



Cal Poly WASC Steering Committee

March 11, 2009
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
01-409

In Attendance:

Peggy Browneller Paradis, Cassie Carter, David Conn, Bruno Giberti, Brent Goodman, Linda Halisky, Rachel Henry, Doug Keesey, Angela Kramer, Cheryl Ney, Erling Smith, Susan Sparling, Tom Trice, Mary Whiteford

Absent:

Denise Campbell, Susan Elrod, Anna Gold, Tom Mackin, Mohammad Noori, Skip Parks, Rick Ramirez, Craig Schultz, Scott Steinmaus, Dan Villegas, Kelley Wigton

Minutes

Minutes were approved.

Announcements

A team of eight will attend the WASC Academic Resource Conference April 15-18. Doug Keesey will present a session on Integrated Program Review.

Faculty/Staff Survey

- The faculty/staff survey will be adapted from the student survey.
- The student engagement and change of major sections will be removed.
- ULO/DLO questions rewritten to read, "Where do you think students are learning?" with the goal of a NSSE/FSSE type comparison.
- TSM and LBD sections will be retained and rewritten.
- The Steering Committee supports adding a question asking whether staff and faculty think different types of activities, e.g. co-curricular contribute to students' personal and professional lives.
- Discussion regarding a possible OPI question assessing what characteristics faculty/staff consider to be part of Cal Poly's polytechnic identity:
 - The Steering Committee supports adding the question.
 - The Strategic Plan needs a definition of polytechnic.
 - The question could use items from 20/21C document. The OPI working group may also have a list of qualities.
 - There was general agreement that the question should be forward-looking in two parts: is this part of our polytechnic identity and how close are we to achieving it? The Likert for achievement could use the stages from the WASC APR rubric: emerging, etc.
 - There was discussion but no consensus on whether to ask what percentage of each major's curriculum should be technical.
 - When the question is developed, the Strategic Plan Writing Team will look at it.
- The TSM group composed additional questions.

- How successful are we as scholars?
- What are faculty and staff members doing?
- The questions ask about individual works and support.
- In order for the questions to be effective, they need a consistent time period, e.g. in the last five years, and scholarship at CP needs to be separated from scholarship before CP.
- This data will be used to base TSM going forward on a realistic assessment of what people are currently doing.
- Where possible, the survey doesn't distinguish between faculty and staff, but it may be necessary to ask people if scholarship/professional development is part of their job description.
- The question of how valuable scholarship is to faculty members' personal and professional lives will be partially addressed by asking how scholarship impacts student learning.
- COACHE addresses the question of faculty motivation for scholarship, whether it's RTP or personal interest.

Student Survey Results

ULO Group

- Because of the way the ULOs were broken down, e.g. separating critical and creative thinking, the results may or may not accurately represent how students perceive these skills.
- It would be helpful to map the demographics to the results in order to get more information about certain items, especially senior project, which students may or may not have done yet.
- Focus groups would be helpful in order to get students' understanding of what critical and creative thinking are and other terms.
- Disaggregating data by college would be helpful.
- NSSE data consistent with results on group work on this survey. On NSSE, students rated their ability to work in teams highly. On FSSE faculty didn't, nor did employers on employer surveys. This is another area where it would be helpful to see what students perceive as good teamwork. It is perhaps not surprising that students disagree with faculty and employers when there's no common rubric or clear expectations for these skills.
- We don't know what students understand these objectives to mean.
- The ULO project is developing behavior outcomes and rubrics, which will help develop student understanding of expectations.
- Students saw GE as an important aspect of their academic and professional lives.
- There seems to be a disconnect between the major and the senior project, whereas ideally students would see them as a continuum. The survey results may or may not indicate that disconnect because it asked whether an activity has already helped students learn the ULOs, which students can't know if they haven't done the activity.
- Students may have projected whether they think the senior project will help them with the ULOs. Many students don't think about the senior project until their final quarter.
- The university doesn't currently present itself as interested in the ULOs and DLOs. If that changes, this survey is a good tool to see whether student perception shifts.

DLO Group

- What is the effect of the Don't Know answers on the results?

- Focusing in on GE/major issues would be helpful because the data is rich in that area. Major impact
- How many students don't know about the DLOs?
- All 4 DLOS aggregated in one chart.
- Disaggregate by college.

LBD

- Disaggregate by college.
- The group would like to investigate why GE came out so low in LBD. Is it because of what students think LBD is?
- The group was impressed by the number of students who came to Cal Poly because of LBD and by their high level of satisfaction with LBD once they got here. Also, a high percentage of students found courses in their major provided the most opportunities for LBD.

Choice of Major

- We need to drill down more into the comments.
- Most students are happy in the major they're in, but we still need to look into the impediments to changing major.
- What's an acceptable level of dissatisfaction?
- At other CSUs, students change their major 3-4 times, and their start to finish time is seven years. Research shows students change their minds about what to major in, though not necessarily their major, an average of five times. In this case, the difficulty in changing major may benefit the student if they change their mind and then change it back.
- CP needs exit interviews with students who leave.
- LBD comments indicate students like taking classes in their major their first year.

Teacher-Scholar

- Students know what their instructors are doing to a much greater degree than the faculty thought. Especially surprising were the number who knew their instructors were editing or reviewing manuscripts. The number who are aware their professors participate in the fine arts is proportional to the number of students in those disciplines.
- Students think this awareness improves their education.
- A high percentage of students neither agree nor disagree that teachers as scholars have a positive impact on student learning, which argues against the idea that TSM is harmful to student learning.
- We didn't ask whether it had an effect on their deciding to attend CP.