Minutes of the Academic Program Liaison Committee Meeting

Friday, February 18, 2011
3:00-4:00 PM
Osborne 107C

Members Present:
Cheryl Addy, Sally Boyd, Wayne Buff, Jim Burns, Mary Ann Byrnes, Kris Finnigan (Chair), Dan Friedman, Tom Halasz, Miriam Johnson, Sarah Keeling, Sheryl Kline, Amy Lantz, Aaron Marterer, Mike Perkins, Irma Van Scoy, Nancy Zimmerman

Members Absent:
Steve Adams, Marsha Dowell, Nancy Floyd, Gary Geer, Andy Gowan, Andy Graves, Susanne Hicklin, Dave Hodson, Martha Moriarty, Suzanne Ozment, J.T. Thornhill, Jennifer Vendemia, Robert Wilcox

Guests Present:
Tim Doupnik

The minutes for the November 12, 2010 meeting were approved.

The following handouts were distributed: meeting agenda, the 2011 Meeting Schedule, and a copy of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): USC Connect PowerPoint presentation.

For the balance of 2011, the Committee will meet every other month.

Members were reminded to follow up on two recent requests from the Registrar’s office: intentions regarding inactive courses, and the use of major suffixes. Inactive course termination paperwork can follow in the next several weeks as part of the bulletin update process. It is possible to submit just one Course Change Form, one JUS form, and attach a list of the courses being terminated. No Bulletin Change form would be required.

Materials for the Distance Education Program Percentage task are posted on the SharePoint site, and should ideally be completed by the time of the SACS visit at the end of March. The updated list of Courses Approved for Distance Education Delivery is on the AcadProg website.

We have still not received the expected prompt from CHE regarding Program Productivity reporting. However, the incoming new Commission is likely to focus on this, so units with low-enrolled programs should be prepared. There is a Program Productivity task posted on the SharePoint site for programs most recently cited for low productivity.

Collection of unit lists of Centers and Institutes is nearly complete, and is missing only one school’s input.

The SACS On-Site team visit will be from March 28th to March 30th. Some of the APLs have asked if they should avoid going out of town, or try to keep their schedules open. It is unlikely that most APLs or their faculty will be called upon to meet with the SACS team. We do not have a schedule yet, but the team has a very full agenda. If an APL is out of town, please make sure that someone in the office knows where program files are, and can answer any questions that may arise. To prepare for the visit, APLs should familiarize themselves with the SACS website, https://sacs.sc.edu/, which has links to all documentation submitted to SACS.

Irma Van Scoy gave a presentation on the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): USC Connect. Questions were raised regarding the depth vs. breadth of major course experiences, and which courses would not qualify. I. Van Scoy discussed the difference between the major core and the general education core. An integrative learning focus at a major research university has not been done before, and it will be
interesting to learn of the SACS reaction. The appointment of a permanent QEP director will wait until after the SACS review of the QEP in late spring.

K. Finnigan introduced Tim Doupnik, Vice Provost for International Programs. He views the University's international mission as having two components: a teaching and learning component that provides students with knowledge and tools to enhance cultural awareness; and a research component that serves to strengthen the global network of scholars and scholarship. There are four aspects to the teaching and learning component: 1) within the classroom experiences, including foreign language and area study courses; 2) beyond the classroom experiences, such as international extracurricular activities, lectures by distance delivery, foreign films, and participation in the Carolina global community; 3) providing access to study abroad opportunities; and 4) bringing more international students to USC. The latter two are strategic priorities for the Provost’s Office. While study abroad fosters a greater understanding and awareness of other cultures, there are several impediments to it, including cost, and increased time to degree. We can increase study abroad participation by finding cheaper experiences, and funding more scholarships. We can also emphasize “bringing the world to USC”. The number of international students on the USC campus is far lower than at most of our peer institutions.

Schools and colleges are encouraged to develop more courses and programs for both domestic and international students, as well as more faculty-led study abroad experiences geared toward majors. One possible model is to embed more study abroad in courses, in which travel is conducted over spring break and integrated into learning during the first and second halves of the semester. T. Doupnik would like colleges to consider making study abroad a curricular requirement, and/or increasing the language requirement. Double degree programs are another option. He agreed that the institution must make it easier for departments to develop study abroad initiatives. M.A. Byrnes brought up the possibility of cultural experiences within the United States, which might make cultural learning opportunities available to a wider range of students. M. Perkins commented that it is hard for students to get into beginning language courses, and this might discourage enrollments in additional language courses. M.A. Byrnes added that not enough graduates have doctorates yet to teach the Spanish courses for which there is a backlog of demand. N. Zimmerman asked about increasing the number of faculty exchange programs, an idea which T. Doupnik welcomed in principle, but that would need to be approved by the Provost.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM. The next meeting will be Friday, April 29, 2011 at 3:00 PM in Osborne 107C.