Minutes
Institutional Assessment Committee
April 25, 2006
Chair: Dr. M. Suzanne Clinton

The meeting was convened at 3:30 p.m. in the CETES Building Conference Room.

Present were: Dr. M. Suzanne Clinton, Chair, Mr. Don Aguilar, Ms. Edna McMillan, Dr. Mary Dzindolet, Mr. Tom Sutherlin, and Ms. Jon Ella Long

Absent: Dr. Larry Kruse

1. Approval of minutes from March 28, 2006, meeting

Dr. Clinton called the meeting to order. Minutes from the March 28, 2006, meeting were distributed to those present. Dr. Clinton asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Don Aguilar made the motion, Edna McMillan seconded it and the minutes were approved.

2. Discussion of Entry Level Classes

Mr. Sutherlin discussed the different entry level classes offered at Cameron and the methods by which they are administered.

A long discussion was held about how many of Cameron’s students cannot adequately read or write. Methods and possible solutions for assisting them in overcoming these deficiencies were discussed. Some suggestions included requiring teachers to emphasize adequate writing skills and making this a part of the teacher’s evaluation process, re-introducing Reading Across the Curriculum and Writing Across the Curriculum, and, ultimately, making the faculty accountable. Dr. Clinton suggested conducting a survey of the faculty and ask how they might encourage writing in their classes. Mr. Sutherlin will devise a survey to be sent to the faculty and inquire about writing assignments. Dr. Dzindolet felt this was positive.

Dr. Clinton remarked that it’s not just entering freshmen who can’t read or write. She says she has many senior students with inadequate skills in this area. Dr. Dzindolet added that she also gets graduate students who can’t write well. Mr. Sutherlin said next year we need to decide how we will measure general education outcomes, so if we have deficiencies, we can go back and correct them. The majority of our students say they come to CU to improve their lives and get a good education. We need to work on ways to see that they are successful when they enter the workplace. Mr. Sutherlin said we could make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and ask him about accountability issues. He said he hopes that, in the future, the Assessment Committee could see what levels they expect students to be at after graduation.

3. Discussion of Remedial Classes

Dr. Virginia Reasor, who has done consulting work for Cameron in the past, has been hired again to conduct a study of our entry level and remedial classes. Mr. Sutherlin has been working with the ITS staff to collect some data for her. He believes the problem we are going to find is retention, not remediation. Keeping students in school will help them succeed, and he hopes this committee can make a recommendation on this. Don Aguilar said there is a big problem with students enrolling without taking remedial courses, and wonders if we could use CAMSIS to block students from enrolling incorrectly. Mr. Sutherlin said this committee is going to have to take a position, put it in writing, and stand behind it. Ms. McMillan said other universities require students to have higher abilities, and we do not get the same caliber of students as OU, for example. Mr. Sutherlin said we need to define our expectations first before we have a right to point the finger at the students. He said only about 10 percent of our students are the caliber of OU’s, and we really need to encourage scholarship and make some difficult decisions. We are not going to be the “university of choice” until we change our behavior.

4. PQIR Process Revision

Dr. Clinton asked the committee for input on revising the PQIR process. She reminded the committee of Mr. Sutherlin’s request for committee input to improve the level of participation by faculty members and revitalize the process. After open discussion, the committee consensus was for Mr. Sutherlin to prepare a recommendation for the Vice President of Academic Affairs’ approval that would include HLC criteria and improve campus participation.

Mr. Sutherlin thanked Dr. Clinton for her work on this committee and the work she has done for the institution.

This is the last meeting for the year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Ella Long