Year: 2011-2012

Service Program: Institutional Research  Supervisor: Marilyn Belwood

I. Mission

The mission of Institutional Research is to support Missouri Valley College’s mission, vision, values, and goals by providing meaningful, accurate, and timely information to facilitate institutional effectiveness, planning, decision making, and policy formation.

II. Goals

- Articulate and cultivate a shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success
- Create a culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities
- Encourage information sharing and collaboration across campus
- Compile, analyze, and interpret information used to improve effectiveness
- Use information to both pose and answer policy questions
- Assist in coordination of accreditation activities

III. Service outcomes

- A shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success will be cultivated in the college community.
- A culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities will be created in the college community.
- Information sharing and collaboration will increase across campus.
- Effectiveness will be improved with information that is compiled, analyzed, and interpreted.
- Information will be used to both pose and answer policy questions.
- Assistance will be provided in coordinating accreditation activities.
IV. Service delivery map

Functions:

1) Informational e-mails
2) Institutional Research Web page
3) Program reports (annual) – academic and service
4) Program reviews
5) Senior Exit Survey
6) Student evaluation of teaching
7) General education program review
8) Strategic planning process
9) Self-study process
10) Help sessions
11) Work with AAB
12) Professional development

The following table indicates the functions in the past year that address respective service outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service outcomes</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved effectiveness using info</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info used to pose/answer policy ques.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation activities coordinated</td>
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</table>
V. Assessment tools

All service outcomes will be assessed with one or more of the following methods:

1) Periodic client survey and/or focus group (indirect measure)

This assessment tool could be used to address one or more outcomes. Specific service outcomes assessed will be identified when a survey or focus group is conducted. This tool may not be used every year.

2) Log to monitor aspects of each function (direct measure)

This tool is used to assess the following service outcomes:

1) A shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success will be cultivated in the college community.
2) A culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities will be created in the college community.
3) Information sharing and collaboration will increase across campus.
6) Assistance will be provided in coordinating accreditation activities.

The following information will be kept for each function:
- Participation of relevant groups
- Completion of project
- Dissemination of information
- Progress of project

This information will be reviewed each year to identify weakness/problems that IR can correct or improve.

3) Periodic assessment of specific projects through feedback, focus groups, or interviews (indirect measure)

Information from this type of tool can be used to assess any service outcome. (For example, feedback from faculty and staff on the program review process can be used to determine ways to better facilitate the process, and, therefore, be a partial assessment of the first three service outcomes.)

Assessment Methods for Service Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service outcomes ↓</th>
<th>Periodic survey/focus group (2-3 years)</th>
<th>Log to monitor functions</th>
<th>Periodic assessment of specific projects</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Shared understanding of success factors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture of assessment created</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved effectiveness using info</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info used to pose/answer policy ques.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation activities coordinated</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Summary of findings

Findings are summarized below under each assessment tool listed in Section V.

1) Periodic client survey and/or focus group (indirect measure)
No surveys or focus groups to assess service outcomes were conducted this year.

2) Log to monitor aspects of each function (direct measure)

The table below shows the functions described earlier with respect to the following:
- Participation of relevant groups (P)
- Completion of project (C)
- Dissemination of information (D)
- Progress of project (Pr)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Info e-mails</th>
<th>IR Web page</th>
<th>Program reports</th>
<th>Program reviews</th>
<th>Senior Exit Survey</th>
<th>Student eval of teaching</th>
<th>Gen ed Program review</th>
<th>Strategic planning process</th>
<th>Self-study process</th>
<th>Help sessions</th>
<th>AAB work</th>
<th>Prof. develop</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>P*</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Pr</td>
<td>P*</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Pr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See participation information in relevant sections below.

Some further explanations of the table follow:

Informational e-mails—E-mails were sent throughout the year on an as-needed basis. Links to results of surveys were also sent via e-mail to the campus community. E-mails also informed recipients that some information and forms were accessible not only on the IR web page, but also on the J drive and/or the faculty folder in Outlook for their convenience.

IR Web page—The Web page will serve as an ongoing resource for institutional surveys, program reports, program reviews, and other assessment information. During the 2011-2012 academic year, results of the 2011-2012 Senior Exit Survey were added in addition to updated forms and information for program reports and program reviews. Links for resources were updated.

Program reports—This year was the third year of implementation of annual program reports for all academic and service programs. Information to assist faculty and staff in completing the reports was disseminated through e-mails, discussion at the dean/chair meetings, division meetings, staff meetings, and individual meetings with the DIR. ‘State of the Program’ events were held in the fall for the purpose of faculty and staff presenting and sharing information from their reports. Twenty-eight academic programs turned in reports for the 2011-2012 academic year; of these, 54% were turned in by the due date and 68% were sent back for revisions. Thirty-nine percent of fulltime faculty were involved in the reports. Many service program reports are scheduled for completion in the fall due to the nature/timing of data they collect for assessment.

Program Reviews—Information about program reviews and the rotation schedule is on the IR web page. The rotation began this year with two divisions, Communications and Languages & Humanities. The DIR and CAO met with these divisions to discuss their completed reviews.

The DIR met with the Business division to answer questions about completing their reviews for the upcoming year. Program reviews are due October 1 following the specified academic year.

Senior Exit Survey—This survey had a high response rate (83%) due to its administration through the Registrar’s Office (included as part of the graduation forms that are required of seniors to complete). Results of this year’s survey were sent to the campus community in June. Additionally, yearly results since 2007 are on the IR Web page.
Student Evaluation of Teaching—As was done the previous year, two parts and two modes of administration were used to gather student evaluations of teaching. Five statements were rated in class by students on Scantron sheets. Three open-ended questions were accessed through a link (on Survey Monkey) sent to students via e-mail. There were 376 open-ended responses in the fall and 209 in the spring. Response rates are much lower than desired.

General Education Program Review—As part of the General Education committee with knowledge that development must consider assessment, the DIR helped guide the review process. The faculty approved a revised General Education core curriculum in March 2012. The DIR and AAB will next work on an assessment plan for the program to recommend to the General Education Committee.

Strategic Planning Process—The DIR facilitated progress on the strategic plan. The Cabinet identified goals, strategies, and performance measures for each of the strategic priority areas. A survey was conducted in February to gather input from the college community on a strategic plan draft. There were 164 respondents. Using this feedback for further revisions, the strategic plan was approved by the board of trustees in May 2012. Gathering baseline data for each performance measure is the next step.

Self-Study Process—The DIR served as Cabinet liaison for one of the Criterion committees working on gathering evidence for the self-study.

Help Sessions—Brown bag discussion sessions were held on November 9 and 10 on the topic of writing student learning outcomes, with four and one in attendance, respectively. Two sessions were held on February 8 and 9 on the topic of program reports and reviews, with one and zero in attendance. Two sessions were held on April 11 on writing program missions and student learning outcomes. One person attended.

AAB work—Involvement of the members of the Assessment Advisory Board is ongoing. The wide variety of members provides multiple perspectives and invaluable input for projects and decisions. AAB members further facilitate dissemination of knowledge of assessment and assessment activities. Some members repeat their yearly service on the AAB, and this provides continuity to the group. New members provide fresh thoughts.

Professional development—The educational consultant attended the annual meeting of the Higher Learning Commission in April. The DIR was unable to attend due to health problems. Both the DIR and educational consultant continually research, read, and review relevant topics and current trends in higher education.

3) Periodic assessment of specific projects through feedback, focus groups, or interviews (indirect measure)

Questions and feedback from faculty and staff during all projects are used to adjust the process when feasible. For example, forms were changed to facilitate the General Education review process and clarifications were made to the program report forms. AAB members gathered feedback from their respective divisions and staff groups.

In summary, the General Education program review was completed and the faculty approved a revised curriculum, the first year of program reviews were completed by two divisions, the participation in program reports increased, the strategic plan was developed and approved by the board of trustees, evidence was gathered for the self-study, and the Senior Exit Survey was completed. Student response rate on evaluations and faculty participation in help sessions were low. Information was disseminated on all projects during the year. Members of the Assessment Advisory Board were active and engaged. Faculty and staff continued to provide input for the program reports and reviews that helped to improve the process.
VII. Level of achievement of service outcomes
Below each service outcome is evidence that progress was made in achieving the respective outcome. Progress on achieving service outcomes is considered successful if each year shows continual improvement.

1) A shared understanding of factors that influence institutional success will be cultivated in the college community.
2) A culture of assessment to plan, implement, improve, and sustain assessment activities will be created in the college community.
3) Information sharing and collaboration will increase across campus.

(Note: The first three service outcomes are quite interconnected. Therefore, evidence that progress was made in achieving the first three service outcomes is combined below.)

Evidence of achieving service outcomes:
- Participation of division faculty and staff members in discussions concerning program reports/reviews and additional small group/individual meetings with the DIR
- Questions from faculty and staff about completion of program reports/reviews and sharing of information among themselves
- Faculty in academic programs and staff in service programs worked together on program reports
- Faculty participated in the General Education review process
- Faculty, staff, and students participated in the strategic plan development process
- Ongoing additions and updates on the Institutional Research Web page
- Dissemination of information via e-mail, the IR Web page, workshops, small groups, and individual communication
- Discussion of all aspects of assessment in meetings of the AAB
- Assessment information (e.g., Senior Exit Survey results) is shared with the Board of Trustees and used for decision making

4) Effectiveness will be improved with information that is compiled, analyzed, and interpreted.

Evidence of progress in achieving service outcome:
- As a result of the process of working on the program reports, many academic and service programs have identified changes they plan to make (or have already made) to improve their services to the students.
- Feedback from faculty in the General Education review process was used to improve the curriculum.
- Survey feedback from faculty, staff, and students on the strategic plan draft was used to improve the strategic plan.

5) Information will be used to both pose and answer policy questions.

Evidence of progress in achieving service outcome:
- As a result of the process of working on the program reports/reviews, many academic and service programs have identified changes they plan to make (or have already made) to improve their services to the students.
- Feedback from faculty during the General Education review process prompted a variety of discussions.
6) Assistance will be provided in coordinating accreditation activities.

Evidence of progress of achieving service outcome:
- The DIR served as Cabinet liaison to one of the Criterion committees on the self-study and assisted in identifying and gathering evidence. In addition, because all functions either directly or indirectly relate to the coordination of accreditation activities, there is evidence of progress in the last service outcome. For example, the annual program reports include a yearly assessment cycle and the program reviews are done on rotation; this documented information will be used in the upcoming self study. Larger aspects of coordinating accreditation activities include: development of the strategic plan, review of the General Education program, and work on a self-study draft.

VIII. Staff/Clientele/Program information

The Office of Institutional Research was created in fall 2008, and the director is the sole full-time staff member. Virginia Zank, former long-time MVC faculty member, serves as an educational consultant to the college and works closely with the DIR on projects. The Assessment Advisory Board, composed of faculty (one from each division), staff (2), students (2-3), members of the Board of Trustees (2), and the Chief Academic Officer, meets monthly with the DIR and is actively involved in many assessment activities.

Clientele of Institutional Research is the college community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, Board of Trustees), the public, and external state, federal, and accrediting agencies. Services support institutional planning and decision-making.

One full-time: Dr. Marilyn Belwood
- Director of Institutional Research (since fall 2008)
- Education: Ph.D. in educational psychology with concentration in statistics and measurement; M.S. in statistics; B.A. in mathematics; B.F.A. in painting and drawing

One part-time: Virginia Zank
- Serves as education consultant to MVC and works closely with the DIR
- Education: M.A. in English; B.S. in secondary education

IX Analysis/Interpretation

Major projects were successfully completed and progress is being made in most others. Effective strategies are needed to increase student response rates for course evaluations and faculty participation in assessment activities. Updates and improvements to the IR Web page continue to be made. The Assessment Advisory Board provided valuable input and assistance. Communication and dissemination of information continues to be of primary importance. Providing training on assessment remains a priority. The DIR attempts to provide continued education in this area through e-mails, help sessions, workshops, and the IR Web page.
Limitations of IR primarily stem from having a single full-time staff member. However, the support of a CAO knowledgeable in assessment has facilitated and accelerated many projects undertaken by the IR office.

The educational consultant provides invaluable assistance. The consultant has also helped with presentations, co-facilitated workshops, and worked with individuals and groups. Since she is off-campus, work between her and the DIR takes place primarily via phone, e-mail, and monthly visits to campus. This arrangement continues to work very well.

X. Action plan/Closing the loop

To help increase understanding of the office, the name will be changed from the Office of Institutional Research to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning. In addition, the mission, values, and goals of the office, as well as the job description of the director, will be revised to more clearly describe the functions of the office and duties of the director.

Engagement of AAB members in assessment activities will be increased by involving them in reviewing the Academic Program Assessment and Planning Reports beginning in the fall. A rubric will be created for this purpose. Through this experience, it is anticipated that AAB members will gain a greater understanding of the assessment and planning process as well as the faculty receiving the report evaluations.

A rubric will be created for evaluating the Service Program Assessment and Planning Reports. Plans to involve staff in using this rubric will be determined.

Tentative ideas for assessing the General Education Program will be drafted over the summer so that the director can work with the AAB in further development and then present draft assessment plans to the General Education Committee for further discussion.

Baseline data for performance measures in the strategic plan will be gathered over the summer. This will aid in setting target goals. An assessment plan for the strategic plan will be developed this fall.

A survey will be developed to gather information regarding satisfaction and knowledge of services this summer so that it can be administered to faculty and staff at the fall meetings.

A presentation will be created to address the idea of institutional effectiveness for the fall meetings. The idea will be to construct the presentation from an unexpected perspective—that of an artist—to help broaden and energize people’s ideas about assessment and planning.

More investigation into strategies for increasing student response rate on evaluations and faculty participation in assessment activities will continue.

Many of the items in the action plan from year to year are ones in which the IR office seeks to continually refine and improve.

- Increase program report understanding and completion by faculty and staff
• Provide support to faculty for the program review
• Increase communication with the college community by directing them to the Institutional Research Web page where information can be easily accessed
• Create survey to assess client understanding and use of assessment, satisfaction with IR services, and needs which have yet to be addressed
• Refine process of working with the Assessment Advisory Board
• Provide more useful information to faculty for assessment of student learning
• Refine methods of assessing service outcomes
• Create outline/timeline of general assessment activities year-by-year
• Establish success criteria for meeting goals/service outcomes

**Individuals who assisted in the completion of this report:**
Marilyn Belwood
Virginia Zank