Georgia Southern University
IE Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting Notes
November 1, 2011 4:00 p.m.
Marvin Pittman Admin. 2002

In Attendance: T. Moore, Dr. Zerwas, W.B. Mitchell, C. Krug, J. Bartels, T. Thompson, S. Burrell, R. Core, M. Copeland, Lisa Bridges (for C. Patterson)

Discussion:

SACS Worksheet
Dr. Moore welcomed attendees and presented the current draft of the Steering Committee’s SACS Worksheet. He also welcomed Bede Mitchell as representative of the Henderson Library and its particular sections and suggested that the committee add Salinda Arthur, VPUA. Dr. Zerwas reminded committee members that the current worksheet assignments are a “best guess,” based on discussions with the Provost’s and President’s offices, so tasks can be reassigned and individuals can delegate as needed. He reminded everyone that it is not necessary for the committee to think in terms of a full SACS review, but to ask the question: Are we prepared to respond to these questions?

Dr. Core asked for clarification of 3.2.2.2, regarding fiscal stability of the institution. We need to determine if this is asking if there is fiscal stability or who has oversight of fiscal stability. Dr. Zerwas will confirm and report to committee.

Dr. Zerwas reported for 3.3.1 we are ahead of where we were last year, and the faculty credentials situation (3.7) has improved as well.

Based on group discussion of the current assignments, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will revise the current worksheet and distribute to committee members after receiving the Provost’s approval. The revised worksheet will be sent to all committee members in advance of the next scheduled meeting. Dr. Moore also suggested that models of successful SACS reports would be helpful so the committee has some models of what actual responses look like. Dr. Zerwas indicated that the SACS website includes templates that can provide guidance, and it was agreed that OIE would provide models successful responses as well.

QEP

- Dr. Zerwas explained that it’s usually good practice to start thinking about a QEP 2-3 years prior to the review, so it’s not a high priority at this time.
- Dr. Bartels asked if the charge to the current QEP committee involved selecting the new QEP and stated that GSU’s committee is to be commended for the work they’ve done; some institutions have entire departments devoted to just the QEP.
Dr. Zerwas indicated that it’s good process to look for heavy faculty involvement, rather than depending on one person. Students should also be involved.

We need to have training on what QEP is and a QEP planning committee that addresses both how we write the QEP and how we assess the QEP.

SACS has pulled back a bit on the scope required of the QEP. It no longer has to reach every single student.

General Discussion
Dr. Krug asked if the SGA might be involved in reviewing GSU’s SACS report? Is this something encouraged and/or accepted by SACS? This led to a broader question by Dr. Bartels as to who should actually be included in writing the reports. Could we involve students in drafting some of the reports or establish a review process through the SGA and/or GSO, for example? It was agreed there may be some areas that would benefit from student involvement, but at what stages and to what extent remain to be determined.

Dr. Zerwas distributed a handout detailing the long-term process for review, covering years six through ten of a ten year continuous process.

- GSU is currently in year six. Our site visit will be in March 2015; SACS will go back three years, so our data needs to start with academic year 2012-2013.
- Compliance report software, if used, should be in place a full year prior to the actual report.
- If we do decide to change from WEAVE as a compliance-reporting software, this change should happen after the 10-year review.
- As we continue to prepare for the review and build our infrastructure, it is critical that we address:
  - Can we identify outcomes?
  - Do we have evidence of achievement of those outcomes?
  - Can we take action to improve those outcomes?
  - What improvements were implemented? Based on what evidence?

Dr. Zerwas raised the question of an Annual Report. Should GSU prepare one whether or not USG requires one? It has not been required in recent years, so GSU has not officially prepared one. And if we do decide to implement it, should it be a standard report? WEAVE does have a place for annual reporting, and we do have the option of determining what is populated and how.

Consensus was that if units are entering their information into WEAVE, they should be able to capture the appropriate information.
Dr. Zerwas also asked how the committee viewed Strategic Planning as related to the Annual Reporting process. GSU has four fairly broad elements, but are there also unit strategic plans that are related to these four themes? And is there value in having individual strategic plans with the units showing how what they do is related to the overall strategic plan? Dr. Thompson indicated that there is some structure in place, and Dr. Moore concurred that it’s not a matter of having a plan, per se, but perhaps documenting that plan. The Faculty Handbook specifies a process for planning, and a lot of issues came out of the summer workshop in July which was based on GSU’s four strategic themes.

Next Meeting
Thursday, December 8 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. in Marvin Pittman 2002