

## Meeting Minutes - Senate Assessment Council

February 16, 2017

Present: Bahar Ashnai; Cara Berg; Pam Brillante; Meredith Drew; Jae Kim; Jill Nocella; Jen Owlett; Jane Zeff; Associate Provost Jonathan Lincoln, guest

Absent due to illness: Kendall Martin

The meeting was called to order and introductions were made. Jane Zeff took minutes. Associate Provost Lincoln was invited to discuss the program review process at William Paterson University. A set of questions were sent prior to the committee meeting that guided his comments. Jonathan started with the last question: *At the University level, clear goals for the review process are important because of the potential impact for Middle States. How does program review tie in to institutional effectiveness? How is this reflected in the format of the review?* Jonathan pointed out that program review is one of the primary ways of documenting what we are doing in the assessment arena; it shows where we are and where we want to go in the future (building on what we are currently doing). Big picture program review helps us with accreditation and middle states.

Jonathan pointed out we don't necessarily have as clear a review process as we could. Our program review manual is 27 years old and perhaps the questions don't necessarily reflect the questions we want to be answering. An important need is to expand on what is a focused program review. The process is mentioned in the manual but not described. The academic department is the biggest audience in the program review process so having the means to have a focused review would be most helpful. The department knows what it wishes to accomplish and having the ability to focus on that process rather than answering every question in the manual should be an option. Jonathan is working on defining the focused process.

A question was asked about the interplay between accreditation and program review and not duplicating the need for both. Our process needs a bit of tweaking. Jonathan pointed out what's good in our process. Our cycle is closer to eight years and this gives the departments time to do and use the reports. Middle States accreditation process is now on an eight-year cycle too. The other aspect of our program review that is unique is the department works with the dean to develop a memorandum of understanding or action. This tells us what is going to be done next; while the program review process is over it is not ended. What is done with the review is defined in the action items in the MOU (odd terminology). There is a midterm check point written in to the plan which is another strong point of the process.

The Provost office is working on getting the process restarted and useful. So, the manual will be revised. Jonathan has taken a stab at it and when it's ready faculty senate councils will have copies to review. Discussed a bit of what is going on in the communication department who is undergoing program review of its programs and how a focused review might be quite helpful to the department. Pick a few of the issues and concentrate on them and not everything. The issues addressed may even help in determining which reviewer is brought in. Jonathan is working on getting a model of a good review for department's to see. Anthropology gave Jonathan permission to share their review document. They revised their assessment plan and asked the outside reviewer for comments about the new process.

The Biology department had a different experience. While theirs was a full length review they too asked their reviewer to concentrate on certain issues they wanted help with.

Jonathan was asked can program review be used to address the University's needs, e.g. increase enrollment? He used anthropology again as an example. The program would like to grow they are concerned and are asking their reviewer for help. How can they engage undeclared students and get them into the major.

Jonathan was asked about what happened with Geography's review. Jonathan said the discussions were frank but no one was told that the program was being closed.

How do we make the review process part of our campus culture? Is there a policy that says we need to do program review? Jonathan will try and put together something for councils to review.

Adjourned

Respectfully,

Dr. Kendall J. Martin, Chair, Senate Assessment Council