The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. in WH 107. In addition to the Chair those present included L. Dzialo, D. Groves, W. Harrison, T. Sutherlin, V. Swinney, and B. Warren.

The minutes for the meeting of 4/11/01 were approved.

The Chair announced that Dr. Amyx, who retired last spring, has yet to be replaced on the Committee, and that Dr. Buckley, as a new dean, has resigned from the Committee. The Chair welcomed Linda Dzialo, the new Vice-President for Student Affairs, to the Committee.

The Chair expressed the Committee’s appreciation for Dr. Buckley’s long and constructive service on the Committee, and its predecessor, the special task force on assessment.

“Guidelines to Improve Program/Departmental Compliance with Cameron University Assessment Process” was reviewed, as was past distribution of the draft of the original document to the deans, their written responses to it, incorporation of their responses into the present document, and its transmission to Provost McKellips last academic year. Given that Provost McKellips had apparently not acted on the document, it was moved and seconded that this document be forwarded to the new Provost for his review. The motion carried. The Chair was tasked to so forward the guidelines.

Sutherlin gave a progress report on departmental support for compliance with NCA assessment requirements. Page III-3, on the status of assessment activities across campus, in the "Report of Institutional Assessment 1999-200" has attracted the notice of faculty members. As a result, big strides have been made in Psychology and Music. Sutherlin is meeting with individual departments, who, among other things, have been advised that they need not try to fix all their problems with assessment this year. As a result, Technology is also making significant progress. Work on the special NCA report on assessment will commence this coming summer and will involve the Committee. Discussion followed. It was affirmed that all programs need improvement, and will continue to do so, even though many will be at NCA’s Level Three of assessment effectiveness.

The new PQIR format was distributed. Two additions to it were noted: dates in the approval process and the last page, on administrative review, which is in direct response to comments from the NCA external evaluators.

The issue of teaching effectiveness at Cameron was addressed next. Sutherlin distributed a handout on Bloom’s taxonomy to make the point that many Cameron faculty are not informed about basic concepts from educational psychology about teaching and learning. Discussion followed. It was asserted that we need to be proactive with respect particularly to faculty mastery and usage of the terminology of program outcomes assessment. Concern was expressed about some faculty taking offense if it were suggested that they were ill-informed about some key dimensions of the teaching
and learning process. It was claimed that new faculty seem to be familiar with educational psychology concepts and proficient in their application. It was pointed out that faculty in the Education Department are quite familiar with these concepts and could help in a faculty development effort. It was remarked that before the University’s current focus on technology there had been multiple useful workshops on, e.g., Writing across the Curriculum and critical thinking; it was asserted that the time may be ripe for a return to workshops on such topics. It was asked if concepts in educational psychology, e.g., Bloom’s, are controversial; it was answered that there is controversy about assessment. Discussion turned to laments about Cameron students’ poor writing abilities, even at the graduate level. The need for faculty to be attentive to different learning styles were mentioned. The need for any faculty development effort not to be too theoretical was stressed. It was reported that a well-qualified, caring faculty is often cited as one of the University’s principal strengths: Can this strength be capitalized upon in a faculty development effort? How can participation in a faculty development effort about improving teaching be motivated? Perhaps the recommendations to the Provost (see above) would be useful in this context. Failure of faculty to take advantage of funding opportunities offered by the Faculty Development Committee were reported. It was also reported that Harrison and K. Merritt will be meeting on 9/21/01 to brainstorm about this issue; IAC members were invited to participate. There was additional discussion. Is it realistic for general education courses to seek to inculcate knowledge, as opposed to fundamental skills? It was suggested that the IAC work with the faculty Development Committee to define what counts as a “good student” and a “good teacher” at Cameron. Yet more discussion followed. Sutherland agreed to work up talking points about these latter concepts for the IAC to address at its next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

T. Atwater