SELF-STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2008

Attendees: Paul Sarantakos, Terry Adcock, Randy Fletcher, Kris Young, Linden Warfel, Sue Schreiber, Pam Lau, Kevin Hastings, Rite Myles, Kim Mills, Bernard Cailloutt, Don Nolan, Seamus Reilly, Linda Moore, Ruthie Counter, Dave Leake

1. The committee welcomed Don Nolan as the new part-time faculty representative. Mr. Nolan was the chair of the accreditation effort for the _____ team visit.

2. Information Resource Team
   Dean Randy Fletcher, chair of the IRT reported that the team met for the first time last month. The goal was to outline information management as it relates to the Higher Learning Commission. They will bind the five criterion teams together and present information in an evaluative sense. They will look at systems that are already in place with an eye to effectiveness and efficiency. Specifically, members of the team will:
   - Sit in on meetings
   - Finalize a data needs form in an effort to streamline requests and assist in the decision-making as to what goes in the chapter narratives and what belongs in the appendices.
   - Create and manage the Resource Room – catalog and classify data sets in both hardcopy and electronic form plus help the HLC team understand what is present in the room.
   - Facilitate communication throughout the process to external stakeholders and maintain a web presence. At the end of the process, facilitate third party comment from the community. Dean Fletcher recommended that we identify a sitting president with evaluator training at a state institution to read a draft of our self-study to offer comment.
   - Dean Fletcher also recommended a session(s) at the Center on evaluative writing.

The Information Resource Team will meet again this month to break up tasks. They will work with the new IAR person and Gordon Green in Campus Technologies on obtaining an institutional snapshot, which can appear in part in each chapter or as a chapter and/or appendix of its own.

3. Center Session #1 Brainstorming
   Our first session in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning focusing on Criterion #1 was well attended (about 26 people). The group was a nice cross-section of the different groups on campus. Amy said that we need either a powerpoint or video of a general overview of the accreditation process to save more time for criterion brainstorming. People who were in attendance offered their comments:
   - People were generally positive and unafraid to share their views.
• Will the same people come to a different session on a different criterion?
• Kevin Hastings said he “recruited” 2-3 people to be on his Criterion #1 team. He was very pleased with the feedback he received.
• It will be easier to obtain volunteers when the structure and framework are set in place.
• We should be sure to invite people who were involved with a particular criterion for the last self-study. Who is still here? Criterion chairs should look at the last self-study.
• There is much overlap in the core components in all five of the criteria.
• We need to approach this from an evaluative point-of-view and not just describe what we’re currently doing.
• There was a short discussion on the difference between Criterion #3 and #4. Criterion #3 should include both academic and support assessment at the program level and demonstrate how the assessment process operates and how it affects curricular change. Criterion #4 will assess general education objectives of our core, plus lifelong learning and faculty/staff professional development. How do we demonstrate competency? The assessment subcommittee chaired by Seth Mendelowitz is looking at this. There are instruments out there that we could possibly use.
• We should try to have our criterion teams in place by March, 2009. The five criteria chairs may start “recruiting” at any time.
• The Editing Committee will supply some sample templates before March. We might even look at a few template ideas over the Christmas break.

4. Process Design Update
After much discussion and consultation with the editing team, it was proposed that we design the self-study around the stated core components. These components may be found online at ___________________________. The criterion chairs need to examine the core components and decide how to line up chapters. The easiest and simplest way would be to have one chapter per core component. Each chair can decide if they want to recruit people to specific chapters or to recruit to a criterion team and then divide into chapters. Dean Fletcher will provide a copy of John Logan Community College’s self-study which is subdivided according to the core components. It was noted that John Logan received good feedback from their report. Look especially at their table of contents. It is a good model.

For items that appear in more than one core component we have the option of putting the data in an appendix and then merely refer to this appendix in the narrative. The proposal to use this design was approved by the Steering Committee.

It may be possible to add a chapter in each criterion for a case study or a focused chapter. In such a chapter, we can take a more personal and/or more evaluative approach to a specific area, such as the Center for Academic Success or the planning process.
5. Formation of Chapter Committees
The discussion centered around how to recruit people to chapter committees. It was suggested to have a chapter chair for each core component. It will be up to the criterion chair to determine if they want to recruit people to the criterion and then subdivide or to recruit to the chapters themselves. We must remember to recruit across the college and not just the people you know. We also want to get new faculty and staff involved. Linda Moore stated that we should not forget employees in both Student Services and Academic Services. We want diversity on our teams. Ideally we want people who are passionate about a specific area. Don Nolan suggested an all-college meeting for recruiting. The next scheduled meeting would be Prep Week in August – is this too late in the timeline? Who on campus possibly served on a chapter at another college? Chapter committees will want to hear definite plans. Dean Fletcher suggested that we consider bringing either Lynn Pretty or Karen Soloman, both from HLC, to campus in the fall of 2009 for advice. They are high-energy experts on the new criteria. During the last self-study, Peter Ewell from NCHEMS visited in the middle of the process. Amy reminded everyone of the timeline where we collect and analyze data during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years.

6. Web site update
Dave reported that the web site is up and running with links to our last self-study and the HLC handbook. All Steering Committee minutes appear on the site. It was suggested that we put a link under “models” to the John Logan document. We also need to fill in the “about the accreditation process” link. The web site is 

7. Miscellaneous and Open Discussion
- Don Nolan asked if we had set benchmarks. More than just the general timeline, benchmarks would alert each chapter committee as to where it should be at a particular time.
- Dean Fletcher suggested a “self-study manual” that includes an expanded timeline, committee benchmarks, template information, the roles of each player in the process and maybe a FAQ section. Terry suggested that it could even be in workbook format with blanks to fill in when benchmarks were reached. It would be roughly a 10-page “how to” document.
- Keep in mind our self-study should be evaluative and not just a snapshot of the campus. We need to document processes. It will be important to look at the 2002 self-study as a starting point and then bridge to our current document.
- Amy pointed out that Mike Coulter and Chris Foster (PCTV) have done some filming of some campus events for possible use.