Action Team: **Student Satisfaction**

**Team Facilitators:** Bill Pink, Timothy Bridges

**Action Team Members:** Barry Ellis, Charleen Weidell, Chelli Gentry, Cheryl Evans, Christopher Butler, Deborah Israel, Deborah Thompson, Jay Corwin

**Introduction**

Student satisfaction is a constant concern on university campuses and is often a difficult target to assess. While various units on the UCO campus focus on such assessments, others do not conduct such examination of the students they service. The action team studying student satisfaction was charged with taking an overall look at these processes and then to develop recommendations for adding organization to the process campus-wide. This document is a summation of the work completed by that action team. The work entailed collecting surveys that are conducted to measure student satisfaction in the various campus departments that administer such surveys. The recommendations of this committee are a result of information gathered during the 2008-09 academic year and are identified in this document.

**Report Design**

The present document is organized into four (4) sections. The first section is a result of communication with other institutions regarding this issue on their campuses; the second section provides a brief overview of the process used by the team to examine the topic; the third contains the resulting recommendations for improvements to the current process; and the fourth is a list of ideas for the implementation of a system for monitoring the administration of student satisfaction surveys.

**Peer Institutions**

UCO has been designated as a metropolitan university, and now enjoys that designation with other institutions of the same size that exist in similar cities. Four of the institutions were contacted to discuss this issue and what they are doing to address it. Two of the four institutions reported that they had nothing in place to address the issue, but have recently realized that the issue needs some attention. A third institution has made a small amount of progress in addressing the issue through placing criteria on when surveys may be administered. If there are more than 50 students in the group, approval must be granted by the Office of Academic Affairs. Groups over 50 are required to be
surveyed via a random sampling by the Office of Institutional Research. While this seems to have helped in cutting down on individual students being administered multiple surveys in a short amount of time, the process does not address the issue of tracking the number of surveys being administered campus-wide. The fourth institution has discussed this issue at length for several years and realized some time ago that they needed an electronic system to track such assessments. After spending a considerable amount of time developing their own in-house system, they have now contracted an outside vendor to organize and track these assessments and the present process seems to be working well for them.

The information on peer institutions indicates that other institutions are experiencing the same issues and asking the same questions on this topic. Some are experiencing success while others are at a point similar to that of UCO.

**Process**

The committee communicated via face-to-face meetings as well as through electronic means. The team initially met in the fall of 2008 and determined what points were important to consider during the study, as well as indentified probable units on campus that likely conduct student satisfaction assessments. Each team member was assigned units to contact, both academic and non-academic, to ask whether or not they conduct such an assessment, the frequency of that administration, and to provide a copy of that assessment. Once the surveys were collected, they were distributed to each team member for review. This review was not to critique the content of the surveys, but to make an assessment of the amount of survey information that is solicited in a given academic year. After the review period, the committee was assembled to discuss and ultimately craft recommendations for consideration. This culminating meeting was held in late spring of 2009.

**Recommendations**

Based on the information, the committee developed the following recommendations for Academic Affairs to consider:

1. Development of a campus timeline that indicates when all student satisfaction assessments are to be administered. This timeline should indicate the name of the assessment, the unit administering the assessment, frequency of administration, and the person from the unit serving as a point of contact.
2. All assessment must be accompanied by a rational for usefulness, which includes information that answers the following questions:
   o Who receives the data once the assessment is completed?
   o Is there a process in place to analyze data to inform program improvement? Encouragement is given to units to refrain from administering such surveys if a plan is not in place to utilize the data to inform change.
   o Does the student understand the usefulness of the assessment?

3. Development of a process for new surveys to be added to the master calendar. This could have oversight by the Office of Institutional Research.

4. Any course with enrollments over 25 should administer the Student Perception of Instructional Effectiveness (SPIE) electronically.
   o Utilize the computer labs
   o Instructor can instill a system of accountability to help ensure a high return rate (ex. WebCT)

Summary

The action team’s recommendations were formed after much work and discussion. The main point from the study was that a process needs to be in place that monitors these survey administrations so that units are not bombarding students with multiple instruments that are redundant and return valuable data that aren't being used to inform the unit of needed changes. Assessment is valuable only if it is used.