



November 15, 2011

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the NEASC survey over the last two weeks. We know it was comprehensive (yes – long!) but the data has already been sent to the Standards committees and will be very useful in their Appraisal process.

Save the Date- You will all have the opportunity to provide input into that Appraisal on Thursday, December 1st at 2:30 – look for upcoming announcements about location and format.

This week we're highlighting the work being done by NEASC Standards Five and Six. We hope you'll see this as an opportunity to provide input into that work. If you have additional information you think would be useful to the work, or questions about it, contact the chair of that standard directly.

Standard Five: Faculty (Elaine Milnor, Chair)

Standard Five committee members include Larry Altman (Biology), Althea Coleman (English), Kate Eddy (English), Chris Gentile-Renda (Biology), Mitch Holmes (Business), Felicia Kepka-Leach (Nursing), Donna Marotti (Business), Sandy Pettinico (Math), Karen Rotella (Hospitality Management), and Ren Sharma (Engineering).

The committee has continued collecting and analyzing data, and has started the process of moving from “describing” what happens at NVCC to “appraising” our collected information.

Following is a summary of the issues addressed in the NEASC Faculty standard:

1. Faculty categories, education levels, demographics.
2. Faculty involvement in student advising, institutional governance, research and creative activities (including student research opportunities), and ARs .
3. Institutional policies/procedures regarding workload, salary, benefits, job security, promotion and tenure.
4. Instructional effectiveness, instructional methods and content.
5. Professional development opportunities and participation.
6. Academic freedom; academic integrity; ethical and responsible behavior.

Emerging Appraisal Items:

1. NVCC has a faculty that is diverse in factors measured by NEASC, including educational background, gender, race and rank.

2. The majority of faculty appreciate the importance of professional development, and opportunities of that nature are available both on and off-campus. Some faculty surveyed, however, expressed concern about funding/reimbursement for professional development.
3. Communication is important for faculty, and some information regarding institutional policies and procedures is being updated, including the Employee Handbook. Union contracts spell out very clearly a number of contract-related issues.
4. NVCC is primarily a teaching institution, but many faculty demonstrate participation in their fields of expertise, and continued professional development, through their involvement in a wide range of creative and scholarly activities, and invite students to participate in the same.
5. The College takes seriously its responsibility to ensure the quality of teaching, through such mechanisms as on-going faculty evaluations and through the process of utilizing a variety of teaching methods and delivery systems.
6. Despite the large number of adjunct faculty at NVCC, there is not a centralized data bank allowing the college to meet the NEASC reporting requirements regarding this important group of individuals (i.e. demographics, hiring practices across divisions, educational background).

Elaine would like to thank the committee members for all their work, and also Lauren Friedman and Katy Kleis from IR, for their support along the way.

Standard Six: Students (Terry Brown and Amy Lenoce, Chairs)

This Standard essentially examines how effectively the College serves, supports, and engages our students outside of the classroom. The scope of the standard is very broad, including the major areas of Admissions, Retention and Graduation, and Student Services. During our formulation of our Description portion of the document, it has been amazing to observe the number of things we are doing to enhance students' educational experience and their success here at the college. These measures range from the creation of the ACE, CAPPS, and JPC, to the development of the new advising processes for new and continuing students, to the greatly enhanced use of student data and outcomes all the way from the IPC to the level of the individual departments and divisions.

The Description portion of our Standard has continued into the Fall semester, but the Appraisal phase of our work is now in full swing, and we are focused primarily on three questions:

- 1) Do students know about all we offer them?
- 2) Do they take advantage of what we have to offer?
- 3) How well do our services and supports work?

There are already a number of things that our research indicates are going well. Given the number of new initiatives and reorganization across the campus, our major challenge will be to stay as current as possible with what is happening across the campus.

There are several dedicated committee members who have really gone out through the institution to gather the information needed. The Standard 6 committee members are: Laura Brown-Yaworksy, Noreen Cerruto, Mary Ann Fontaine, Kristine Kelley, Ingrid McGowan, Rachel Sackett, Patricia Targett, Yvette Tucker, Gloria Wellington, and Diane Zutant. The Student Services and ACE and JPC directors also deserve a lot of thanks for being so responsive to requests from this Standard!

Sincerely,

Dean Sandra Palmer & Kim O'Donnell
Your NEASC Co-chairs