

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
Institutional Effectiveness Committee
ANNUAL REPORT
2007-2008

I. Executive Summary:

2007-08 Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee members included:

Dr. Birdie Bailey (CONAH dean)	Dr. Donna Jacobs (COE dean)
Dr. Phil Bridgmon (A&S fac. rep.)	Dr. Alan Medders (VP. Advancement.)
Dr. Roosevelt Newson (VP/Programs)	Dr. Andrew Luna (Director of Assessment)
Dr. Pam Fernstrom (Educ. fac. rep.)	Mr. Kevin Jacques (Stud. Affairs rep.)
Dr. Kerry Gatlin (COB dean)	Ms. Leigh Thompson (Library fac. rep.)
Dr. Vagn Hansen (A&S dean)	Dr. Lavin Rowe (Nursing fac. rep.)
Mr. Jeff Hodges (Athletics rep.)	Mr. David Shields (VP/Student Affairs)
Dr. Steve Smith (VP/Bus. &Fin. Affairs)	Ms. Karen Kennedy (Staff rep.)
Mr. Randy Horn (Dean Info. Tech. rep.)	Dr. Pete Williams (Business fac. rep.)
Dr. Dan Howard (VP/Admin./Int'l Pro.)*	Dr. Sue Wilson (Enrollment Mgmt. dean)
Dr. Garry Warren (VP for Academic Affairs and Practical Jokes)	

*Note: Dan Howard vacated his position mid-year.

Phil Bridgmon served as Committee Chair for 2007-08. David Shields served as Vice Chair and is expected to assume Chairmanship of the Committee for the 2008-09 academic year.

During 2007-08, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee focused on the following:

1. Orient the new Director of Research, Planning, and Assessment to University protocols and policy documents.
2. Evaluating assessment process and IE Committee's relationship to continuous improvement.
3. Implementing the *Guide for Planning and Assessment*.
4. Assisting University with awareness of IE.

Efforts were also made to understand better and improve coordination with the budgeting process, to move toward electronic reporting of assessment activities, and to better relate to key constituencies.

Recommendations were made concerning organization and scope of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment, implementation strategies of the Guide, and adoption of revisions to the *Guide for Planning and Assessing Institutional*

Effectiveness. The IE Committee's activities were altered by a change in the VPAA's office early in the AY and a new Director of Research, Assessment, and Planning.

II. The Committee's Charge:

1. To communicate its deliberations and findings, through the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to the President for approval and dissemination to the university community;
2. To review in a systematic cycle and make recommendations for indicated changes to critical university documents (i.e., mission, institutional goals, value statement, strategic plan, etc.)
3. To recommend, publish, and implement adequate procedures for assessing and documenting the effective support of the institution's goals by all campus units;
4. To provide leadership for ensuring that the looping process of assessment and evaluation, appropriate feedback, and budgeting is completed and that the results of evaluations are reflected in modifications to programs and services and in the allocation of physical, financial, and personnel resources; and
5. To assess whether the expected outcomes have been achieved and to ensure continuous improvement in university administration, academic programs, and educational support services.

III. The Committee met on the following dates:

September 19, 2007

October 24, 2007

November 27, 2007

January 16, 2008

February 13, 2008

March 12, 2008 (no quorum)

April 9, 2008

May 2, 2007

A. Specify whether a quorum was present for each meeting.

A quorum was present for all meetings except for our March 2008 meeting.

B. Where are the minutes of these Committee meetings posted?

Minutes for the IE Committee are now posted on the Shared Governance website as they are approved by the IE Committee.

C. If fewer than eight meetings were scheduled, explain why more meetings were not necessary.

N/A.

IV. What were the Committee's actions and accomplishments this year relative to each of the items of the charge?

Committee Charge: To communicate its deliberations and findings, through the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to the President for approval and dissemination to the university community;

Actions Taken: The Provost is a voting member of the IE Committee and is the primary recipient of this report.

Committee Charge: To review in a systematic cycle and make recommendations for indicated changes to critical university documents (i.e., mission, institutional goals, value statement, strategic plan, etc.);

Actions Taken: The IE Committee Chair and the Director of OIRPA met regularly as part of a workgroup to implement the new *Guide for Planning and Assessment*. Based upon a directive by the VPAA that the responsible office for assessment is indeed the Office of Research, Planning, and Assessment, a working group comprised of Vagn Hansen, Priscilla Holland, Celia Reynolds, Phil Bridgmon, and Andrew Luna met to develop language for official policy documents that reflect the enhanced leadership role of the OIRPA as it oversees institutional effectiveness. Formally adopted by the IE Committee at its May meeting, the revised Guide reflects the role of IRPA and the need for that office to be a leader in IE.

Committee Charge: To recommend, publish, and implement adequate procedures for assessing and documenting the effective support of the institution's goals by all campus units;

Actions Taken: Based upon a recognition that the broader campus community was not ready to fully implement tenets of the Guide, the IE Committee requested that the OIRPA conduct workshops on assessing academic and academic support programs. The Committee formally voted to conduct two workshops in June and July. The Committee also requested that the office work collaboratively with the academic deans to establish a schedule of assessments for the five-year cycle. Further, the Committee gently prodded the OIRPA to provide the templates for all Guide protocols. While not all templates and supporting documents are currently available, progress has been made. Anticipate that electronic reporting will be operational by fall 2008.

Committee Charge: To provide leadership for ensuring that the looping process of assessment and evaluation, appropriate feedback, and budgeting is completed and that the results of evaluations are reflected in modifications to programs and services and in the allocation of physical, financial, and personnel resources; and

Actions Taken: Very little was accomplished in this area. The IE Committee Chair and Strategic Planning and Budget Study Committee Chair did exchange visits to their counterparts Committee. Both expressed a strong desire for the Committees to work closely together. The IE Committee Chair expressed that once assessment is fully integrated into program evaluations, richer data should be available to aid the SPBSC in its deliberations.

Committee Charge: To assess whether the expected outcomes have been achieved and to ensure continuous improvement in university administration, academic programs, and educational support services.

Actions Taken: Throughout the AY, the IE Committee had a qualitative “feel” that the change in leadership within the OIRPA had slowed momentum that developed the prior year. Within meetings of the IE Committee, several discussions were held that placed an emphasis on the need to make greater strides in assisting the campus community with understanding assessment, development of outcomes specific to program areas, and identifying data to assist in evaluation of those outcomes.

Four departments volunteered to complete Academic Reviews. Reports should be available to the IE Committee at its early fall 2008 meetings.

V. What were the Committee’s formal recommendations?

The IE Committee approved Guide revisions that fully incorporate a clear role for the Office of Research, Planning, and Assessment. Several templates were approved that support the Guide’s implementation (Annual Action Plan, Annual Action Plan Assessment, Academic and Academic Support Reviews). The Committee also adopted a set of tasks to be complete by OIRAP that includes the following:

- 1) Annual Action Plan Assessment * (Completed)
- 2) Academic Support Review (Completed)
- 3) General Education Assessment
- 4) University Goals Assessment
- 5) Mission Statement Review
- 6) Administrative Systems Evaluations
- 7) Shared Governance (including Faculty Senate)
- 8) Guide Changes (will be presented at the April I.E. meeting).

The IE Committee also adopted the following language when calling for these procedures and protocols:

The OIRPA is the primary office responsible for developing the...procedures, protocols, and documents that support the University's assessment programs.

VI. What does the Committee plan to accomplish?

A. In the coming year?

The upcoming year should not be one of transition. The new Director of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (*ex officio* member of the IE Committee) has now spent a year in office and has become acclimated to UNA and its policy documents. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee and OIRAP will have a busy year in 2008-09, as the OIRPA has planned for all Academic Support units and several academic units to undergo program reviews.

The Committee should receive briefings on the first round of completed program reviews and Annual Action Plan Assessment reports. The Committee should receive advice from the OIRAP on the degree to which departmental priority initiatives supported the University's 2007-2008 initiatives.

The Committee should receive all templates, assessment schedules, and results of any program review feedback at its early 2008-09 meetings.

The Committee should utilize the University webmaster to fulfill the commitment of the University to a fully functioning assessment website.

Encourage the OIRPA to take a more visible role in promoting, explaining, and encouraging assessment.

While General Education Assessment is a standing Committee, the IE Committee should be fully aware of its machinations and also receive reports of any assessments originating from that Committee.

Several "new" issues will likely need the attention of the IE Committee to include receiving a report on the efficacy of the new employee classification system, banner implementation issues, and recognition of the 2008-09 University priority initiatives. One major University initiative should be widespread assessment of University functions not typically given much scrutiny. Shared Governance and governance systems in general are ripe for assessment.

B. In future years?

SACS reaffirmation is imminent. With a 2012 visit and compliance report due December 2011 that will take one year to complete (fall 2010 start date), the 2008-2009 AY is the most critical year of future years.

The IE Committee should ensure that the OIRPA begin moving with haste in the area of assessment. On the current assessment trajectory, the University will scramble to make assessment a ubiquitous part of our operations.

Additionally, the IE Committee should be able to formally receive official reports from IRPA regarding the assessment and documentation of University accomplishments of goals in relation to the Strategic Plan.

Fortunately, more University representatives are attending SACS conferences, individuals have been appointed to serve as SACS reviewers, and a leadership team has been assembled.

VII. What are the Committee's weaknesses?

The primary weakness of the Committee is understanding its relationship to the notion of institutional effectiveness. Some clarification has come this year with clearer expectations from the Provost. The primary issue is now to resolve the difference between the definitions and understanding of governance and administration, which currently exists to some degree between the Committee and the OIRPA. Governance and day-to-day administration are not synonymous, and the IE Committee OIRPA must come to some resolution on the proper scope of the Committee's work. Also, the Committee struggles to adequately promote IE across campus. For example, deadlines for the submission of program reviews and annual assessment reports were extended by the Committee at its May meeting, but the extensions were not broadcast by IRPA as it distributed the Annual Action Plan Assessment templates.

A. What actions will be taken next year to address the weaknesses?

The simple way to solve the above mentioned weakness is action. IE and IRPA should partner on the development of a comprehensive assessment website for the Committee. IE should oversee IRPA's implementation of a series of workshops on various assessment topics. Since we are in a critical period before reaffirmation, past IE Committee Chairs should form an information advisory group for the Committee. IE should also ensure that the OIRPA follow through with its commitment to manage program reviews of all academic support areas.

B. What can the Shared Governance Committee help you do to address the weaknesses?

The Shared Governance Committee should commit to assess faculty and staff governance during the 2008-2009 AY. This could be accomplished with focus groups of faculty, staff, administrators, and external patrons of the University. Surveys could be utilized and structured interviews with key administrative members (President, Board members, and faculty leaders) would provide a clear portrait of where Shared Governance currently stands within the University..

Comments:

While progress was made on the core commitments of the IE Committee, the change in leadership within the VPAA's office caused a reorientation of the Committee's priorities. The instruction that IRPA would be held primarily responsible for assessment is welcome and needed. UNA's assessment program, while a year old, does not appear to be fully embraced by IRPA. Commitments by IRPA to managing the assessment process have been slow to develop.

For UNA to be successful, the OIRPA office must elevate assessment to its chief priority for the next several years. Once the assessment program is in place, the office can then return to balance of research, planning, and assessment. Given assessments infancy at UNA, this is a critical piece to our success as an institution, particularly with regards to reaffirmation and governance.

July 24, 2008

ANNUAL REPORT
Date Due: July 25, 2008

Institutional Effectiveness Committee

University of North Alabama
Florence, Alabama

Phil Bridgmon, Ph.D. Committee Chair

Date submitted

Submitted to: _____ Date received _____
Garry Warren, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs