

**Academy of Distinguished Teachers  
Twin Cities Steering Committee**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, December 13, 2007  
115 Morrill Hall, 7:30-9:00 a.m.**

**Present:** Jay Hatch, Gail Peterson, Maria Gini, Vern Cardwell, Deborah Levison, Jim Rothenberger, Kristin Anderson, Karen Zentner Bacig

**Regrets:** Mike White, Mary Rowan

**Guests:** Rich Howard, Director, Institutional Research and Ron Huesman, Assistant Director, Institutional Research

**Discussion with Rich Howard, Director, and Ron Huesman, Assistant Director,  
Institutional Research – Teaching Metrics**

Metrics looking both at currently available data as well as what else we might use as the basis for comparison relative to the various metrics for faculty excellence, and other areas.

FCC has a subcommittee looking at faculty measures of excellence, chaired by Jennifer Windsor.

Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). Now called “College Portrait.” Created in partnership with NASULGC and AACSB to provide public information relative to graduation rates, time to degree, assessment of student learning, etc. One of most difficult parts of VSA effort is measuring student learning. University of California system has opted out of VSA participation. Focus at this point is undergraduate education.

Tools being looked at for use by institutions to measure learning include the CAAP, MAPP, and the CLA. Many institutions have opted for use of the CLA.

One issue is whether to follow a cohort longitudinally with one of these measures or whether to sample freshmen and seniors randomly. The other issue is the need to stratify to look at different kinds of students, who progress through the system very differently.

GRE was looked at for possible participation in the VSA. They declined.

Purpose of metrics is to create a reliable, valid measure of teaching excellence as part of faculty excellence. Rich sees a connection between measuring learning and this metric.

No way currently to make a statement about the quality of teaching and learning based on the student evaluations of teaching, according to Rich.

Other institutions have brought teams of faculty together to create rubrics around various, for example, general education areas. Challenge is somehow to roll this up to something that provides an institutional picture relative to some level of accountability.

Is it realistic to look at student satisfaction, student evaluations of teaching, faculty teaching, etc. across an institution as large and diverse as ours? Do some of the proposed approaches to

measuring learning gains only address the lowest common denominator while not getting at the varying ways in which disciplines “know”?

Many fields have national, standardized tests to certify graduates in certain areas. Should we be looking at a combination of institutionally collected data as well as data from various programs that have such exams from which we can also have data that has a national comparison group? This works for many professional areas, but there are many other disciplines that do not have such an assessment. We have liberal education plus disciplinary learning.

There are also efforts to survey employers as well as alumni relative to their satisfaction with their learning/educational experience. Currently, Rich is working with Vice Provost Rinehart to survey alumni three times per year. For years, we’ve also administered a Graduating Senior Survey. We typically measure usefulness, but it is hard for a recently graduated undergraduate to know so soon out of college whether their experiences will be useful. Some of the follow up that is being developed to conduct with those who have been out longer will get at this question more effectively.

We also need to be measuring learning in a specific domain.

Is there a way to tap into the Writing Studies program to do some assessment? We could train faculty raters to assess student writing relative to certain areas such as critical thinking. Writing is a basic skill and a good place to start.

Part of the metrics discussion is measuring our students’ learning in a way that can be compared to a national group.

Looking at metrics, there is no measure of student learning or of teaching excellence.

“Florida Study” and its nine areas of measurement (now run out of Arizona State University) has become the benchmark for measuring excellence. Of the 20 metrics that our committee has developed, the first nine from the “Florida Study” are included in our own set of metrics, and then we have developed 11 more. On several of the metrics we are in the top 10 and in a few we are in the top 5. In graduation rates we are much lower. The key outlier for us is the performance of our undergraduates. We need to devote a lot of attention here. For comparison, University of Wisconsin, Madison is in the top 10 for graduation rates. This past year, 50% of our incoming first-year students were in the top 10 percent of their graduating classes.

We lose 15 percent of our incoming students between freshman and sophomore year. We lose another 25 percent of our original cohort between the sophomore year and graduation.

**ACTION:** Karen will send links to VSA/College Portrait, CAAP, MAPP, and CLA.

**Key Question:** *Within Exceptional Faculty and Staff metric:*

\*Should there be a metric re teaching? If yes, what ought it to be?