

November 29, 2005

Dear SAC Administrative Support folk,

Yesterday you were copied on an e-mail that Karen Jolly, chair of the Educational Advisory Council, sent to PCC faculty regarding the new academic planning process. Tomorrow you will receive from Reine Thomas, the Dean of Instruction at Rock Creek, a fuller description of the new planning process, along with a spreadsheet of data that will be used in it. As one of the division deans serving on the EAC Task Force advising on the planning process, I have been asked to send a "heads up" about what the new process is likely to mean to division deans and directors serving as SAC administrative supports. Three points seem particularly important at this time.

First, the new process calls for an annual review of institutional data by SACs working with their SAC administrators. The document you will receive tomorrow suggests that faculty will review institutional data and provide feedback to SAC administrators regarding data accuracy and anomalies. No doubt the faculty will have feedback regarding institutional data, but I suspect that we will end up playing a central role in interpreting data for both faculty and deans of instruction. We will need to prepare for this.

Second, members of the Academic Planning Task Force have frequently argued that the planning process needs to include qualitative as well as quantitative information. Reine Thomas points out in her document that numbers do not tell the whole story about programs and disciplines. However, I do not believe that we on the planning task force have yet worked out very clearly just what qualitative information needs to be included in the academic planning process and how it will be considered. I encourage you to think about this and share ideas you have for how we can address qualitative issues in a fair, systematic manner during academic planning.

Finally, the academic planning process this year is behind schedule. There is not much that we can do about this now, but the long-term goal is to connect planning discussions and budget decisions. Most important, the deans of instruction are committed to making academic planning an inclusive, transparent process.

Please feel free to share ideas, questions, or comments with your dean of instruction or members of the Academic Planning Task Force.

Thank you,

Steve

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