Summary of Answers to Steering Committee Questions

Note: all answers refer back to the Institutional Priority -
Demonstration of and support for academic excellence of the programs and schools of the College through regular and transparent assessment.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

Question 1
What are the current assessment processes in place across all areas of the College?
What are the challenges of institutional assessment for the College – and how have we addressed the challenges encountered in maintaining commitment to consistent, coherent, multi-faceted assessment?

The Working Group will assess the assessment processes from all Schools and Areas via requests for documents, interviews with key individuals and document progress made toward creating an institutional culture of assessment across the Schools and areas with very different populations and intended outcomes.

Best assessment practices ask us to produce assessment data, share the data with each other, and translate what we know into information on which we base our quality enhancement plan, planning and self-study. Without an institutional effectiveness office/officer, our institutional assessment efforts are not coordinated in a standardized manner among the four schools and administrative areas. Efforts to address the challenge of developing a College-wide culture of assessment have included an AVPAA who worked closely with Institutional Research to develop data that informed enrollment management decisions and shared that data with various constituencies (Board of Trustees, faculties, College Senate); Town Meetings in which vice presidential areas and Schools share relationship to institutional planning priorities or other benchmarks (enrollment or retention numbers, fundraising targets, financial health, etc.). Although Academic Affairs (e.g., Center for Academic Excellence) and Student Services utilize student learning outcomes in planning, conducting, and evaluating programs and services, the findings are not disseminated in the same way as is done by the Schools.

What formats for sharing information and best practices in the delivery system and measurement for student learning can we develop? The current self-study may provide a good model for this. Since the last self-study, the SAS faculty handbook has been modified to make service to the College a more prominent aspect of the criteria for promotion. Assessment activities can be articulated as an aspect of service to the College and can be recognized as vital to maintaining academic excellence. Other kinds of measurement—cost and productivity, and stakeholder satisfaction—can produce important indicators of institutional effectiveness. Current stakeholder satisfaction surveys include the Senate Survey on Authentic Participation, the Financial Affairs Area Services Survey, Student Services’ quality of Life and Senior Exit Surveys. Could the