STRATEGIC PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCREDITATION
Minutes
Don 125 (Lecture Hall) – 01/19/2018

In attendance:
☒ Chad Hickox, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (Chair)
☒ Kirk Lacy, Interim Dean/CEO
☒ Russ Fillner, Assistant Dean of Fiscal & Plant
☒ Mike Brown, Institutional Researcher
☒ Robyn Kiesling, Division Chair of Gen Ed & Transfer
☒ Tammy Burke, Division Chair of Trades & Technology
☒ Mary Lannert, Director of Continuing Education
☒ Patrick Turner, Director of Student Support Center
☐ Nathan Munn, Faculty Senate President
☐ Brenda Johnson, Staff Senate President
☐ Quinn Kurokawa, Student Senate President
☐ Bryon Steinwand, Faculty Representative
☐ Betsy Hussey, Faculty Representative

Recorder:
Summer Marston, Assistant to the Dean/CEO

Old Business
- Mike and Chad will work on some Professional Development tracking ideas to bring back to the group.
- SPAA will review the Core Themes at least annually and engage the campus with recommendations/action items to address needing improvement

Finalize revisions to the Strategic Plan
Year One and Ad Hoc (regarding assessment) are due to NWCCU on March 1. Finishing them, Barb McAlmond needs them by February 15 for printing. Mission revision approved at the December SPAA, then January BOR. Core themes almost complete; still have to finish a few objectives. Subset of SPAA reviewed Strategic Plan feedback; draft document shared with the campus during January Institutional Development Days. Discussion of the draft Strategic Plan included the following:
  • Strategic Goal 2.1 – Slight edit to add verbiage “Provide relevant and enriching instruction…”
  • Strategic Goal 5.1 – Staff senate expressed concern regarding “transparent process…” following the restructuring. Strategic Goal 5.1 refers to “fiscal resources” rather than organization structure. Even so, seeking campus-wide input would not have been appropriate due to sensitive nature and personnel implications. The campus welcomes participatory governance; however, some things are not appropriate at all levels.
  • Strategic Goal 4.2 – Determining what diversity means to Helena College. Discussed possible $25,000 Lumina Foundation grant. Campus community will be brought in to work on the action plan.

SPAA is advisory to the Dean/CEO. Dean Lacy will have listening sessions with areas of campus; good time to suggest ways to develop a master plan for achievement. Consider strategic ways areas and individuals can contribute. Ideas may be included in the action plan. SPAA will build the framework; each area needs to write out their plan every year to move goals forward. Avoid process words like improve. The Strategic Plan sets the end state. SPAA discussed proposed edit “and enriching” to Goal 2, #1. Russ moved to accept the Strategic Plan update as amended, Brenda seconded. No further discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Core Themes
Mission defines the institution, themes define attributes, objectives show how we measure it. Mike attended the Annual NWCCU meeting. Campuses discussed issues over the last seven years. Some colleges struggle with another layer to maintain. Other institutions like it and are able to use it to their advantage. NWCCU recognized assessment of student
outcomes gets lost in the process. HC had recommendations regarding assessment, as well as determining better indicators and outcomes for collecting community involvement. Ongoing, but working on it; objectives are now outcomes (end state rather than action). Need to set a few targets. Year 1 report explains targets, how they are measured, and how to determine mission fulfillment. Review yearly and connect with the Strategic Plan.

Discussed “Objective 2: Helena College faculty and staff participate in professional growth opportunities emphasizing excellence in teaching and delivery of support services” – high quality education. Measured last year by number of employees that received professional development; need to focus PD dollars. PD was not funded last year due to budget constraints. Will be brought back as funds become available; ensure maximizing value, increase on-campus events, etc. Must be available for faculty promotion and tenure; include all employees. Counting participation is input; counting effect is output; trying to focus on the output. Create a list of trainings and strategically focus on institutional priorities. Metrics could include follow-up events from PD, may be more meaningful. The following metrics can be easily tracked:

1. Institution investment in PD? How is it quantified?
2. Scope of participation from those investments? Track participation rates?
3. Outcomes towards individual / institutional goals? (More difficult, but RFP approach would set measurements.)

Discussed different ways to do the RFP or multiple RFPs, metrics, time as a resource, percentage of budget, and self-reporting, number of participants, deliverables from PD.

Discussed #9 and #10; more complex. Determine how to demonstrate students have gained requisite knowledge.

Outcomes are course, program, and institutional. Some institutional competencies are duplications; pare down to truly institution that are not captured at course and program level. Need to be more intentional; possibly measure density as well as coverage. May need 2 or 3 metrics, but don’t want more than 2 or 3. Database will play a central role.