

Assurance of Learning Committee Transcript

Thu, Oct 13, 2022 8:59AM • 37:54

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

committee, meeting, assessment, programs, college, year, group, graduate programs, visit, coordinate, people, report, governance, feedback, department, review, faculty meetings, campus, propose, carl

00:26

I'll wait just wait a couple of minutes for others to arrive you.

Okay, we may as well get started. Does anybody object if I record the meeting? All right, I'm going to go ahead and hit the record button. And it will also provide us with a transcription All right, well, good morning. Thank you for coming to the meeting. This is our first meeting this academic year for the assurance of learning committee, and please, you know, just let me say welcome and as such, this being my first minute meeting, I apologize for the informality. Maybe we'll set aside Robert's Rules for this first meeting. I promise we'll get to it though. And I'd like to begin with a little recap, because I'm not sure you know what everybody knows or does not know.

So, in August 2020, we know that HLC came to the campus, and they wrote a visitor's report that was somewhat critical. And we were placed on monitoring, and we were going to have a written response that was due one year later, but then the ALC at HLC reviewed our – the visitors report and instead of monitoring one year later, they placed us on a different kinds of monitoring which required a focused visit. That would happen in 2023. And right now, today, we're preparing for the focus visit by writing the report in advance of the focus visit which is due at the end of this year. So, we're quickly and very fast writing all of this and gathering evidence and trying to organize information and I don't know if you all know but Carl has rejoined us here. Carl Brun has rejoined us here at the at the University and has agreed to stay on for the next 10 years. Now we see you shaking his head no, but I keep trying to convince him that his contract is renewable. And we just have to we just have to tell him we have to have to inform him that he's going to stay here but anyway, so we're preparing for our focused visit which is on March 27 and 28th. So, I need your help. I was hoping that we might begin a discussion by informing me. What is it we do in this committee? Can anybody let us know? Let me know?

04:38

why do we do what we do? Anybody? So I think there is a committee charge which we which we have probably all by all the silence means we should probably review in our next meeting.

05:02

I think part of the booths is I think we need everybody so anybody can speak. Oh, gosh.

05:07

Can you hear me? Yes. You can hear me? Yes, yes. So as far as to what the committee should do and what the committee does do, maybe different things that may also be part of the DSU. I think for the past couple of years. One of the things that committee has done is look through the program assessment for us. Right, but that's been more of are all the T's crossed and are the eyes dotted. Then providing actual actionable feedback to the to the programs. As a response to the reports. The committee's the committee's efforts have been honestly very light

05:47

in my opinion. Okay. And is that something that you think should change?

05:57

If you're asking the group, yes. But I will say for colleges or for programs that don't already have external regular evaluation processes that require their faculty to evaluate their programs against the shift learning objectives, and have regular external evaluators look over how their programs and their students are doing. I would think that someone has to do that and that should be this group. Yes. All right. It may not be necessary for the programs that have external evaluation, but it would do no harm.

06:36

Okay. So when is the last time we did what would we do? Was that prior to May of 2022. Do you all recall a meeting in the spring of 2022?

06:58

Last October,

07:00

Last ... last October. So, when one whole year from from from now or before now is Is anybody doing anything? Right now that we're supposed to be doing?

07:19

Do you mean is any other group doing the work of this committee?

07:22

Or is anybody doing anything with their their liaisons in the in the colleges or the programs or anything like that?

07:33

That's a that's a pretty open question. Yes, I would say

07:37

it's a it's a show here. I remember. I remember the time where I think it may be Tamizh last communication if I remember that. And it was talking about having, having some convert she wanted at the time or intended to have some conversations with department tears who are in charge of entering data into the app, I believe that was very late March. And some people have changed from the committee. You know, for instance, we had John Densmore, who was asked about a call this year. So

he is not on this committee, but he was last year, but Tamizh last a task if I remember that clearly was to understand what the challenges were with program directors, what department chairs in terms of entering the data for 2021. Because at that time, we were still trying to catch up with some of the programs for 2021 and there was maybe some conversation about 2122. But the plan at that time was not very clear. So again, that was late March, and now we're looking at more than six months later, I believe. To my knowledge, this is the first meeting since then.

08:59

Okay. So we did meet in the spring of 2022.

09:04

I believe virtual meeting I believe so. All right. All right.

09:09

Although we do have a committee charge, do we have a mission vision and value statement or do we have a written statement about what good assessment or good practices? Anybody recall anything like that?

09:26

I don't recall anything like that. This was an okay, thank

09:30

you very much. So I don't know if you all will I have been introducing the idea that we need both course learning objectives and outcomes, both program learning objectives and outcomes. Amy and our provost has suggested that we have good college level objectives and outcomes that we have good core learning objectives and outcomes, and we have good co-curricular learning objectives and outcomes, which is a lot of assessment but it's what we have to report to HLC do we coordinate the activities of other committees and should we?

10:21

Not we have not okay. And should we coordinate the activities of other committees or should we should we keep the committee structure and you know, wait business as usual. Does anybody have an opinion on that? Would it be helpful to coordinate the activities of other committees so that we can centrally you know, compile the information coordinate, you know, organize it and coordinate it?

11:01

Hi, Bruce. It's a sure again, you know, maybe speaking, perhaps more based on college of business and what we need to do here I think the committee campus wide committee can be very helpful, because there are some commonalities between what we do and especially if we all are coming together to support HLC and the immediate task or the focus visit, I think, I think from that perspective, I see that'd be helpful. That being said, all the programs across campus can be really different at the same time. And you know, what AACSB asks for may not be what HS II asked for may not be what Meghan needs for her programs, programs. And I think people have support each other but recognizing

that program also needs to function on your own. Maybe from that perspective is what what from your level can support each colleges to do their jobs? Well?

12:03

Thank you. That's, I think that's a really good perspective. I can only I can only speak from my past experience at other institutions where we had a central committee and then we had subcommittees and the Central Committee helped all of the subcommittee's gather, organize and present information and of course, right feedback, you know, substantive feedback that then is acted upon in order to demonstrate with evidence that we use it for continuous improvement. So I know that here, it seems to me as though the committee's had been separate. And maybe the coordination came through the person who was in my position. But I'm wondering, from a governance standpoint, which I support wholeheartedly, if we might come together, if we might coordinate all the committee's together. I know that seems like a very large committee, and it would certainly be a large committee. But if and then if we had subcommittees that we could, we could come together and not just a shared governance, configuration, but maybe a networked governance configuration. Where we're all working together and giving feedback and and, you know, as as contributors, making certain that we're all doing what we're supposed to be doing, when we're supposed to be doing. Would anybody have an objection if I were to, to write a proposal for that? I know that's a different configuration altogether. But would anybody have any any objection if I were to propose that we'll make it if you're talking. I couldn't you I think you're muted. Oh, okay. All right.

13:56

If I may, this is Mike Seville, and in Department of Electrical Engineering, and so I've been on this committee much last year I was on sabbatical and the year before that, I was on it for just a short time. And in our, in our college, you know, we predominantly rely on the abet accredited process, which credits our programs versus the institution where HLC as my understanding is really accrediting the institution. And so you know, what you're proposing. Are you thinking about this? Over, you know, the full 10 year cycle of HLC. Are you thinking about this during that period of, you know, what's the frequency? What's the scope of that you're talking about? Because there's such an amount of overlap between what we do already every six years, and what we submit that is for our coding, and I imagine for others, it'd be nice to have a better idea on you know, what would be drawn from it and then what would be complemented with what we do already with respect to say in the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and likewise for other accredited programs on campus?

14:59

Certainly, that's a great point. So I call HLC, our former regional a creditor now we don't have regions anymore. Anybody can be accredited by anybody these days. But that's regional accreditation, and then we have our national or programmatic or our specialty, accreditation, and all those those efforts are ongoing in the colleges and the programs themselves. I'm not certain and I and I'm involved in that as well. And now you know, I've been listed with several of the accreditors our national accreditors in our program accreditors as one of the liaisons here on campus. And I'll, as I understand it, I'll be assisting and providing feedback for our specialty accreditors and our self studies or assurance arguments going forward. I'm not so certain that this committee should perhaps coordinate those although I think it would be helpful if if, if a committee felt as though you know, maybe a college

committee felt as though they would like some feedback from a larger committee that that would be a good thing. So I'd like to certainly like to leave it open and we can discuss that. But yes, I'm thinking more or less that this would be for HLC. And also, we have some responsibilities to the Ohio Department of Higher Education. And the Department of Education. In fact, HLC is the reviewer for the Department of Education in Washington. Our own regional accreditors is their is their reviewer so we have some responsibilities to the Department of Education, Ohio Department of Higher Education which mostly Wafaa deals with, and then of course, to the Higher Learning Commission. So that was a pretty long winded answer. I don't know that I maybe answered your question, but certainly I think what we should do is discuss and leave it open.

17:02

I think it would help if we had a better picture of you know, I mean, I think as a case in point, what you're asking about at the start of this meeting is looking for some historical perspective on what the committee is doing. My perspective only goes back, you know, two years and a big chunk of that gone. So I don't know how everyone else is on this. So I don't know if it's to suggest that, you know, as far as a committee that would perhaps be at the college level with college level representative to keep the committee a more manageable approach. Is would that be again in the two or three years preceding a visit or is it going to be you know, every couple of years spanning that you know? That the continuity across the committee is always going to be a challenge, as she already mentioned, right? People are transitioning in and out and, and so that's why I'm curious to understand just in my own department, and in our own case, we've had a lot of transition in the last few years and we're preparing our own abet accreditation. So we're doing this right now. Right and so I'm just trying to figure out how would that fold in what would be the type of representation on the committee that you know, our department would ask from college, so anything that would help you there would be good?

18:13

Well, I you know, HLC uses these this, these two words, it depends. And so and so I would like to say that while I would hope that I could benefit from your guidance, and we could meet once a month, you know, there's there's a lot of learning that I need to do about the institution historically and, and our efforts here on campus so that we can coordinate them. We have our focused visit coming up, and we hope to pass that focused visit. If we pass that focused visit, then we won't see HLC again until the fall of 2026. Of course, we will immediately have to begin preparing for our visit in 2026. And there's some changes that I'm thinking about coming on down the line, which I have not entirely proposed yet. But we're going to have to do some things differently most especially because criteria change during the pandemic and HLC updated their criteria. We no longer do self studies, we do assurance arguments with henna, we we support that with it with evidence. Now there's the possibility of course and we don't want that that we would we would not pass our focus visit and then the next level of monitoring would be annually so they would come to campus annually thereafter, which we hope we we hope we don't have to incur that's a lot of work. So, but if we did if they said I'm sorry, you know, we see that you're making progress, but we want to keep you on monitoring and we want to keep you on annual monitoring then of course that's even a you know, some heavier lifting than we we anticipate and then we would have to prepare a report for them and in 24 and 25 and then prepare for our our visit in in 26. So it all really it depends I wish I could answer it right now. I would like again, I'm just so I could learn from all of you and we can coordinate our efforts. I'm hoping that we could perhaps meet once a month

just to make sure that you're we're checking in and that we're talking about a plan. And, you know, we're proposing things that we need to coordinate and get done. And then of course that we can help our colleagues wherever we we need to help them. That's a very open ended answer. I'm so sorry, Mike. But you know, that's kind of where I'm at.

20:39

I understand. I think, you know, I'll probably follow up with you, if you don't mind are our coordinate through Travis to boost our Associate Dean of the college, but just to again, be able to get some of the more important feedback and details at the last report and what we may need to be thinking about down at our department level. So again, I don't want to take that time from this meeting, but I'll follow up with your premise later.

21:04

Well, I can give you one detail right now. We we missed a couple of annual assessments. And we have one that's due we were asking everybody to do their annual assessment by December 16. So we can put that in our report at the end of the end of December. So it can go to HLC. But there are 30 programs and we've communicated with the deans and we've communicated with with folks at the associate dean level as well about the programs that are have missed assessment interestingly enough, I was just had a meeting yesterday where we were made aware that there are some difficulties with getting some of that information together and catching up. Certainly do understand that HLC expects us to give it our best try. So we'll be communicating again about that, again, that again, these are spread throughout the the institution, but those that have, you know, two years worth of assessment do we're going to need that, or at least our best attempt and of course, then we need this year's assessment or the assessment that's due this year by December 16 But I can talk to you again offline about other things that we might we might need. And then we should perhaps even compile a list we can compile a list and and send it out before our next meeting.

22:24

So this is and and I'm I'm just kind of a little lost at the moment. Not gonna lie. So I remember when this committee started, we started it and the last one of the last full visit was and we did it just to collect whatever anybody was doing for program review. So I know with nursing, we submitted our speak plan, that's what it's called now. Call it something else back then. So we submitted that and they use that for documentation committee did nothing. We had our four year report came back with issues with assessment. So this committee was rejuvenated, brought back we started then focusing on making sure we had program outcome data that was reviewed by Tammy we as the committee members didn't review it, we were kind of given with you know, make sure whoever's in your chair in your area submits their reports. So I'm a little confused, like, does this committee possibly need to do some work possibly find anything else put on my plate? Am I going to try and run away probably not to lie I'm a little overwhelmed with everything else on my life. And so I'm a bit lost in what it is we're trying to do.

23:49

Me too. So you know, I wanted to use this meeting to try and ask some questions and try and figure that out. And perhaps again, propose a plan to the committee for our next meeting, so that we could think about how we could coordinate our efforts and what it is that we need to do. So that's why I'm

asking all these questions like you know, do we do we have officers I believe I'm the chair but do we have a co chair a secretary who takes minutes or you know, where's the evidence of our of our meetings in the past?

24:24

Can I jump in here for a second? Certainly, of course and anyone please correct me. I think I've been involved in this since the beginning. And this this group was created I believe, wholecloth when the perm assessment report, process started and Carl, Carl and Tammy put it together. And I believe it's it was never officially created. There was no write up. There was no charge for this committee that was written down anywhere. To the best of my knowledge, no officers, I believe it was put together primarily as a communication group, so that Tammy could push out to all of the colleges where everyone was in their program assessment, report entry, so that she could provide feedback to ask them we could ask them good questions answered. But I don't know that this group actually did work as a group so much as a information dissemination body. Again, please correct me anyone if that's wrong, but you know, basically, she would let us know. Here's what I'm expecting. Here's what I'm seeing. Here's where we are. Colleges go back take care of this. It was more of a coordination effort than a decision making body. So changing into something more than that, I think would be welcome. But it would just need to recognize that that's not what it has been. It's been more expressed. Uh, I don't know what what's what's the right word for it. It's not

26:04

me. I'm going to try min Can you please. Yes. I've been holding back because I don't want to guide where it goes. But basically, everything everybody said has been charging this committee in the past. I'm gonna go way back this committee actually started out of a Academy assessment academy that Renee akin who was in Bruce's position many years ago and committed the university to and we didn't have an assurance of learning committee. We didn't have a BP for assessment that group back in like 2014 15 produced enough leverage for the administration to create an office that we now have that we didn't have a long time ago. And then that this committee came out of that even the name assurance of learning came out of that group because they didn't want to use the word assessment. So that was well over. Like I said, 2015 when assessment on our campus wasn't, wasn't part of the culture, and it clearly is now so we've definitely gone and then the first time this committee met back in 2016, was when we had our accreditation or last fall visit. Renee, this committee actually did review program reviews. And Carol arranger isn't on this q&a now. But she was then and that earase whatever reason I bring that up, is it this committee actually looked at every single program or do members of this committee and actually gave feedback about the how well those plans were. And people didn't like that. individual colleges didn't like that somebody from another college was giving feedback about the plan. So this committee then merged into being more of a consultant then actually doing the work and it wasn't because the committee wasn't willing to do it. It was because people were saying, you know, is that the right role on this committee? Is that the right role people outside of my group? I do. Like Mike was basically a couple of you have said Do we get together? It seems like we only get together when there has to be a visit. And so that seems to be time oriented and task oriented. And I think there actually was a charge that we created and it was never a charge from the president or a charge from the Senate. But there there is a description that I can go back and find because I've seen that on some of the minutes in the past. But I think Bruce is allowing us to say hey, no matter what it was in the past, it

can be whatever we want it to be now, but that is that this committee has gone everything from reviewing program reviews, to basically my view and when I was running, and I think kameez to was having asking you all to assist us in collecting the assessment information, because if it's all relying on one person in one office, it's not going to get done. So that's not to say which way it should go. We just said view of where historically where it was.

29:13

Absolutely, Carl, thank you. And yeah, absolutely. I you know, just a little bit a bit about me. I'm certainly the in my position and I have a title and and what have you, but boy, I sure like to, you know, work collaboratively with people. And I think that anything that we can do together in shared governance or network governance is going to be a whole lot stronger. And and a whole lot more effective if we can work together. I would hate to think that I would issue edicts and tell you what to do. I would much rather work with you and that we discuss things. I hope that's okay.

30:02

So, if what I'd like to do perhaps is, is maybe schedule another meeting soonish maybe October 27. I was thinking and in the meantime, I could come up with a maybe a rough draft or a first rough draft or working draft of a proposal for the committee that we could discuss. I'll try and get it out a couple of days before and again as you would merely be a suggestion and any feedback and you know we can debate it we can we want to come to a consensus on this and how we move forward. Again, I'm a firm, firm believer in governance and I just you know, I'm Carl can tell you, I argue with people all the time about governance, so I'm a firm believer in governance, and I think that anything that we can do together it's going to be way more effective. If we do it together. So with your permission, if that's okay, I'll schedule another meeting for us on October 27. That that's all right. And, you know, I'll have something out to you all before a couple of days before at least, where we could we can at least discuss some ideas. Would that be okay?

31:13

Can I just put out a couple other things and thinking about it. Again, I can't find put my finger on but one of the things that this committee tried to do was to make sure that there was at least one faculty member and one administrative from each college, so not so it wasn't just administrator heavy, but that there will be a faculty member who was involved in doing assessment. So I don't know if the current composition is that way now and if people want it to stay that way, the other groups this group in the past has been really big at different times and really, depending on how efficient we needed to be in getting a certain tasks done. And at one time, this larger group included the co curricular people who do co curricular assessment. And again, you may want to think about keeping those as two separate groups or keeping them together. At one time. This was a really big like 25 to 30 member group. And then there were subgroups like the co curricular would have its own group. But I think it wasn't intended to have faculty who do assessment who are teaching, to be at least to be represented on this committee also.

32:23

All right. Good thoughts, good thoughts? Certainly, we'll put that forward. In you know, the, maybe we can't even call it a proposal. Maybe we'll just talk about it as like a, you know, ideation document, so that we can

32:38

What's the date that you just mentioned that you're you're thinking about

32:42

October 27? Is that okay?

32:45

Well, I have a thought just a food for thought. You could maybe consider asking the committee members to such as I Genda, you know, agenda items. I believe every college has faculty meetings. So you were at our meeting yesterday, and when the conversations are coming, right, so I think people may be able to identify things that will be appropriate for this group to talk about. And I don't know how long we're often plan to do that, but maybe give people enough time to, to collect some feedback and maybe suggest items for this mean for the meeting?

33:26

Absolutely. I mean, if you've got a thought, call text email, we'll we'll certainly, you know, put it down. But it's still sort of like to meet again soon. So that we can, you know, we can begin ideating on this and perhaps, you know, coming to some sort of, you know, consensus about how we we need to go forward, but I can I can send out a, I can send out a communication now. You know, addressing, you know, interesting that right now that you might be able to your faculty meetings or invite me to your faculty meetings, I'm happy to come. I mean, I was at business yesterday, it was delightful, so you know, and I'll follow up with you and but if I can come to your your your meetings, or if you don't care for me to do that's fine, as well. But you know, I'm here I volunteer. All you have to do is give me a call and give me an email me text me my cell phone numbers in my email signature. So you can even call me on my cell phone if you'd like.

34:35

Another thought this is Travis again. And this is not a suggestion, just a thought something that we should think about and do it intentionally. Assessments for undergraduate and graduate programs are very different. And we this committee tends to really focus. I think a lot of our discussion has been on the undergraduate programs and the graduate programs if we don't get as much attention as is appropriate. So something to consider intentionally is whether or not we want to have a separate group of subgroups, certain days where we focus on graduate issues, just to make certain that our graduate programs get full attention and we don't exclusively focus on the undergraduate programs. I know the reports are everything but most of our discussion really has been focused on undergraduate programs and that's not necessarily an appropriate but our graduate programs have not gotten a lot of discussion.

35:27

That's a great point. Absolutely. And our provost is undertaking some considerations regarding graduate programs right now. So that would be a great address alongside other efforts. I think that's

you're absolutely we could focus whole meetings on on graduate programs and assessment. Absolutely.

35:52

Does anybody else have any other comments or questions or, or suggestions? Hearing none, I just want to say thank you for coming to our first meeting. Again, we'll try and introduce some more structure in our next meeting and those meetings thereafter. But I just want to say I'm really I'm really glad to be here I started on on August 27. And Carl and I have been working fast and furiously at getting things organized and prepared for our focused visit. I intentionally waited to have this meeting so that I could first understand a few things before we had the meeting. But now that we've had our first one, I feel like you know the the cow is out of the barn, so to speak, and maybe we could chase a few more meetings before our focused visit. I would really appreciate that. If you'd help me I personally be very grateful. And I mean, here, I'm here to help and you know, to ensure that we we do a proper job and we address our focus visit as best we possibly can. And we want to pass that so we don't have to deal with HLC until 2026 and we can figure out a bunch of things going forward together. So I just want to I want to thank you and express my gratitude for all of you being here today. And Megan, I think we made it in time for you to go to your next meeting. All right. Well, I'll send out the the transcript and the recording will will also post so we'll see you soon. Bye bye for now.