

SACS 5th Year Interim Report Process and Issues

Georgia College & State University

Process

- Began work in March 2009
- Led by a Steering Committee
 - 80 faculty, staff, and administrators involved
 - 8 subcommittees divided into two groups
 - Academic areas and administrative areas

Process

- “Academic” committees
 - Led by the chair of the steering committee
 - Divided into three subcommittees
 - I: *Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 and Federal Requirements 4.1, 4.2, and 4.4 (Learning outcomes, student achievement, program length)*: chaired by the Arts and Sciences Dean
 - II CR 2.10 Student Support Services: Chaired by the director of the testing center

Process

- QEP impact response report subcommittee
 - Led by the chair of the steering committee
 - Two groups of participants
 - Responsible parties for original QEP initiatives
 - Broadly representative drafting committee

Process

- “Administrative” subcommittees
 - A facilitator: The University Registrar
 - 5 subcommittees, each with an individual chair

Process

- Report sent to expert external reviewers

Process

- See our university planning website for complete organizational details
 - <http://www.gcsu.edu/planning/sacs2010/committees.htm>

General Issues

- **Core Requirement 2.10**

- *The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students.*
- Connects to learning outcomes
- Controversial in Student Affairs and rarely done
- Reliance on indirect data, such as from NASPA surveys
- Similar issue for facilities standard CS 3.11.3

General Issues

- Many standards, such as CR 2.10, require a demonstration of compliance that is linked to the institutional mission statement
 - Must derive and/or link learning goals from/to the mission statement
 - 2004 reaffirmation issues with mission statement
 - Leadership changes
 - Recent mission review retreat

General Issues

- *Federal Requirement 4.5* The institution has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures when resolving student complaints.
 - Need to keep documentation of our actual application of policies

General Issues

- CS 3.3.1.1
 - *The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area: 3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes.*
 - Leadership changes impacted continuity of practice
 - History of difficulties with assessment software
 - Need to close the loop

The QEP Impact Response Report

- Early QEPs were typically unfocused and broad
 - GCSU title: *Fostering Excellence and Challenging Students in the Classroom and Beyond and Across the Student's Career: A Mission-Driven Plan for Quality Enhancement*

What have we learned?

- GCSU QEP had 6 initiatives
 - Multiple sub-initiatives
 - Multiple student learning outcomes under each initiative and sub-initiative
 - Initiatives were not clearly related to one another

Assessment Issues

- Learning outcomes were poorly formed
 - Many were not assessable
- Often the means of assessment did not directly relate to the stated learning outcome

Case Study

- Initiative 1: **Enhance orientation programs for transfer students**
- Outcome 2: Students will be prepared to learn and to be intellectually challenged. Assessment: Increase in number and retention of transfer students in good academic standing after their first semester.
- Outcome 4: Students will experience the benefits of the public liberal arts experience. Assessment: Average transfer student GPA is equivalent to or better than that of generic freshmen at graduation.

Other Issues

- Report on Changes Made to the QEP
 - SACS had recommended use of formative assessment to track progress and respond to issues
 - Implemented the QEP as initially drafted
 - Leadership changes: Formative assessments were not done on campus during the life of the QEP
 - Responsible parties were not alerted to the need to keep assessment data

Impact on Student Learning

- Limited success with Initiatives 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6
 - Initiative 3 and general education
- Greater success with Initiative 5
 - Broadened as a result of the Strategic Focusing Initiative to include a wider array of LBTC activities
 - Helped to unite several QEP initiatives, such as Initiative 2 (Leadership) and Initiative 6 (success after graduation/internships, etc.)
- **GCSU's Quality Enhancement Plan**
 - Six initiatives to help us better fulfill our mission to “foster excellence and challenge students in the classroom and beyond.”
 - 1) **Enhance orientation programs for transfer students**
 - 2) **Enhance student leadership opportunities**
 - 3) **Enhance academic challenge within the curriculum to reflect the liberal arts mission**
 - 4) **Enhance recruitment and retention of students and faculty to increase diversity**
 - 5) **Enhance opportunities to engage student learning in the classroom and beyond**
 - 6) **Enhance preparation of students for success in post-graduate opportunities**

QEP Initiative 5: Results



- **Enhance Opportunities to Engage Student Learning in the Classroom and Beyond**
 - *Outcome 5:* Students will interact with instructors outside of the classroom.
Assessment: Originally survey of faculty in learning communities, but joint research activities and survey results proved more informative.
 - 259 students gave joint professional presentations and/or publications with faculty.

QEP Initiative 5: Results

- Outcome 6: Students will demonstrate crossover learning and apply learning to external situations. Assessment: Originally GPAs, retention rates, and graduation rates of students in learning communities, but increases in LBTC activities and survey results proved better measures.
 - Student research conference presentations increased from 104 (2006) to 302 (2009).
 - Service learning hours increased from 12,328 (2006) to 30,000 (2009).
 - Internships increased by 36 percent (2004-2007).
 - Study abroad participants increased by 168.87 % since 2003, the largest increase among USG institutions.

QEP Initiative 5: Results

- Outcome 2: Students will be involved in campus life.
Assessment: Increased participation in campus events and student organizations.
 - Volunteer hours increased from 33,586 (2006) to 42,500 (2009).
 - Recipients of the Presidential Service Award (recognizing a minimum of 100 volunteer hours in a year) increased from 4 (2004) to 146 (2009).
 - 472 students participated in leadership activities since 2006.



Indirect Data on LBTC from Surveys

- NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) Student Voice Survey (2008-2009)
 - Student responses to the NASPA item, “ As a result of campus activities, I have gained experience/skills relevant to my academic major,” were higher than the national average ($p < .05$)

Indirect Data on LBTC from Surveys

- NSSE 2008 (National Survey of Student Engagement)
 - Student satisfaction ratings are higher as compared to other benchmark institutions in areas related to *learning outcomes 3 (progress towards degree), 4 (collaboration), and 5 (student-faculty interaction)*.
 - With the exception of faculty-student interaction, these ratings have increased since 2005

Responding to the QEP

- Recent QEP/Mission Review Stakeholder's Conference
 - Intensive focus on learning beyond the classroom
 - Development of learning outcomes to guide the next five years as we look to the next QEP