Minutes QEP Committee Meeting 2/6/17

Dr. Judith Mann introduced herself as the successor of Dr. Hudler and the new Chair of the QEP Committee. She welcomed new members and contextualized the work and organization of the Committee that debuted in Fall 2014. Then the original committee was organized into a Steering Committee and two sub-committees (Assessment and Outreach).

Presently, the Committee is reconceptualized as a large committee (45 members) in an effort to match the charge from SACS which requires a broad-based input in the decision-making process from faculty and administration alike. New members were invited to balance out the overrepresentation of Arts and Sciences and offer better representation across the university. Following SACS recommendations, the new committee will be divided into five subcommittees: literary review – assessment – professional development – marketing and budget. The QEP Committee will meet as a whole every two weeks and all members of the sub-committee will be associated in the decision-making process.

LU led two QEP projects: ACES and SMART (currently going on). It was reiterated that the charge of the QEP committee is to decide on a topic and develop the actual project. Since the topic proposed previously did not reach broad-based university input (due to the limitation of the sample surveys), the charge of the present committee is to formulate a topic based on our university data (which is another avenue suggested per SACS) and may assist in developing an actual project. As suggested by SACS, the Committee should define what is the topic of greatest concern for our university: retention of our students and progression of our students toward graduation. LU serves many underprepared students which affects their learning and progression throughout our courses.

Major steps have to be taken in a limited timeline (analyzing institutional data, literature review, needs assessment to address our students learning). Other universities have established potential innovative and creative solutions such as mainstreaming College Readiness Courses. Dr. Gary Brice is presently leading a pilot of CRMA0372/College Algebra mainstream for Spring 2017. Other universities have paired metacognition with College Readiness Courses.

Dr. Daniels stated that LU is based on a "deficit model" leading to a feeling of not belonging among underprepared students. Dr. Smith asserted that 45% of our first time students in college are provisional students, among which we lose half of the students after a semester. Mrs. Nichols pointed that first time students narrows the retention topic. Members of the Committee (Mrs. Hoover, Mrs. Nichols, Dr. Holtzhausen) requested investigation of data from students that have left the university. Consensus among the Committee to extensively studying all data available connected to LU governing issues thus establishing a broad-based knowledge of LU retention. Dr. Hudler and Dr. Mann both underlined that the topic proposed could potentially be institutionalized, having lasting ramification to improve the system as suggested by SACS.

The functions of the subcommittees were discussed as follows: the assessment committee will be charged with looking and interpreting our institutional data and will assess the program – the literature review committee will examine literature review and help in the identification of an action plan – the professional development committee (once the action plan has been chosen) will be charged with finding an expert in that area and bringing them on campus - the budget committee will be tasked with finding ways to physically make this possible on our campus and, finally, the marketing committee will be in charge of communication, informing and rallying the rest of the campus.

The Committee unanimously approved of the retention and progress toward graduation as the QEP topic.