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January 12, 1990

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice Chancellor Marlene Springer
East Carolina University

FROM: Raymond H. Dawson *RHD*

SUBJECT: Institutional Assessment Plans

During the coming months each institution is required to develop a plan that will meet the requirements of the new "accountability" legislation. The legislation provides:

The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall require each institution to develop a plan that would exhibit how the institution will measure its effectiveness, especially in the areas of student learning and development, faculty development and quality, and progress toward the institution's missions. Each plan shall include information concerning the institution's goals to improve and maintain its quality in these areas. The plans shall provide for annual assessments and for reporting these assessments to the Board of Governors and to the General Assembly. The Board shall identify a number of assessment measures that shall be required on all campuses to insure system wide assessment.

These plans shall be developed and submitted to the General Assembly by January 15, 1991.

It was agreed as a result of our conferences in November and the general discussion at our meeting in December that the next step is for each institution to prepare a draft plan that responds to the legislation. This memorandum gives some guidelines and a schedule for this process.

Some General Principles

The discussion at our December meeting indicated general agreement on a number of important points.

First, we should not attempt to design a uniform assessment plan to be followed by all institutions. However, in preparing draft institutional plans, appropriate University-wide measures and reporting systems will be utilized. (Current measures and reporting systems are summarized in the April 12, 1989, paper you have received.)

Second, it is clear that each institution is already engaged in a significant amount of assessment activity. One of the first tasks in preparing institutional plans is to tie together these diverse activities into a comprehensive program.

Third, while we are required to make annual reports, we will not attempt to confine ourselves to short-term measures, nor is it necessary to report on every measure every year. Some measures may be reported on at two, three, or even four-year intervals. Plans should generally be phased in over a period of five years, beginning this year.

Fourth, the major focus of the plan will be on the undergraduate program. However, graduate and professional programs are of central importance in the mission of several institutions, and the institutional plan should include effectiveness measures for students and faculty in these programs as well.

Components of the Plans

Each plan needs to be organized around the three broad areas outlined in the legislation.

a. Student learning and development

For undergraduate students, you will need to address the areas of basic skills, the general education program, and the academic major. This will require the inclusion of such areas as

- admissions criteria and practices (freshmen and transfer)
- testing, placement and remediation
- evaluation of the general education program
- analysis of retention, progression and graduation rates

For graduate and professional students, appropriate measures or indicators should also be developed. For all groups of students the review and evaluation of degree programs will be needed.

b. Faculty development and quality

Here you will need to deal with those measures that are to be employed to evaluate teaching effectiveness, the evaluation of faculty research and scholarship and public service activities, and the faculty role in academic advising. Your evaluation measures should also look at the faculty appointment process, the operation of the tenure system, and your affirmative action programs.

c. Progress toward institutional mission

This should include measures concerning enrollments (and, specifically, minority presence enrollments), degrees conferred, graduation rates, sponsored program activity, and public service programs and activities.

In developing the plan, it is important that faculty be involved in setting standards of achievement, in selecting measures and in the analysis of results. The plan should make clear assignments of responsibility for its development and operation.

Schedule

Please submit your draft institutional plan by April 15, 1990. The plan should be concise. It must indicate the scope of each annual report and the proposed intervals of comprehensive analysis and evaluations. These annual reports will be submitted in December of each year, beginning in December of 1991.

During the spring we will review these plans with you. Thereafter, a comprehensive draft plan for the entire University will be prepared, and this draft will be reviewed with each of you. We want to have this final, University-wide plan and all institutional components ready for presentation to the Board of Governors by September of 1990.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

cc: President Spangler
Chancellor Eakin
Vice President Carroll