

TO: Faculty Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Edward Kinman, Interim Assistant Dean for Cook-Cole College of Arts & Sciences

RE: Proposal for creation of new Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Outcomes and Program Review

DATE: 5 February 2010

Proposed:

A new Faculty Senate committee is being proposed to address SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.4.12 which states, **“The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty.”**

While two current committees are addressing aspects of this principle (EPC for content, and General Education for content, quality, and effectiveness of general education curriculum), there is no oversight related to quality and effectiveness of the programs that are not governed by accreditation associations.

Context:

Since assuming the role of Interim Assistant Dean for CCCAS, I’ve conducted an “assessment of assessment” for the college. A number of issues have been identified related to compliance of Longwood’s assessment policy. Given that most programs within CCCAS are not accredited and do not require systematic assessment by external agencies, the quality of assessment within the college is uneven. While administrators can monitor and provide evaluations of Biennial Reports and Program Reviews, the issue of having these activities done by faculty remains. Longwood needs to demonstrate to SACS how curriculum evaluations are conducted by faculty and show attention to curriculum quality and effectiveness for all programs, including those with external accreditation associations.

The lack of consistency for Longwood is not new. On page 40 of the 2000-2003 Longwood University Self Study, the committee “Found a wide range of Institutional Effectiveness procedures in place across the various undergraduate educational programs. All undergraduate programs have defined their purpose in a documented mission that supports the educational mission of the University. Varying degrees of complexity and intricacy characterize the academic programs' procedures for evaluating the extent to which educational goals are being achieved.” The committee continues to report on page 41 that an, “...examination of the academic units indicated that all departments had developed clearly established goals and clearly defined methods of evaluation. However, some departments, while having a clear sense of mission and an informal process for program revision, needed to formalize and document their program review criteria and processes as well as demonstrate how evaluation data was used for program improvement.”

There are also issues related to Program Reviews. First, the Program Review Policy needs periodic evaluation to insure information needs for both SACS and SCHEV are being met without being too burdensome on faculty. Having a faculty-controlled committee will keep faculty concerns in mind. Implementation of the current Program Review Policy has been a problem. Second, the current policy hasn’t been followed for a number of years. An audit of the Arts & Sciences program reviews found no evidence since 2002 that external reviewers (two faculty members external to a department) participated in the process. The new proposed committee will provide a better structure for Program Reviews to be examined, look for uniformity of results, and provide constructive feedback to programs.

Mc Amoss has been consulted about this committee. We discussed a number of options to address Standard 3.4.12 and concluded this would be the best approach. EPC has a very fully plate already and the General Education Committee will be very busy with assessing general education courses as learning-outcome data begin to be entered in WEAVEonline.

Committee on Academic Outcomes Assessment and Program Review

- 1. Purpose and Duties:** The committee shall be responsible for promoting the quality and effectiveness of the academic curriculum. The committee will monitor, oversee, and evaluate academic Biennial Reports, Program Reviews, and Accreditation Studies to ascertain the extent of compliance with Longwood's assessment policy. The committee will evaluate all academic assessment reports except for those related to general education (which is under the purview of the Committee on General Education). The committee will also make recommendations to the Senate on issues related to assessment of academic programs.
- 2. Membership:** 5 full-time faculty (minimum of one Senator)
- 3. Ex-officio Members:** Assessment Coordinator from Office of Assessment and Institutional Research (non-voting) and the 4 Assistant/Associate Deans (voting) with assessment responsibilities (one from College of Arts and Sciences, one from College of Business and Economics, one member from College Education and Human Services, and one from Graduate and Extended Studies).
- 4. Tenure Restrictions:** None
- 5. Departmental Restrictions:** No more than 1 from a department.
- 6. College Restrictions:** None.
- 7. Other Restrictions:** None.
- 8. Term of Office:** The term of office shall be for three years and the terms of service will be staggered. Members may be reappointed.
- 9. Method of Selection:** The 5 full-time faculty will be nominated by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and approved by the Faculty Senate. The 4 Assistant/Associate Deans and Assessment Coordinator from Office of Assessment and Institutional Research are selected by virtue of position
- 10. Chair:** Appointed by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate
- 11. Reporting Route:** To the Faculty Senate