

MEMORANDUM

TO: Advising and Student Support Program Council

FROM: Steering Committee

RE: Assessment plan for advising

DATE: November 2, 2016

Background:

On October 28, 2016, Steering received an email from Jennifer Palmgren, Assistant Provost, asking Steering to charge the Advising and Student Support Program Council to develop a college-wide assessment plan for advising, as is called for in the Policy on Advising Goals and Practices developed by CAP with advice from ASSPC.

Charge:

The Steering committee charges ASSPC to develop a plan for the assessment of advising. As this may include an assessment of work done in part by individual faculty members, the three-step process for governance should be followed.

In conducting step 1, Steering suggests that ASSPC seek input from Associate Provost Mosen Auryan, from Academic Leaders, from the Council of Deans, and from the Faculty Senate and Student Government Executive Boards, either at meetings of these bodies or via email.

In constructing a plan, ASSPC should consider and seek input on the following questions;

- 1) What is the purpose of the assessment? Is the goal to assess the advising offered by individual faculty members, to assess the effectiveness of departments in advising their students collectively, or to assess the effectiveness of advising at the College as a whole?
- 2) Should students be given an opportunity to provide feedback on their individual experiences?
- 3) Should information gathered be shared with individual advisors, departments, and deans with information identifying the advisor in question, or should data be kept only in the aggregate?
- 4) Should a single assessment tool be developed for use by the entire campus, or should sample tools (perhaps with common elements) be developed from which individual schools might choose?

Once a preliminary plan is prepared, this plan should be shared with faculty and students, with testimony via open fora and email. The council may then prepare a final recommendation, which should be forwarded to Steering.

Timeline:

ASSPC should complete its work on this charge by the end of Spring, 2017.

TCNJ Governance Processes

Step #1 -- Identifying and reporting the problem: When a Standing Committee receives a charge from the Steering Committee, the first responsibility is to clearly articulate and report the problem to the campus community. The problem may have been set out clearly in the charge received from the Steering Committee, or it may be necessary for the Standing Committee to frame a problem statement. The problem statement should indicate the difficulties or uncertainties that need to be addressed through new or revised policy, procedure, or program. The problem statement should be broadly stated and should include a context such as existing policy or practice. Problem statements may include solution parameters but should not suggest any specific solutions. Clearly stated problems will lead to better recommendations.

Step #2 -- Preparing a preliminary recommendation: Once the campus community has received the problem statement, committees can begin to collect data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. Committees should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups. When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community through regular updates and the Governance website. At this point, committees typically receive input or testimony through committee membership, formal testimony, and open comment from affected individuals and all stakeholder groups. Committees must be proactive in inviting stakeholder groups (including Student Government, Staff Senate and Faculty Senate) to provide formal testimony. In cases where testimony results in significant and substantive changes to the preliminary recommendation, the new recommendation will be considered to be in step #2.

Step #3 -- Making a final recommendation: Committees must use sound judgment to give the campus adequate time to review the preliminary recommendation before making their final recommendation. Again, committees are expected to be proactive in receiving feedback on the preliminary recommendation. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must resubmit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community. When, in the best judgment of the committee, the campus community has responded to the proposed resolution of the issue, the committee shall send its final recommendation (with documentation) to the Steering Committee. That final recommendation should include a suggested implementation date. Accompanying the final recommendation shall be a report of how testimony was gathered, the nature of that testimony, and how the Committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

Testimony

The presenting of testimony, prior to both the preliminary and final recommendations, is central to the concept of shared governance. All stakeholder groups will have an opportunity to provide input into governance issues through direct membership as well as invited testimony. Individuals appointed or elected to the governance system are expected to take a broad

institutional perspective relative to issues being considered. In contrast, invited testimony will reflect the stakeholder perspective on the issue being considered. Committees are expected to be proactive in inviting stakeholder groups to provide testimony at both steps # 2 and #3 of the process. Committees need to identify stakeholder groups that are interested in each particular issue and invite their testimony at scheduled Committee meetings or hearings. Committees should report in their transmittal memos which groups were targeted as stakeholders, how testimony was invited, the form of the testimony (written, oral, etc.), and the substantive content of the testimony.

To see the Steering Committee's guidelines for gathering testimony and making a final recommendation, see the "Governance Toolbox" at <http://academicaffairs.pages.tcnj.edu/college-governance/a-governance-toolbox/>