

SECTION: 17
DATE: November 15, 2005

BOARD OF REGENTS
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

RECOMMENDATION

MONTHLY REPORT
FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Faculty Affairs Committee Agenda for November 15, 2005 and the Minutes of the September 20, 2005 meeting be received and placed on file.

STAFF SUMMARY

The primary presentation item for the November 15, 2005, Faculty Affairs Committee meeting is a report on "Scholarly & Creative Activities".

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.

University Executive Officer
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Board of Regents

Faculty Affairs Committee

November 15, 2005

9:00 – 9:45 a.m.

205 Welch Hall

AGENDA

Regular Agenda

Section 18 Monthly Report and Minutes (*Regent Rothwell*)

Status Report

REPORT: “Scholarly & Creative Activities”

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF REGENTS

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 20, 2005
9 a.m., 205 Welch Hall

Attendees (seated at tables): C. Gould, M. Higbee, M. Homel, H. Bunsis, Regent Valvo, Regent Rothwell (Chair), Provost Loppnow, D. Barton, L. Lee, E. Contis, R. Holkeboer

Guests (as signed in): D. Barton, M. Bretting, H. Bunsis, P. Carter, D. Clifford, M. Desprez, J. Dugger, L. Findlay, E. Francis, H. Höft, B. Hopkins, J. Knapp, G. Larcom, R. Larson, B. Lindke, M. Marz, G. Miller, M. Nair, R. Neely, R. Rosenfeld, B. Scheffer, J. Schulz, C. Shell, M. Sutton

Monthly Report and Minutes (Section 18)

Regent Rothwell convened the meeting at 9:00 and recommended that the minutes from the March 31, 2005 meeting be approved at the full Board meeting later in the day. Regent Rothwell turned the meeting over to *Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Don Loppnow*, who introduced *Ms. Ellen Gold, Director of University Health Services and chair of the Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee*, to give a brief presentation on the reaccreditation process and movement toward Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) at EMU. Please refer to the attached hard copies of the slide presentation for details on what was shown.

REPORT: "Continuous Improvement: The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Reaccreditation Process"

Ms. Gold began by introducing her partner in this process, *Dr. Laura George, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences*, and then began describing EMU's accreditation. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredited EMU in 2000, and that accreditation is good for 10 years. The North Central accreditation is now known as the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). There are two methods of accreditation, as described in the presentation handout: Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ), and AQIP. AQIP is more directly focused on a continuous improvement process. The process itself involves a focus on total institutional learning, and on helping students to learn. The AQIP process is very participatory in nature, and really relies on involving the institution and drawing in the institution's various communities. The premise behind this is the more people that are involved in the institution, the better the process, and the better the opportunity for success in terms of what the pre-determined goals are. The process has a present and future orientation, rather than a historical one, and focuses on systems and processes. The measures of success really frame the AQIP process. It is important to note that AQIP brings a shift in emphasis: no longer should we be valuing what we measure, but measuring what we value at the institution. Too often we decide we are going to implement and value an assessment or survey and figure out how to make it work. We should no longer take that kind of approach. Instead we should take a look at what we value and measure how well we're doing against what we value. We use a portfolio for this process to shape the agenda for the institution. We are very accountable on an annual basis for the work we are doing.

Ms. Gold turned the floor over to Dr. George, who spoke about the kinds of institutions involved in AQIP and about what AQIP can and might mean for a faculty member on EMU's campus. Smaller schools and

community colleges initially adopted AQIP, but more and more large comprehensive universities have been adopting this process, in part because it offers such substantial opportunities for cross-divisional and cross-unit engagement in careful self-examination at all levels.

PEAQ and AQIP differ significantly in processes, in what needs to happen on campus, and how the campus interfaces with the accrediting body. AQIP is fundamentally forward-looking, and is significantly more intellectually engaging than the traditional accreditation process. PEAQ involves preparing retroactive reports on a regular cycle. In contrast, AQIP focuses on formulating what the AQIP processes call “action projects.” The title “action projects” is something of a misnomer. What is implied in this terminology is the act of quickly identifying a problem and settling on a plan of action. However, what happens with AQIP action projects is almost the opposite of that. In spirit and substance, action projects are extremely similar to the traits of thought and habits of investigation that are familiar to faculty, and the kinds of thinking faculty try to inculcate in students every day in teaching and research. Very careful and richly collaborative thought goes into the formulation of the questions to be asked in every action project. The AQIP committees working on particular projects are mirroring the process faculty engage in when preparing peer-reviewed workshop papers. Committees working on these projects are expressly charged not to come up with solutions in advance of investigation, but simply to delineate the parameters of the problem or issue to be investigated as precisely and thoughtfully as possible. The process of formulating the question to be investigated is done incrementally with input from many people, from many areas in the university.

Draft research problems are peer-reviewed and after that teams are formed on campus to brainstorm, make lists of information needing clarification, and generate possible solutions. In the AQIP model these teams are expressly not to be dominated by people in managerial positions, but by people who are delivering the services that are being looked at in one way or another. These teams may report to someone in administration, but are charged with using all their ingenuity and creativity to determine what we don’t know about our own processes as well as to clarify what we do know, and alternately to generate ideas about how we can do things better. The AQIP accreditation process does potentially involve every member of the campus community at one point or another, and in particular offers tremendous opportunities for faculty involvement in administrative decision-making for truly shared governance. Not all faculty may want to be involved in AQIP teams or committees. Many may want to continue to focus energy primarily on their students, and on their teaching. However for those faculty which need to be directly involved in formulating plans to improve various processes, the opportunity to participate will be rich and substantial.

Dr. George closed by providing an example of the process she described, using advising as a case study. There is much anecdotal evidence that there is bad advising on campus. Being involved in AQIP made her think about the possibilities for uncovering concrete detail about how bad it is, if it is in fact bad. She followed a process of asking faculty and department heads in her college and advisors in main advising for names and information on specific student complaints, not anecdotes. Though she expected to be swamped by a tidal wave of complaints, there were only a few a week, and once she uncovered the details, most turned out to have straightforward solutions. This is not to say that advising at EMU is being done as well as it can, but it illustrates the kind of opportunity that AQIP offers for self-scrutiny and questioning of assumptions.

Ms. Gold continued by describing AQIP’s core processes that we have been and will continue to be involved in. One process not listed in the presentation was an institutional self-assessment completed within the last year. This was a rapid process-centered review of our challenges and opportunities, aimed at trying to identify a few areas where we wanted to look into improvements or enhancements in a continuous improvement mode. Focus grouping and a trailblazer review resulted in a report, which was submitted for external feedback from a consultant. From there draft action projects were formalized.

These projects can range from six months to three years for completion. Typically an institution is asked to develop three to four initial projects, with potentially differing completion schedules, based on their scope. The next step is a strategy forum in which a team participates over several days with peer institutions who can be at different stages of the process. Here the draft proposed action project is presented in a poster board session, and the team can also view other institution's proposed projects. Peer institutions are relied upon for review and feedback in terms of scope, nature, and feasibility. After the forum, the action projects will be finalized, after receiving all the feedback and making any adjustments. These adjustments might include suspending, refining, or even abandoning a project. If the latter, another project is taken up in its stead.

All this information will be shared across the campus community prior to moving into action project mode, the next step of the process. Then teams are developed from the campus community, including employees and students, to focus on implementation. An annual report related to progress is required, as well as a systems portfolio, which is currently under development, which needs to be completed in EMU's case by May of 2008. This is a publication in which key processes, performance results, and improvement practices are described. The systems portfolio is to be created and submitted for review within three years following the forum. In the fourth year a systems appraisal is conducted, which consists of formal review and a site visit by the HLC. Within seven years the HLC provides verification that all submitted materials and the site visit have met the expectations for continuing accreditation.

Regent Rothwell asked who from the university was involved in helping to draft these action projects? Ms. Gold replied that over the last year and a there have been several focus groups to develop ideas on potential projects and potential concerns. The Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee vetted the action projects based on focus grouping. *Dr. Caroline Gould, American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Member-At-Large*, asked what these projects are. Ms. Gold described them as follows:

- The first proposal is focused on assessment and looks at establishing a balanced scorecard management process at the university. This means identifying the vital few performance indicators and developing metrics that translate our vision and our strategy; creating an assessment tool for performance indicators for the university.
- The second draft relates to customer-focused service, and looks at enhancing quality client-centered service standards across the university. There will be a pilot in three or four departments looking at quality service standards and metrics and then developing a system for measurement.
- The third project is focused on General Education reform, using the three foundation courses related to speech, math, and writing. The writing course will be used as the pilot to develop an assessment tool based on the outcomes for the course. This tool will help to measure whether the course itself is achieving the outcomes, and whether or not the outcomes are translated into learning by students in other areas of their academic life. That pilot will be implemented and expanded upon for the math and speech courses.
- The fourth proposal is to improve the academic advising services system across the university. This is not specifically centered around general academic advising, but looks at advising from the time a student enters the university to the time he or she graduates, whether he or she is an incoming first time in any college student (FTIAC), or a transfer student that has particular issues with advising.

Regent Rothewell asked how new project proposals get added, and what is the timeframe for adding them. Ms. Gold replied that it is an ongoing process, especially due to the fact that some projects take longer than others. The committee will evaluate proposed projects; they have several proposals before them right now. As more people find out about this process, more things will come forward throughout the university. Dr. George interjected to clarify the relationship between AQIP projects and other initiatives on campus. While there are initiatives going on all the time, having some labeled official AQIP projects does not necessarily mean that they are somehow more important or central than others. What it actually means is that those projects have been designed for the particularly careful documentation needed for accreditation from the beginning. The systems portfolio doesn't have to reflect only those things that have been identified as action projects; if some other group has done something fabulous in those years, that can be included. If there is another project or initiative that is going on it can be recommended to become an AQIP project. Another key point with the AQIP process is that it is a tool for the university, and becomes the way we do business. The AQIP process can be used to resolve issues outside of the formal project framework. Anyone anyplace any time can utilize the process, and it can be included in the report.

Provost Loppnow asserted that one of the reasons that it really seems that this approach to reaccreditation is timely, is that in contrast to the traditional PEAQ approach and its 10-year retrospective cycle, in the case of AQIP it is a formalization of the process always done at universities, which centers around finding ways of doing things more effectively. One of the really persuasive reasons that the university decided to apply to the AQIP process is that it is built on the philosophy of measurement where from the beginning goals are identified and then progress towards goals is measured, rather than the retrospective model.

Dr. Daryl Barton, Faculty Council President, pointed out that AQIP and strategic planning are intertwined – AQIP dovetails in with strategic planning and the initiatives there. The committee isn't called the AQIP Committee because AQIP is part of the continuous improvement work that has been going on all along. The PEAQ process would be in response to an external group which we would hope would not discover our weaknesses; the AQIP is a self-assessment involving a large cross-section of the campus.

Dr. Gould offered that a potential pitfall of the process is that someone could decide to change a fundamental process without considering the effects of that change on other areas involved in that process. Ms. Gold responded that projects have to be identified through some kind of assessment or metrics and are data-driven. Anecdotal information is not enough. Dr. Gould then sought clarification because this is how the advising project seems to have been adopted. Dr. Barton explained the the project at this point is only to examine academic advising, not to attempt to address any perceived deficiencies, because deficiencies have not yet been demonstrated concretely. Dr. Gould further clarified that the initial step of the process is to ascertain if there is a problem through data collection, prior to constructing the steps towards fixing any problems that might come to light.

Dr. Gould asked if we go with AQIP, are we still eligible to be accredited through the ten-year rotation? Ms. Gold's response was that as part of the HLC, we are in the ten-year mode right now and are accredited until the year 2010. At the point of reaccreditation the issue would have to be addressed one way or the other. The university has decided to move towards continuous improvement as a mechanism to achieve our vision and mission and through that process utilize AQIP as a method for reaccreditation.

Provost Loppnow offered that another way of looking at it is that an institution can select either of the two tracks that the HLC now offers, depending on which best suits the institution's needs and methods. There have been a number of institutions that have been early adopters and went into the AQIP pilot process. Although we applied several years ago, we are now just really launching it, and we'll see how it works for us. We are not permanently locked in to one track or the other. After the work of the CIAC and several

years of assessing where the challenges are, we made the decision that the ongoing, forward-looking approach was better suited to our needs at this time. But we are not permanently committed to AQIP if we find through experience that it doesn't work as effectively for us as the retrospective approach to accreditation. The HLC gives institutions the option to go either way.

Regent Rothwell thanked the presenters. Ms. Gold acknowledged those present who have been working on the CIAC, and they were thanked. Regent Rothwell next introduced *Dr. Howard Bunsis, AAUP President*, who began by objecting to the brief time remaining for the faculty representatives to make their remarks. Regent Rothwell offered to discuss the problem at a later time, and noted that as the next meeting did not start until 10:00, the present meeting could be extended to meet the needs of the faculty presenters.

Dr. Bunsis stated that he and his colleagues generally support these processes that aim to improve education, but raised the question as to whether AQIP is the correct process or not. In that the AAUP is very data-driven and bases all its analyses on data, Dr. Bunsis reported that there are 144 institutions that have adopted AQIP; 110 (76%) of them are community colleges and other two-year colleges. In Michigan there are fifteen institutions that have adopted AQIP, and ten of them are community colleges. Thirty-four (24%) four-year institutions have adopted AQIP. Three of them are Category One doctoral institutions, fifteen are Category 2-A, master's level institutions like EMU, and sixteen are category 2-B, or baccalaureate institutions. There are 861 2-A institutions in the US. Fifteen (1.7%) of these have decided to choose AQIP. Those numbers suggest we need to ask some more questions before we move forward.

Dr. Mark Higbee, AAUP Member-at-Large, concurred with Dr. Bunsis' assertions and described the background of AQIP's adoption on campus. In the 2000-2001 academic year EMU was approved by the traditional process for a full 10-year accreditation, after an outstanding evaluation with no follow-up required in any category. Former President Samuel Kirkpatrick had predicted that we would not perform well on the evaluation, and was disappointed when his forecast was incorrect. Right after this highly successful accreditation he announced we were going to the AQIP process, because he needed to accumulate some presidential leadership accomplishments, which he did in a destructive way. It is absolutely inappropriate for us to be wedded to that process any further. It's a waste of time when we don't have to go through accreditation for another five years. There are many worthwhile projects that can be done through any process, not just this one.

It's also misleading to speak of the PEAQ as just backward-looking. That process has been changed, too, and it now involves projects and continuous improvement elements. There are experts on this campus that are involved in it and there are more credible ways of doing it. Though the appointees that President Kirkpatrick selected are wedded to the process of AQIP, it is not an institutionally wise choice. The numbers show that our peer evaluators will be from community colleges and baccalaureate schools, which while being good institutions, have very different institutional missions and do not furnish an appropriate comparison. And though recently there has been much talk about EMU's peer institutions, none of those schools are listed on the AQIP participant list. The decision was made carelessly for bad reasons and we have no need as an institution to stand by it.

Dr. Michael Homel, AAUP Secretary, continued by turning the Regents' attention to the questions of cost and budget. He raised the issues of the cost of implementation and other budgetary factors, such as what sacrifices will have to be made to fund this process. He expressed the desire that the Regents request some really specific information and projections on costs from the EMU administration. Then based on this, make the decision as to whether this is the best way to use our money, when over 40% of instruction is being delivered by part-time and full-time lecturers. A second related issue to consider is whether going ahead with AQIP will result in an increase in administrative staff.

With regard to the assertion that this program is participatory in nature; no specifics were given about the composition of the task force and whether members were taken from the administration as well as other units, and how these people are chosen. Though participation is a great goal, it is important to ensure that we in fact do have the broadest representation.

Dr. Homel concluded by raising the question of the selection of the external evaluators: who selects them; what are the values, agendas, and perspectives that come into play; and are they the model of the institution that we want to be?

Dr. Barton offered a comment on faculty participation, which is that Faculty Council was approached to approve representatives on both the University Strategic Planning Committee (USPAC) and Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC), following the process set forth in the Faculty Council master agreement. Dr. Bunsis acknowledged the truth of this, but insisted that most people on campus don't know what AQIP is, so it cannot be all that participatory, and reiterated that it was a decision made by one person and implemented by a small group of insiders.

Dr. Gould raised the more public issue of the problems with classroom facilities and the condition of classroom buildings.

Regent Rothwell asked how the focus groups were composed; was there a general invitation to participate?

Provost Loppnow interjected some historical information at this point. When a decision was finally made to move forward with the process, a series of activities that took place. For example, one of them was a full-day workshop with the CIAC and the USPC, which include both faculty, administrators, and student representatives. A session took place utilizing a process that is built on a trailblazer process, which is in effect an institutional assessment process. There were discussion sessions that took place with an array of groups on campus including Faculty Council, Deans and Department/School Head meetings, Student Government meetings, and the Cabinet. There was an array of groups that identified potential projects, but most importantly answered questions about what is going well at EMU, and where there are opportunities to improve. This process is part of the reason why it has taken a while to be more well-publicized. Now we are at the point where the work of the University committee has begun to mature; we can speak more broadly to the campus community with details about what has surfaced through the data collection process and through these discussion sessions, and take this to a more public phase. Frankly it took quite a while for the committee to learn the ins and outs of how we go about doing this, to explore different models for institutional assessment, and to test out different approaches.

Dr. Higbee concurred that it does take time to set up a new process, particularly one that is still evolving. But EMU was so successful under the old process, so why did we decide not to compete in that realm any more? Provost Loppnow's response was that he has no doubt that we will do well in the AQIP process as well. However, the point is that the process used should be the one most useful to the institution. Both PEAQ and AQIP have quality improvement expectations embedded in them. The decision to do this as an ongoing part of the work of the university made more sense to the committee and the others who explored it. Dr. Higbee contested that the committee was created because of the decision, and did not make it. Provost Loppnow disagreed and stated that the committee was formed to explore whether the University ought to pursue the AQIP option.

Provost Loppnow continued by explaining that when AQIP was started, the HLC focused on piloting it at smaller private or community institutions, because embedding a continuous improvement process in a large, complex organization is a much greater challenge, and those schools tend to have a more narrow focus and scope of mission. Eventually four-year institutions were invited to begin participating. Kent

State and Ohio University are our peers and have gone to this process. The data about the 800 comparable institutions nationwide is true; however the North Central region just covers the Midwest. Also, one of the reasons the HLC developed AQIP is because the Federal Government cited them for not having a continuous improvement outcomes-based approach to accreditation. The AQIP project was launched as a way of jump-starting the process in this region. What was learned in the initial years of AQIP has been embedded in what is now known as PEAQ, the revision of the more traditional approach to accreditation. AQIP and PEAQ are very similar; the main difference is that AQIP is an ongoing process rather than every ten years.

Regent Rothwell returned to the topic of costs and asked if a cost-benefit analysis of AQIP versus PEAQ has been done, and if indeed more administrative staff will need to be added. Provost Loppnow acknowledged that these are legitimate questions, and replied that there has been initial exploration. There is essentially very little difference in what the HLC charges for the accreditation. The issue that remains to be resolved is the cost of the AQIP site visit as compared to the PEAQ site visit, which is still evolving. Regent Rothwell also noted that our internal time is also a factor; if it's time spent doing things we would or should have been doing anyway, that's one thing. But where the AQIP process itself adds time and inherent cost should be factored in. Regent Rothwell then asked who our peer reviewers would be for the action projects and later for the site visit. Ms. Gold replied that the HLC matches evaluators up with institutions, and will not send community college people to evaluate a four-year institution. We are also given a list of site visitors in advance and have the opportunity to dispute evaluators, and to supply the characteristics that we want the evaluators' institutions to have. Regent Rothwell remarked that the question remains if there is a sufficient number of people allied with the process who come from similar institutions to be available for these activities.

Dr. Bunsis repeated his assertion that this is mostly a community college initiative, and stated that this is going to cost more than the other process, and will need to be done earlier. He stated that he would like to see every dollar that would be spent on this effort be put where it's really needed: into fixing the facilities on campus which impact our faculty and students. He suggested we do just what needs to be done to remain accredited, and not put any more of our energy toward processes like AQIP which include more administrative positions and fewer dollars going to students.

Dr. Barton agreed that the classroom problems need to be addressed. However, she asked if we as an institution need to wait for a majority of other institutions to join the AQIP process to adopt it, or if we can be on the leading edge. She likes to think we can be on the leading edge, and if this is where the HLC is heading, we should be on the forefront and be the model that other schools look to.

The AAUP representatives thanked Regent Rothwell for the time to express their concerns and questions. Regent Rothwell thanked all assembled, and adjourned the meeting at 9:58.

Respectfully submitted,

Akosua Slough, Administrative Secretary
Academic Affairs

Continuous Improvement: The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Reaccreditation Process

Board of Regents

September 20, 2005

Ellen Gold, Chairperson

Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee



Academic
Quality Improvement
Program
The Higher Learning Commission NCA

Focus of the AQIP Process

Institutional learning

Participatory processes

More people involved the better

Future and present

Rather than the past

Systems and processes

Measures and results

Portfolio used to shape the agenda for the
Institution



Academic
Quality Improvement
Program

The Higher Learning Commission ACS

Differences in the Accreditation Process

AQIP

After accreditation University conducts self-assessment review

- Submitted to an external education group for feedback on possible processes that need to be changed.

Action projects are developed to improve processes across campus focused towards future success

PEAQ

Two years before visit University committee develops report on what has occurred during the previous 10 years.

Institution does not take a purposeful cross-divisional look at process to improve but reports on what is.

No external feedback is received until the report and site visit are completed at the end of 10 years



Academic
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AQIP Participating Institutions

Michigan

Michigan Technological
University
Northwood University
Northern Michigan
University

Others

Kent State University
Ohio University
University of Nebraska
at Omaha
University of Wisconsin
- Stout



Academic
Quality Improvement
Program
The Higher Learning Commission NCA

What are the Core Processes of AQIP?

Strategy Forum

Action Projects

Systems Portfolio

Systems Appraisal

- Feedback report
 - Physically visit every organization
- Reaffirmation of Accreditation - 7 years

