SACS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

President's Conference Room
Meeting of September 13, 2006, 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: Payne (Co-Chair), Caso, Jenkins, Muehsam, Parker, Price, and Rogers

1. Dr. Payne welcomed and thanked the committee members for their participation on the committee.

2. Dr. Payne provided an overview of the committee's responsibilities:
   - Formally accepting, reviewing, and finalizing the Compliance Committee's report.
   - Serving as readers for the Self Study from the perspective of an expert of the University and that of an off-site reviewer.
   - Aiding the Compliance Committee in removing any barriers or obstacles they may face in gathering information for the Self Study.
   - Approving the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

3. Dr. Payne announced that the SACS winter meetings are being held in December. He stressed that the Leadership Committee members should each attend to gather a reasonable understanding and a broad perspective of what SACS would be expecting of the University during the reaffirmation process.

   Dr. Muehsam encouraged the members to register now, as local hotels would be filling up. The meeting dates will be December 8th – 12th. There will be workshops held on December 8th and the morning of December 9th.

4. Dr. Payne raised the issue of developing a strategy to design a QEP that will solicit input from the entire SHSU community. He further explained that upon gathering input from students, faculty and staff, the QEP would be selected. It is not necessary for all of these individuals to be involved in the implementation of the QEP, but each must be aware of what the QEP is.

   The committee discussed possible avenues by which ideas and suggestions could be solicited from students, faculty and staff. The following options were proposed:
   - University Faculty Senate
   - Departmental input through each college
   - Town Hall Meetings

5. At the request of the committee, Dr. Muehsam reviewed the timeline for SHSUs SACS reaffirmation process:
   - September/October 2008: Self Study to be submitted to SACS off-site review team
   - January/February 2009: Submit a Focus Report, if necessary, addressing concerns identified by the off-site review team within the Self Study
   - April/May/June 2009: SACS on-site review team to visit the University
   - December 2009: SHSU's Accreditation Announcement by SACS

6. Dr. Muehsam informed the committee that the onsite SACS review team would address any issues remaining after the Focus Report, but would be primarily concerned with the QEP. This team will guide the University through the final steps of the QEP development prior to its implementation.

7. Dr. Payne informed the committee that several high quality institutions recently completing their SACS reaffirmation had not taken certain aspects of the reaffirmation serious and had received either sanctions or a negative action from SACS, such as being placed on probation or warning. SHSU will put forth every effort to ensure the reaffirmation process proceeds and is conducted as requested by SACS.

8. Dr. Muehsam discussed with the committee the general guidelines surrounding the QEP and distributed SACS Core Requirement 2.12. He reiterated that the QEP, if successful, should improve student learning. The QEP can be broad or narrow, as long as it improves some aspect of student learning.

9. The committee discussed in further detail how input should be solicited from the various groups on campus. The division of Academic Affairs will solicit input from its departments through the channels previously discussed. The committee discussed an approach for soliciting input from each of the other divisions on campus. The committee agreed that the division of Academic Affairs should develop a base list of QEP ideas to then share with each of the other divisions. It was determined that the Town Hall meetings would be open to all faculty, staff and students across campus. In addition to those channels mentioned earlier, the University Staff Council and the University Student Government Association would be channels for gathering input. Electronic suggestion boxes will also be provided.

10. The issue was raised that the University was already pursuing projects that would qualify as QEPs. Dr. Payne informed the committee that the QEP must be something that the University is not already doing. The question was raised as to whether the University could build upon something that was already being developed. Examples such as the American Democracy Project and SHSU Learning Communities were suggested. Dr. Payne felt as though the QEP could be an extension of something the University was already doing.

    As the QEP cannot be merely something that the University has already implemented, committee members asked if certain pending projects should not be acted upon now, but rather delayed and used as the QEP. As this strategy is not in the best interest of student learning, the University will continue to be proactive in improving student learning and will find additional ideas for the QEP.

11. Dr. Muehsam explained that a QEP committee would be developed. Committee members discussed whether the QEP committee members should be named prior to a QEP topic being selected. It was decided that the skeleton membership could be developed; however the QEP director should be selected following the QEP topic as to provide expertise in the selected area.

12. The committee discussed the need for adequate funding for the QEP. Those QEPs that have been successful at other institutions have all been adequately funded. The QEP must also have demonstrated funding for years to come. It was pointed out that no institution has spent less that $50,000 in preparation for a SACS reaffirmation.

13. The committee discussed options for getting the word across campus about the QEP. Dr. Muehsam showed the committee an example of marketing techniques used by the University of North Texas to market their QEP. The committee was in favor of an efficient, cost effective marketing technique for advertising the QEP.

14. Dr. Rogers shared her QEP ideas with the committee.
    - Learning Communities
    - Professor Academic Center for Excellence
    - Service Learning

- Academic Coach
- Readership Program

15. Dr. Price suggested using "new literacies" or enhancement of student learning for those students whose first language is not English as a base for the QEP.

16. Dr. Payne asked the committee how they would like to proceed. It was determined that input would be solicited from the deans by December. Ideas from each of the other bodies should be gathered prior to December. The SACS Leadership Committee will meet again in December or January to review the list of ideas. The committee will then narrow the list and solicit mass input from the SHSU community during the spring 2007 semester. A plan should be selected by summer 2007. Baseline data will then be collected.

17. Drs. Muehsam, Caso and Rogers will develop a format to solicit input for the QEP. Multiple forms may be created to cater to the varied perspectives of faculty, staff and students.

18. Dr. Caso recommended using the "snowball" approach when gathering input for the QEP. Start with one body and one list of ideas. Forward this list to the next body to build upon.

19. Dr. Caso suggested to the committee that the QEP process be launched into a web community, possibly utilizing a blog. She suggested involving not only the students, faculty and staff, but also the Huntsville community, employers of SHSU graduates and off campus alumni.

20. Dr. Muehsam asked the committee members to send their December SACS meeting travel and hotel information to his office. He would provide the SACS account number for payment.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Somer Smith