University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Consultative minutes 10/30/2012

Consultative Committee

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Consultative Committee Minutes 10/30/12

Committee members present: Co-chairs Brook Miller and LeAnn Dean, Jim Barbour, Joey Daniewicz, Molly Donovan, Jim Hall, Nancy Helsper, Ray Schultz, Bonnie Tipcke, Zach Van Cleve, Heather Waye

Guest: Jon Anderson

Jon Anderson was welcomed to the meeting to and address questions about and discuss the RAR process.

Jon started with the current state of knowledge. The data submission process for all three program areas (Academics, Student Services, and Administration) is complete, and they are now processing the data to get it into the format for the next stage. He brought an example of the reports that the scoring teams will receive (the example is the report for the Statistics discipline). This will be a narrative with summarized data, that will give the scoring team an understanding of what each program does and its strengths and weaknesses. Academic programs are finished, Student Service programs are partly done but will be finished within the week, and they are working on data reorganization for Administrative programs. There will be a meeting this afternoon of Chancellor Johnson, Barbara Burke, Peh Ng, Hilda Ladner, and Gwen Rudney to discuss the rubrics for scoring and to come up with the assignments for the scoring teams (e.g. how many programs for each team, how many people for each team). There will be a training session for the teams on how to use the rubrics. Meanwhile they will develop an evaluation team who will develop the prioritization process. Folders will be on Netfiles so the scoring teams and prioritization team will be able to access the narratives for each program. This way, the prioritization team can begin working before receiving the final report from the scoring teams. The scoring teams will start working next week, and will take 2 weeks to finish. They are close to having (or now have) names for the scoring teams and the prioritization team – the Membership Committee is assisting with this. It will take 2 to 2 ½ weeks for the scoring process, then programs will have a 1 to 1 ½ week window to reply. There will be an online form for programs to use to submit comments, or corrections, or add context. The prioritization team will then get to work.

Jon addressed the questions about the RAR process provided by the Consultative Committee:

1) What information will programs receive about how they were ranked, including how their reports were processed and quantified?

Every program will get their ranking, a score summary, and a short commentary by the scoring team, but not individual data values. It is unlikely that more information will be available. The final rank listing will be available to all, but it is unsure right now if the scores will be widely available.

2) What opportunities will programs have for commenting on the evaluations of their programs?

There will be an open comment period, with an electronic form for programs to use. More private comments can be made directly to Jon. Brook asked whether programs will be notified when the window for commenting will be open, and Jon replied that the timing of that window will be easier to predict as scoring progresses, so there should be around 2 weeks advance notice. Brook pointed out that there is some anxiety about the data and how programs will be valued, so there will likely be some desire for intensive review of the data, comparisons to other programs, and discussion about what to add. This process could take longer than 1 ½ weeks. Jon replied that the window probably could be extended to 2 weeks, but we risk pushing everything back beyond the time that the prioritization will be useful. Most programs will not need to spend much time on the rebuttal, while others will. Extending the window for comments to 3 weeks will not make a difference in terms of time to craft statements of rebuttal.

3) What will be the timeframe for programs to gather information about and respond to evaluations of their programs?

This will be the 1 to 2 week window for comments. Programs should keep in mind the audience for these comments is the prioritization team, not the scoring team.

4) Will programs have access to reports of other programs to crosscheck whether components that the RAR committee values have been underreported?

Are there any pitfalls to concealing or revealing the reports to other programs? A pitfall to concealing is that there will be worry about what was not emphasized by a particular program, and the ability to compare with similar programs might address this concern. LeAnn asked if that meant that this is an opportunity to add information and to address the word count restriction. Jon replied that yes, programs could submit whatever they want to tell the prioritization team, whether it be something new or a rebuttal to scoring comments. LeAnn asked if graphs or spreadsheets could be submitted, as they are a more efficient way of conveying data and making comparisons. Jon replied that this would not be possible as it is not clear how these files would be physically processed and handled, and a standardized format makes comparisons between programs easier.

5) How will these feedback mechanisms, if any, be incorporated into the assessments of the phase 2 and phase 3 RAR groups (that is, how will feedback be incorporated into their recommendations)?

The prioritization team will be asked to look at the comments, the original materials, and the scoring team's results and to make their own judgment. We want them to be as well-educated about each program as possible. Brook asked about what the prioritization team will do with their conclusions – do they provide a ranking or offer administrative suggestions? The prioritization team will provide a ranking and suggestions (e.g. this program needs more resources, this program is doing well with what they have, this program is a candidate for resource reduction). Programs that are suggested for reduction will be subject to another layer of review and executive decision-making. The end of the RAR process will be the start of a new phase involving the discussion of allocation of funds. Brook pointed out that the intention of a new layer of review for reduction of resources should be made very clear in order to reduce

anxiety. Ray asked if a program feels comfortable with their scoring and ranking and doesn't send a rebuttal or comments, will they get reduced if lower-ranked programs do send a rebuttal? Jon feels it would be wise for all programs to take the opportunity to send more information and a rebuttal. Most programs haven't seen ranking charts before and perceive themselves in a way that might be very different than what is reflected in the rankings. The ranking charts could help clarify their self image, or if they conflict the programs should take the time to make a rebuttal. Academic programs are finished, and they could look at their rankings now.

6) What general information will be provided about how conversion of qualitative and quantitative data into rankings occurred (if any, above and beyond the description already found on the website)?

The scoring team will use numeric and qualitative information, but will not be told to use one over the other. The rubric relies on them using both types of data to rate programs as "high level" or "low level", etc. The teams will practice being consistent in their use of the information, but some may value qualitative over quantitative (or vice versa). The scoring teams will be teams of 4 (potentially), with one team each for Academic, Administrative, and Student Services programs. This will help maintain internal consistency. A cross team will be formed at the end with representatives from the three scoring teams, and they will cross-match programs into a general ranking, taking quartiles or quintiles from each ranking and force-merging them. The scoring teams each contain someone from outside the group (e.g. someone who is not faculty on the Academic team), so the teams will be not completely representative but cross-representative.

7) What forums should programs use to report errors within their data?

Come to Jon first with specific errors, so they can be addressed before the process goes too far. General complaints should be addressed in the rebuttal document.

8) Will programs receive confirmation that their reports are complete?

No, they will be notified when all of the reports are complete, but they won't check whether any particular report looks messed up. It is up to the programs to review their own reports.

Brook asked whether students will be included in the prioritization phase. The mechanism will likely be that the prioritization team will come up with a proposal of groupings which will be reviewed by the students. Their input could then be used by the prioritization team to modify their results. Nancy wondered if the teams are preparing for a debriefing at the end of this process, and pointed out they should be taking notes in anticipation for a debriefing. Jon feels this entire process was too person-specific (ie. Jon-specific), and needs to be able to be passed off to someone else. The committee thanks Jon for coming to talk to us.

These minutes will be passed to Jon Anderson to review, and then sent to Chancellor Johnson before her meeting with this committee.

Submitted by:
Heather Waye