty roster form required for reaffirmation. The faculty roster form has been designed and is awaiting the upload of faculty data.
 - While assessment is an activity independent of reaffirmation, it is a necessary part of reaffirmation. Steve Wilkerson is coordinating the assessment work of various teams across campus. This includes facilitating the improvement of current assessment and entering the assessment plans for every institutional unit into the university’s planning and assessment tool, *TracDat*. In addition, Nancy Martin and Steve Wilkerson are coordinating the assessment of the Core Curriculum along with liaisons from each College represented in the Core Curriculum.
 - Gerry Dizinno is addressing substantive change (new programs added since our last reaffirmation, distance learning, off-campus locations, etc.) communications on an ongoing basis.
 - Sandy will provide a more detailed update at our first Leadership Team meeting early in the fall 2008 semester.

- QEP Topic Selection
 - The spring semester was devoted to communicating the QEP selection process and requirements of the QEP to the university community and to initiating the QEP topic selection process:
 - Dr. Belinda Flores conducted 19 sessions with various groups of the university, including almost 580 faculty, administrators, students and staff. These sessions provided information on the requirements for successful QEPs and the process that we were using to ultimately result in a single topic.
 - As a reminder, our process involved soliciting “pre-proposals” from the community – using a short form that we provided – that allowed groups and individuals to briefly identify the topic that they were interested in pursuing, the importance of that topic to UTSA, and how student learning would be improved.
 - The QEP Committee, consisting of 17 faculty, staff, students, reviewed the 14 pre-proposals received.
 - QEP Pre-Proposal Results:
 - Four topics were selected as finalists. The teams who developed these pre-proposals have been awarded a \$2,500 stipend to “flesh out” their pre-proposals into full proposals.
 - The following were selected as finalists:
 - *Maximizing the Relevance of Graduate Education for Current and Prospective Students* submitted by Dorothy Flannagan, Dean of the Graduate School; Ben Olguin, Associate Professor, English, Classics and Philosophy; Gabriel Acevedo, Associate Professor, Sociology; Scott Sherer, Assistant Professor, Art & Art History; William McCrary, Associate Professor, Music; and James Dykes, Associate Professor, Psychology.
 - *Quantitative Scholarship: From Literacy to Mastery* submitted by David Senseman, Associate Professor, Biology; Nandini Kanna, Professor, Management Science and Statistics; Kay A. Robbins, Professor, Computer Science; Nancy Martin, Associate Professor, Counseling, Educational Psychology, Adult & Higher Education.
 - *Service Learning: The Paseo to Life-long Learning* submitted by Lisa Blazer, Assistant Vice-President, Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services; Nancy Martin, COEHD Undergraduate Dean; Rosalie Ambrosino, Professor Social Work; Alycia Maurer, Senior Lecturer, Interdisciplinary Learning & Teaching; Jennifer Lilly, Assistant Director, Inclusion & Community Engagement Center; Gabriel Mendiola, Assistant Director, Financial Aid and Enrollment Services; Barry McKinney, Director, Student Activities; and Elizabeth Stanczak, Executive Director of Health and Counseling Services
 - *The Global Graduate: Higher Education for Leadership and Success that Transcend Regional and National Boundaries* submitted by Joellen Coryell, Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching; David

R. Johnson, Vice-Provost for Academic and Faculty Support; Elizabeth Pate, Professor and Chair, Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching; and Robin R. Wright, Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching.

- Next: Steps in Selecting the QEP:
 - We will hold public forums in September 2008, prior to the QEP proposal submission due date, during which each of the groups will have the opportunity to present their ideas and receive broad based feedback as they are finalizing their proposals.
 - The due date for submitting the full proposals to the QEP Committee for evaluation is October 1st.
 - The QEP Committee will then provide recommendations regarding the QEP proposals to the Leadership Team.
 - The Leadership Team will then forward recommendations for final action/selection to the CMO. This last step is vital, since the QEP will require a (often significant) commitment of institutional resources for implementation.

If you have any questions, please contact Gerry Dizinno (general information on the reaffirmation process), Sandy Welch (overall progress and Compliance Report), or Belinda Flores (QEP). We anticipate that the Leadership Team will require two meetings in the fall 2008 semester. The first meeting will be held early in the semester to review progress regarding compliance reporting, and the second will be held to consider the recommendations of the QEP Committee for selecting the QEP topic. We will contact you as soon as we know the exact dates, times, and locations for these meetings.

Thanks for your help!