

Stewardship Coordinating Council FY2010: A Proposal

Background

In FY2008, the Stewardship Coordinating Council (SCC) was not as productive as it might be due to structural problems, too large a scope of responsibilities, and poor meeting attendance. As a result, to improve attendance, the membership was based on job function, so that the expertise necessary to contribute SCC projects is guaranteed. In addition, in FY2009 the function of the SCC was narrowed to focus on one project – evaluating the University's progress on our six goals.

SCC FY2009

Our experience with the revised SCC in FY2009 was very positive. A team of stakeholders was assigned to each of the six goals to review our progress on each of the goals using the assessment information available in TracDat. Their report highlighted a few areas of concern for the University:

- A need for more training in the use of TracDat software;
- A need for assessment data to be provided to academic department chairs, since they all have the same metrics, targets and outcome measures, and some of the data resides in institutional databases; and
- A need for better understanding of the intent of, and outcome measures and targets for two of our goals:
 - Goal III: Enhance UTPA's engagement with the community to meet challenges and maximize opportunities.
 - Goal V: Infuse Inter-American and global perspectives throughout the University community.

Addressing Identified Concerns

First, regarding TracDat training, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) is committed to continuing TracDat training in FY2010. In Summer 2009, meetings are being held between Cathy Vale and divisional stewardship liaisons to discuss improvements in the software, reporting options, and training needs. In a related undertaking, OIRE added to its FY2010-FY2011 plan a process improvement to move beyond simply tracking the submission of planning and assessment reports, to evaluating and helping planners improve their outcome measures, assessment methods, use of assessment results, etc.

Second, OIRE added to its FY2010-FY2011 the development of a process to provide to academic planners the data needed for assessment reporting, where the data is available in UTPA's databases. At the request of Dr. Sale, Dr. Griffith met with Dr. Wendy Lawrence-Fowler, since she is working on an Academic Affairs Knowledge Management System (AASMS). There will be no conflict between these two projects; indeed, Dr. Lawrence-Fowler remarked that the system OIRE develops for assessment reporting will in the future become part of the AAKMS, since she has identified the TracDat database has a source of data for the system. OIRE staff will work with staff in Undergraduate Studies when developing a solution.

This leaves the issue of an institutional dialogue on Goal III and Goal V for FY2010. Therefore, this proposal recommends that the SCC be charged with reviewing these two goals as their project for the upcoming year. It is envisioned that the SCC will form two teams – one for each of the two goals. The outcomes of the exercise will be a better understanding of these two goals, development of outcome measures and targets for the institution to track its progress toward accomplishing these goals, and mechanisms to ensure that the majority of the University community contributes to these goals.

The timing of this activity is particularly appealing, since the results will be available (see "Timeline", below) just as we welcome a new president. It is expected that one of his/her first activities will be a comprehensive review of our strategic plan and our processes. Having addressed two weaknesses in our plan – Goal III and Goal V – will provide essential information for this review process.

At the request of Dr. Sale, Dr. Griffith contacted Jim Langabeer to see if he sees any problem with an SCC team focusing on community engagement, since he oversees the units at the institution that go by that name. He sees no problem at all.

Timeline

The SCC will meet in Fall 2009 for an orientation to this project by Dr. Sale. The two teams are expected to meet (physically or virtually) at least three times to achieve their outcomes. Each team will have a facilitator and a recorder so that they can work effectively. They will be directed to hold mini "town hall" meetings to gather data and information from campus constituencies on the two goals. It is expected that gathering and processing information will take at least the Fall semester, with reports due sometime in Spring 2010.