Instructional and Student Services Committee Meeting  
February 19, 2010


Sam Hill and Georgeana Stratton participated by phone.

Guests:
Ms. Charlotte Calobrisi, Special Assistant for Compliance Certification, SACS Reaffirmation  
Ms. Alison Thimblin, Special Assistant for the Quality Enhancement Plan, SACS Reaffirmation

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Walters, committee chair.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the January 22, 2010 meeting were approved as presented.

Presentation on Academic Advising and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Two major documents required for NOVA’s reaffirmation, the Compliance Certification Report and the Quality Enhancement Plan, are currently being worked on by Ms. Calobrisi and Ms Thimblin, respectively. The Compliance Certification addressing the core requirements for reaffirmation is due March 2011. The QEP, the college’s strategy to enhance a particular area of student learning, is due about August 2011.

Ms. Thimblin discussed the process now underway to select NOVA’s QEP. It focuses on student learning and/or the environment supporting student learning. Student learning can address knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values.

The QEP does not have to be something new, but could focus on improving or enhancing something already in place. This plan looks to the future and includes specific student learning outcomes. Based on empirical data and an analysis of the data, it explores NOVA’s culture, strategic vision, goals, mission, and assessment results. It needs to be broad in its scope so as to be significant to the institution as well as a major enhancement to student learning. Broad-based support is required as the institution goes through the process of identifying and developing this plan.

The following topics are currently being considered by the SACS Reaffirmation Steering Committee:

- Experiential Learning
- Citizenship Across the Curriculum
- Science Across the Curriculum
Two or three QEP proposals will be presented to the Administrative Council in March 2010. Once the QEP is selected by the Administrative Council, a QEP committee will be identified to develop the official plan to be submitted to SACS.

The Quality Enhancement Plan must be manageable, allow appropriate assessments at specific benchmarks, and have a measurable outcome. An Impact Report will be submitted as a part of NOVA’s Fifth-Year Interim Report.

Feedback from the college community is encouraged and can be sent to Ms. Thimblin by email or posted on the QEP blog.

The ISSC discussion of the QEP focused on the proposed topic of academic advising. In discussing this proposal, the committee offered the following suggestions:

- The plan needs to focus both on the teaching faculty and the student services aspects of advising and to define the relationship between the students and each of these.
- The difference between counseling and advising needs to be clearly communicated. Teaching faculty, student services counselors, and advising specialists need better communication, collaboration, and an understanding of each other’s roles.
- Clarification is needed on both the role of the faculty advisor and the college’s expectations for faculty advising.
- Consideration should be given to the numerous advising activities currently in place. Identifying what each campus and the college is doing in the advising area and assessing what does and does not work is important in the development of this plan. Consistency should be a major focus.
- Special consideration should be given to the advising needs of ELI students. It is important to understand how adult learners see their relationship with NOVA. Various other high-need groups such as developmental and international students should also receive special attention.
- Coordination between faculty advisors and transfer counselors is needed to better serve the needs of students planning to transfer.
- The college should continue to enhance current online advising resources.
- It was agreed that improvements are critical in the following areas:
  - Communications
  - Comprehensive and consistent resources
  - Training
  - Coordination
- One model available is the advising effort at the Loudoun Campus. Communication training modules and a more equitable way of distributing advising duties are some areas addressed in this model.
- A plan for offering advising during the summer months is needed as 9-month faculty are not available and the student services staff is busy with registration.
The students’ role in the academic advising process also needs to be clarified. What are their responsibilities and expectations, and what input do they have in the selection of their advisors? What can be done to get the students to meet with an advisor early in their college experience?

While technology resources should be used to their full potential, it was agreed that the student-faculty collaboration is critical to student success.

Although letters are sent to students and the Deans of Students in cases of academic probation and suspension, there is currently no way to notify advisors that their advisees are having trouble.

The process for assigning faculty advisors needs to be consistent and more equitable.

Employing more paraprofessionals to assist at the beginning stages of advising. Assessing a student’s needs and determining who can best address them does not necessarily have to be done by a counselor or faculty advisor.

Ms. Thimblin will forward the revised proposal on academic advising to the ISSC.

Additional comments regarding academic advising should be forwarded to Ms. Walters.

**Campus Safety and Security:**

Dr. Dever reported that the Presidential Commission on Safety and Security was convened on February 15. The Commission will review the adequacy of what the college currently has in place as well as provide recommendations for closing any gaps and for enhancing preparedness and coordination. The focus of this effort is to identify what can be done to make NOVA a safer place to work and to attend classes. The Commission’s report is due to the president by April 30.

The committee suggested the following for consideration by the Commission:

- The college community needs general guidelines for responding to various types of emergencies. An informed faculty and staff are the college’s best tools to ensure its safety and security.
- Ensure that resources are available throughout the college to support these guidelines. Telephones and internal locks in every classroom are two examples.
- It is important to find the right balance between fear and preparedness.
- A protocol for off-site locations needs to be in place and clearly defined for college personnel located at these sites.
- Effective and timely communication as to the nature of the emergency is critical.
- The college’s first responders must be clearly identified, properly trained, and have the resources needed to do their jobs.
- It is important to fully utilize the resources provided by the college Care Teams. All concerning behavior should be reported as soon as possible.
Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Next Meetings:

The next meeting of the Instruction and Student Services Committee will be Friday, March 26, 10:30 a.m., in the Large Board Room at Brault.