

Minutes: Academic Excellence Taskforce.

Present: David Barton, Marta Makielski, Pankaj Saksena, Randy Isaacson, Katherine Jackson, Becky Torstrick

Absent: Anne Brown, Katherine Karl

Becky laid out a brief history of why this committee is meeting and what our charge is. She handed out the proposed strategic priorities for IUSB, the timeline for the entire strategic planning process, and the proposed format for task force reports. This task force is charged with developing the process by which to plan for academic excellence on campus. Our charge for this semester is to determine exactly what academic excellence means and what the priority areas we will address are, to research what is currently in place and why for those areas, and to generate the strengths and challenges facing the campus in those areas. Next year's task will be to generate a campus conversation on academic excellence in order to eventually develop strategies, goals/targets, and the structure of responsibility for making any changes needed.

To begin, we tackled the issue of what our membership should be. We decided to add members to represent the Library and the Associate faculty. Marta is on the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Committee and will make a request to them today to appoint a representative to serve on our committee. Becky will contact the Library about getting a representative for the committee. We decided to bring in additional groups/representatives from campus as needed for consultation purposes (such as representatives from OIT/IMS, Financial Aids, Admissions) and to solicit student and alumni input at a later stage in the process. Randy will serve as a bridge between this committee and the Student Learning, Access and Success Committee since we overlap to some degree.

Next we started to discuss what academic excellence covers. David raised the issue of needing a definition of what academic excellence is. We decided this would be a good starting point for our next meeting—to come up with our expanded definition of our topic. Different aspects that were mentioned included: Honors Program, Academic standards (admissions, grade inflation), UCET, FACET, SMART, faculty development and support, how to assess whether we are producing academically excellent students, the place of remediation, and community/regional perceptions of our excellence, nature of assessing final student outcomes (national licensing exams in Education, Business, and Nursing/Health Professions, versus talent/creativity for Arts, versus knowledge in LAS).

We decided to meet again in February and to do the following things in the meantime:

TO DO:

Send Becky ASAP your schedule of times that you are regularly NOT AVAILABLE.

Begin to draft an answer to the following question: What is academic excellence? And share your thoughts with other committee members on e-mail.

Begin to brainstorm the sub-components in the following three broad areas of concern:
Programs, Faculty, and Students.