



STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL

Thursday, October 9, 2014

Ammerman Campus

Mildred Green Room

MINUTES

In attendance:

Dr. Christopher Adams	Anindita Ghosh	Dr. Lanette Raymond
Drew Biondo	Dr. Janet Haff	Gary Ris
Gwendolyn Branch	Myung-Chul Kim	Raymond Roses
Joanne Braxton	Theodore Koukounas	Dr. Christopher Shults
Dr. Caroline Burns	Dr. Dorothy Laffin	George Tvelia
Dr. Philip Christensen	Elisa Mancuso	Dr. Helen Wittmann
Dr. Marc Fellenz	Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen	Dr. Catherine Wynne

Theodore Koukounas began the meeting at 3:50pm by greeting the membership and welcoming everyone back. The February minutes were sent out instead of the minutes from April. We don't have the April minutes on hand because of the change in structure [new co-chair]. We will follow up on the April minutes by the following day.

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Discussed Operational Planning and what was learned
 - Last year was first year we sat down and went through whole operational planning process; hit some snags and learned things as we went along.
 - Learned the operational planning process was very complicated and took up a lot of time for people involved; an operational planning survey was given to those working on the operational planning piece to help work out any kinks; want to make the process as useful as possible and not onerous for people who have to do it.
 - When the college community formulated Institutional Goals (IGs), we also had Measureable Institutional Objectives (MIOs); MIOs are used to see if we are making progress on achieving the IGs; those IGs were for 2012/13-2020 and now need to go back and see if the objectives are still relevant to what we are doing and how we measure them.
 - Have some key performance indicators set up but need to go in-depth to see, now that we have some baseline data from 2012 and 2013, where do we want to be in 2015 and 2017 with many of the IGs. Want to look at today and plan out how to approach over the next year.

Suffolk County Community College promotes intellectual discovery, physical development, social and ethical awareness, and economic opportunities for all through education that transforms lives, builds communities and improves society.

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Dr. Christopher Shults:

- Discussed the operational plan, the process and where we are now
 - Everyone became familiar last year with operational planning, which was an attempt to operationalize how we achieve our strategic plan with the IGs and MIOs. Last year's process was truncated, put together in 2-3 weeks because of Middle States. Usually takes 2-3 months. Ended up with around 150-200 plans. When you do operational planning and you want to do progress reporting you have to provide progress on each action plan in operational plan.
 - For 1st and 2nd quarter reports, individuals provided information which was tedious, especially for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs who have about 80-85% of the plans. By 3rd quarter, was apparent it would be difficult to continue down that track. Do need to provide a report for the end of the 1st year.
 - Met with Dr. Pedersen, Dr. Adams and Dr. DeLongoria to develop a quick template to get an update for all IGs and MIOs for the 1st year. The template will also be provided to VP Araneo and General Counsel Petrizzo where 5 & 6 fall under. Asking for a narrative where you go by each IG and MIO that you have responsibility for and provide overall updates as opposed to tracking every plan. Should track progress for every one but because of process used there was too much in the operational plan. For 2014/15 will take input from SPC survey as well as other information gathered and introduce a new operational planning process in November. Focus on better connection between Central and campuses; have more prioritization of what goes into operational plan to make tracking of progress easier; and providing progress information that is useful to those engaged in plans as well as those who need to have information on plans.
 - Start thinking about September 1, 2015 when progress report is due to Middle States. Need to look at evaluation and review of Comprehensive Assessment Plan for Institutional Effectiveness (CAPIE). Operational Planning is one of the central tenants in the CAPIE. SPC is responsible for oversight of the operational plan. Need to demonstrate that we are following the CAPIE, are continually evaluating the CAPIE and that we are seeking to improve it and our planning process.
 - The executive summary of last year's operational plan should be available second week of November and will be major part of our first Institutional Effectiveness Report. Will highlight all progress made on assessment, planning and integrated planning which includes budgeting and our operational planning for the last year.
 - Timelines were stressed to the VPs. In the CAPIE timelines the Nov/Dec/Jan period when budget presentations are being prepared, VPs and Executive Deans should be looking at assessment results. The Budgeting Office has developed a template to look at budgeting requests against use of results for suggested changes. Will be our first full cycle of integrated planning where we are able to document using resources ensuring accomplishment.
 - Encouraged people to go to the Middle States website and look under our college and look at the letter they sent in June because it states what's expected of us and we need to make sure that the CAPIE and what's in the minds of the SPC and AAC reflects what's requested in that letter.

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Discussed the Operational Planning Survey
 - At the end of last year a subgroup of the SPC put together an operational planning survey that was sent to people who were listed in the Operational Plan itself as leads in certain areas or supervising whole different divisions of the college. Dr. Caroline Burns put together a 36-37 page report from the material gathered. Didn't send out to everyone because there was a flaw in that one of the respondents who was responsible for a large measure of the report made one response for the first IG and then said to Dr. Burns to put it in for all their IGs. The plans were all different so that skewed the results. Pulled out that response that went for everything and found some commonalities.
 - 8 people contacted Dr. Burns right away saying they didn't know they were involved even though they were listed as part of the Operational Plan, or that they didn't know what IG they were assigned to. As Dean of Instruction, Dr. Pedersen and Dr. Dorothy Laffin were in Operational Plan but didn't know until he was sent the document to proofread it. Obviously not contacted in terms of planning and that is the type of stuff that needs to be addressed. The College likes to pull people together, wants everybody to be a part of the process of institutional planning with administration to make it work well but everybody needs to know. Need to work on communication.
 - Several leads did not inform those involved in getting input to create the plans or in letting them know they had responsibilities
 - Recommendations to streamline the process; fewer action plans should be incorporated
 - Very little prioritization to action plans; want means to prioritize things; looking at way to prioritize action plans
 - Better timelines that make more sense for the culture of the institution; perhaps semester based reporting structure instead of corporate based; like January and June report with executive report at end of summer instead of quarterly
 - Communication with people; means for leads to report back to supervisor of area so that it could get into the report so that it could get to the President
 - Overwhelming that every time a new cycle started, a new report had to be filled out; won't work well with trying to keep track of progress. Operational Plan is too long (75 pages). Means to take operational planning template and action plans, prioritize them and put in an easily readable format and everything can be in one place and SPC can have access to it. Use to see how we are doing and how we measure success.

Theodore Koukounas:

- Thanked members of the IG sub-committees and Dr. Caroline Burns. Last year they created a very well thought out series of questions with the help of Dr. Burns. The subcommittees worked diligently and met deadlines.
- Look at how to make things better especially with regard to annual operational plan and reporting templates so they easily speak to each other; possibly change some of the vocabulary so it's easier to understand
- Revisit subcommittee structure and have recommendations come from them about what types of templates to use and what should be included in the templates

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Want to discuss with group about what would be most helpful on templates in trying to keep track of progress of goals and action plans that are set
- At Cabinet retreat spoke about people in charge of divisions having people from their areas contributing to creating action plans as opposed to a VP telling the leads what the plans will be; trying to get ahead of development phase
- Review templates handed out and see what is helpful to keep or refine as we create a template. Have reporting template be with operational planning template so it's all in one place and eliminate need for multiple reports to refer to

Theodore Koukounas:

- Want to move together with sub-committee structure to work to begin to explore templates

Anindita Ghosh:

- Some things were listed as action plans that were considered maintenance; asked if there is a list of items that should be there and should be addressed

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- In next planning cycle want to work with people planning it to make that distinction; some maintenance could be action plans

Dr. Christopher Shults:

- OPIE website has guidelines to help understand the purpose of an Operational Plan

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- 2013-14 Annual Operational Plan template given to people to create plans; review that template to get input on where it might be improved; problem is that people don't understand what an action plan is; need better definition of what is being asked for in an action plan

Dr. Christopher Shults:

- General planning and action plan should state what initiative or action will be accomplished; gave retention plan example (ensure collaboration across multiple groups to develop the plan)

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Gave demonstration of where there is an issue
 - Action plan for student success, one of the action plans listed was to increase visibility, access and use of academic support specifically writing centers, math and skills centers and VLC; Dr. Shults said it was an inventory of tasks; Dorothy Laffin stated that sounded more like a goal than an action plan; VP Pedersen said it gave lead responsibilities, Dean of Instruction, Title III leadership, Executive Deans and Campus Associate Deans but nobody said who was to do which of those pieces; became list of things as opposed to an actual plan; method of assessment is number of students accessing support services and number of visits but nothing measured student success

Theodore Koukounas:

- Have IGs and objectives, and actions help us determine how well we are meeting those objectives; action plan has to be measurable and able to be tracked

Gary Ris:

- Could have tracked that action plan; if the example wasn't right, what would have been right as an action plan; what changes task list to action plan

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- First ask what you are trying to achieve; if students will do better academically if they do this list of things; used Title III reporting problems as example (student's GPA will go up if they use VLC but wanted to compare against general population except didn't take into account self-selection – a different type of student chooses to use VLC); establish things that are going to help and have helped

Joanne Braxton:

- An example would it make better sense to say for developmental courses want to reduce number of W's by X% and by going to VLC or learning centers we hope to see that result? Is that an action plan as opposed to them just going to the place and not knowing what happens because they did go?

Dr. Christopher Shults:

- If that is your action plan, and it could be, VLC would be method but you are not limited to one method; may have one or two things you know based on prior research should work or something you want to test but has to be clear; may want to establish a target and get a baseline for first year; saw in most cases method found its way into the action plan

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Good example given by Joanne; need to know what you're trying to accomplish; just trying to get students to go or reduce number of W's

Theodore Koukounas:

- Percentiles could be your target or aspiring for

Dr. Dorothy Laffin:

- Part of struggle is that an action plan is different than an objective and if your objective is to reduce the number of W's that sounds like an objective; action plan is how you're going to do it; action would be going to every developmental class and speak to students at least twice during first 7 weeks to spread word

Theodore Koukounas:

- Need to clean up vocabulary so everyone understands; same process with General Education assessment; went through long cycle trying to understand the idea of what is a measurable student learning outcome; plan and report should easily speak to each other; hoping subcommittee can come up with good recommendations on what to use for each of the categories and language within the categories

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- An example of an action plan was research and identify best practice to support students in and accelerate student completion of gateway courses; should be doing that anyway; not an action plan

Anindita Ghosh:

- Wanting to improve an accelerating the process is an action plan; already doing what we should be doing but wanting to improve on it is an action plan

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- Ghosh is correct; should already be doing research; another example is reviewing curricula, conduct curriculum review of a minimum of four gateway courses; are we not doing that regularly? Should already be doing as part of our job; should be more substantial than what we are setting out to do

Dr. Dorothy Laffin

- Suggested that if you took the word “plan” out from the document and said list actions that will be undertaken to accomplish this objective, it would be easier to understand

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- There seems to be a piece missing; the objective is the College will, during the period 2013-2020, increase the completion rate of first time full time students in gateway courses through enhanced engagement with faculty, academic support and student services; the middle piece is reducing the number of students needing development courses and what action do you take to do that

Raymond Roses:

- Pointed out that a problem may be that we are not using the tools we might already have and used the withdrawal form as an example. The reasons why students are withdrawing from a course should be looked at, compiled and assistance offered to help improve retention rates,.

Dr. Christopher Adams:

- In Student Affairs they have AES unit reviews (two from last year and two more this year) and Student Affairs Assessment Council is finishing up closing the loop activities from last year and constructing for this year. There is just so much going on and it would be helpful to streamline the process. Dr. Adams thinks that the IGs are incredibly worthy but the MIOs are overwhelming. We are constantly comparing to previous years but thinking ahead to 2020 is ambitious. Would like to simplify and think what success would look like in the next year. He believes that would be more helpful.

Dr. Christopher Shults:

- Explained that MIOs essentially are strategic objectives but we don't call them that to avoid confusion. The operational plan is supposed to say that on a year to year basis here is the progress we want to make to achieve this larger institutional goal.

Theodore Koukounas:

- You can look at MIOs and create your own actions of progress to meeting MIOs; can look at graduation rates and link to retention or can change action at some point and look at something else

Dr. Christopher Adams:

- Want to pick a few things that are important and focus on them; an example is a central call center because 50% of calls are going unanswered during peak times; huge problem for retention and engagement and frustration for staff as well as students; doesn't fit with integrated planning during assessment and closing the loop

Dr. Christopher Shults:

- Should only put priorities in operational plan; should help achieve objective of increased retention; operational plan should have priorities as determined by divisions and campuses used to help with budget requests and budget allocation

Elisa Mancuso:

- Might be helpful to give concrete examples of an action plan, an initiative; discussed Nursing using TEAS exam because they were finding students with high GPAs were not academically successful in the program

Joanne Braxton:

- Process needs to be more streamlined; definitions need to be simple; people are confused and the process gets stagnate because people don't know what to do

Dr. Jeffrey Pedersen:

- The next steps are to set up a couple of committees to come up with a nice template, which Dr. Laffin volunteered for, and also for operational vocabulary. Will communicate by email to solidify things.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05pm.