Earlier this week, I read a story about Bob “Huggy Bear” Huggins, the current coach of the West Virginia men’s basketball team, which originally appeared in the Charleston Daily Mail. The story, among other things, shared his musings on the relative value of rear view mirrors and windshields. Anyone who has followed college basketball closely over the past decade or two knows that Huggins' past is a checkered one...just to state the facts as kindly as possible. So, it should come as little surprise that his opinion of windshields is somewhat more favorable than his opinion of rear view mirrors.

Huggins tells a story from his youth when he and a friend were walking to town to play a basketball game and a truck stopped beside them to offer a ride to the game. As the story goes, the two boys climbed into the truck and Huggins said to the driver, “you don’t have a rear view mirror.” The driver simply replied back that, “we’re not going backwards.” The lesson Huggins took away from that experience so long ago is that: “The past is the past, and whatever is behind you, you leave behind. You worry about what is in front of you and don’t worry about what’s behind you. You let it go and focus on what’s in front of you.”

In the academic environment, the metaphors of the rear view mirror and the windshield hold particular importance; it’s not quite as simple as always looking forward and not caring about what happened in the past. Institutional reaffirmation requires member institutions to look at the past; reaffir-
mation forces institutions to take a hard, long look back, take an inventory of past actions, and poten-
tially be held accountable for those actions. Meanwhile, the windshield view requires an institu-
tion to think about its future and take purposeful steps toward achievement of institutionally deter-
mined outcomes. Both looking back while looking forward, this editorial shares some of my thoughts
about the past couple of years and what to expect in the near future.

- **The Rear View Mirror:** Looking back through Sullivan University’s rear view mirror, most of the
  reaffirmation activities appear to be behind us: the original Compliance Certification, the Focused
  Report, the visit from the SACSCOC team are all behind us. By all accounts, the culmination of all
  of the efforts—which started two weeks before I assumed the provost’s position in June 2013—
  appears to be a successful reaffirmation or legitimization of Sullivan University’s status as a mem-
  ber institution of the Commission on Colleges in December 2015.

  As reported by Dr. Marr in an e-mail to all faculty and staff of Sullivan University, there will be
  three recommendations in the report: (1) QEP evaluation—to firm up the evaluation framework
  and focus more specifically on direct measures of QEP success; (2) course staffing—to make more
  certain that faculty are appropriately selected to teach courses based on the combination of aca-
demic credentials and/or strong, documented experience in the field; and (3) public/community
  service evaluation—to evaluate the effectiveness of public/community service activities as part of
  evaluating our adherence to the stated mission of Sullivan University.

  We are already working to address these issues. First, a search for the QEP Coordinator, a person
  who will have considerable input into both implementation and assessment of the QEP, was re-
cently announced. This person, along with Dr. Wiljanen, will have responsibility to firm-up the
  assessment framework. Second, specific findings with faculty scheduling have already been ad-
dressed with the various deans and directors and are already being rectified. Third, Nathan
  Ragland volunteered to create a survey designed to evaluate public/community service activities
  which is now being vetted and should be sent to faculty and staff members within the Sullivan
  University community within the next few weeks.

  Although most of the activities most closely associated with the reaffirmation effort appear in the
  rear view mirror, the *Principles of Accreditation*, the guiding framework behind our reaffirmation
  efforts, are never in the rear view mirror. As such, activities like programmatic assessment and
  evaluation, PECC presentations, and emphasis on continuous improvement will not go away or
  fade in importance. Likewise, the emphasis on “sharpening the saw” through continuing profes-
sional education, industry certifications, and enhanced academic credentials will also not simply
  fade away. These types of activities, among many other types of activities, demonstrate Sullivan
  University’s firm commitment to institutional quality, which begins with the integrity of our aca-
demic programs and the quality of faculty members who teach within those programs. Mr.
  Brown’s article in this issue of the *Academic Illuminator* can be (and should be) seen as telling a
  simple truth: SACSCOC (still) matters.
The Windshield: For those among us who haven’t yet read the SUS Strategic Plan, please go ahead and devote the hour or so required to read the plan. For those among us who may have read it a year or so ago, please take the 30-minutes or so to refresh your memory on the contents. Although the past two years have largely been dominated by preparation for and execution of reaffirmation efforts, Sullivan University has already and will continue to devote significant attention to priorities stipulated in the SUS Strategic Plan. Thus far, significant steps have been made toward streamlining the number of academic credits required for AS-level degree programs, incorporating bodies of knowledge and certification opportunities into various AS-level and BS-level courses and/or programs of study, and formalizing academic policies more consistent with making Sullivan University a friendlier university to transfer credits. There is, however, still significant progress and attention required to fulfill the vision set forth in the SUS Strategic Plan.

Consistent with the SUS Strategic Plan and the primary forward-looking or windshield-oriented requirement of the institutional reaffirmation effort, the QEP titled, “Career Competencies and Career Literacies: Putting the Care Back in Career,” focuses largely on the learning environment and better formalizing a university-wide approach toward integrating the link between career preparedness and the educational environment at Sullivan University. As a career university historically, culturally, and by mission, the QEP is designed to be both transformational but sticking closely to the knitting of the very basic value proposition offered to students as a result of having trusted Sullivan University with their development: To offer a competitive educational value which positions them well among their peers when competing in the market for their human capital. Part of that preparation includes the learning objectives stated in the QEP. Dr. Viljanen’s article in this issue of the Academic Illuminator highlights the QEP and should be seen as a windshield view, albeit a partial view, of where Sullivan University is headed.

Some among us may consider an article which begins and ends with a story told by Bobby Huggins as heretical, especially since the writer is a University of Kentucky graduate whose permanent residence is in the shadow of Rupp Arena. However, even a Mountaineer can offer an insight of value every now and then. Where we are going is much more important than where we have been. Focusing on the past with the recent reaffirmation activities is largely in the rear view mirror, and now is the time to more squarely and purposively concentrate on the future.

Best wishes as we begin a new academic quarter—

Ken

Dr. Kenneth R. Miller, Jr.
Provost
Sullivan University
QEP Update

By

Dr. Mark Wiljanen

Director of Institutional Research

We made it through the SACSCOC on-site review of our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)! To be sure, we took a little hit on our assessment measures, but that will be easily addressed and corrected after we receive the written report from the on-site review team. Overall, the determination was that we’ve got a great QEP that’s an excellent expression of our institutional mission and goals and that’s likely to have a substantial positive impact on our students. It’s a time to savor the moment and celebrate! Woo-hoo!

It’s also a time to take a little pride in what we’ve accomplished so far. We really came together as an educational community to produce this QEP. So many people contributed to its creation in so many ways, and I want to thank all of you for the various parts you played in its development. By working together, we were able to come up with an outstanding QEP that Beth Davisson and I were proud to present to the SACSCOC on-site review committee.

It’s nice to know that we did good in creating this QEP, and I know that we can keep on doing good. As we get settled into new classes and a new quarter, let’s keep thinking about the QEP and how it can be worked into our classes and have a beneficial impact on our students. Let’s not forget that our QEP, “Career Literacies and Career Competencies: Putting Care Back into Career”, identified two overarching goals that will be driving all of our QEP activities:

Goal 1 (Career Literacies): Through the development of multi-faceted career literacies, including expanded awareness and understanding of career fields and career options, students will be career-focused and engaged in a career-oriented, clearly-relevant program of study.

Goal 2 (Career Competencies): Students will develop a set of career-relevant ancillary skills, materials, and experiences, complementing their career-specific core education and enhancing their abilities to compete successfully in their intended careers.

These two overarching QEP goals are elaborated into four more focused and detailed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
Career Literacies: Student Learning Outcomes:

Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will attain clear understandings (career awareness) of their intended careers and of the relevance of their programs of study in preparing them for those careers.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will develop a level of financial literacy that will prepare them for satisfying careers and personal lives.

Career Competencies: Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will participate in experiential learning opportunities in their intended career fields.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Students will acquire career-appropriate communication skills, including the preparations and materials enabling them to engage confidently in job interviews in their intended career fields.

As you start the new quarter, consider how these goals and SLO’s might be worked into your courses, programs, and service unit activities. In my last “QEP Update” (Academic Illuminator, Winter 2015), I presented highlights of the major implementation activities we’ve planned for each of these SLOs, so I won’t repeat them here, but it is certainly not too early to be thinking about these implementation activities.

Although the QEP preparation (pilot) period doesn’t formally begin until this coming Fall quarter, we will be taking a number of steps in the coming weeks and months to position ourselves for the formal start of the QEP.

First of all, we will need a person to lead the QEP. (Provost Miller and CEO Marr have already filled my plate with other assignments.) We will post a job announcement for a QEP Coordinator and hire a person in this position prior to the Fall quarter. This person will manage the day-to-day implementation of the QEP, direct all of the communications campaigns associated with the QEP, oversee all QEP operations, chair the QEP Committee (which will continue to structure the ongoing development of the QEP), and guide the evolution of the QEP in conjunction with the PECC (Planning and Evaluation Coordinating Council) and the University’s senior administration. Clearly, the retention of a good QEP Coordinator will be crucial to the success of the QEP.

The QEP also involves the licensing of two important web services. The first of these is the EMSI Career Coach. This service will
be used by the Admissions office and many introductory and capstone courses, but especially by the Information Literacy (FYE 101) course. The Career Coach starts with a personal inventory instrument which matches personalities to occupations using scores on personality dimensions (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, conventional). The resulting scores are tied to a selected set of occupations and to the University’s programs of study leading to careers in those occupations. In introductory and capstone courses, students will increase their career awareness by exploring the other features of the Career Coach, where each potential occupation is tied to data tailored to the local service area. These data provide a wealth of local information concerning any selected occupation: how many people are currently employed in that occupation in the local area, how many of them are approaching retirement age, an estimate of the annual number of local job openings in that occupation, and the typical hourly pay for someone in that occupation in the local area at the entry-level, at the senior-level, and the local median pay rate for that occupation. The Career Coach web service also includes a resume builder option and links to local area job postings. We plan on licensing the Career Coach web service and beginning to make use of it as soon as possible.

The other web service that we are eager to roll-out is a digital portfolio management system. Upon entering Sullivan University, each student will establish a digital portfolio to collect samples of the student’s career-related accomplishments. The portfolios should be filled with career-relevant communications broadly defined to include a wide variety of communications from e-mails and memos to simple reports and lengthier and more detailed reports and other communication modalities including spreadsheets, tables, graphs, and even perhaps audio or video clips, as well as more traditional reflective writing samples. Each student’s portfolio can be developed as an on-going process throughout the student’s progress toward a degree. The portfolio will receive special emphasis and review in each program’s capstone course. A University-wide e-portfolio task force has recommended a digital portfolio vendor, and we expect to move ahead with these arrangements in the very near future. The time is now to be thinking about how you might use this technology to enhance your teaching effectiveness and the educational experience of your students.

We’ve passed our first major milestone—and it’s an achievement to celebrate—but much of the QEP journey still lies ahead of us. As we begin to roll-out parts of the QEP implementation plan, I guarantee that it will be an interesting and rewarding adventure. Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome. Please send them my way at MWiljanen@sullivan.edu.
2. How did you originally get into education? What was your motivation?
I liked Math and was frequently asked by friends and classmates to tutor. I enjoyed explaining the concepts and decided that I would like teaching.

3. What do you like the most about teaching?
I like creating lessons that promote student understanding of mathematics by explaining why a rule works and breaking problems down into simple steps.

And what do you find the most challenging?
Students who do not put enough effort into studying math.

4. Do you have any advice for new educators?
Be patient with students even when they make you want to beat your head against the wall. ;)

5. What hobbies or interests do you have in your off time?
I teach classes at LAFitness. Classes include Step Aerobics, Cycle, and Weight Training. I also love flower gardening. And I am a big online Scrabble player.
SACSCOC (STILL) MATTERS:
An ongoing column addressing compliance issues

3.3.1

By
Charles Brown
Director, Sullivan University Library, Louisville

As members of the university, many of you have now (i.e., Post-SACSCOC on-site visit and everything leading up to it over the last year and a half) have – I should hope, a basic understanding of the significance of the types (e.g.: Core Requirements [CR], Comprehensive Standard [CS] and Federal Requirement [FR]) of SACSCOC standards and what they require. You may also know a little about the responsibilities of off-site teams and on-site teams. Likewise, you may be somewhat familiar with the three key SACSCOC documents to which I have often alluded in this column and which may continue to be helpful to you to understand points still to be made in this and future columns:


To the extent that you were directly involved with the last year and a half’s SACSCOC activities, you may also have some knowledge of how best to interpret the standards as they impact our university. In *Assessment in practice*, Trudy Banta, the doyen of higher education assessment, asserts that “student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsi-
bility...assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement [Banta, TW, Lund JP, Black KE and Oblander, FW. (1996). *Assessment in practice: putting principles to work on college campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p 35.]. So, in a continuation of the SACSCOC MATTERS column – because the more we know about accreditation, the “better-informed attention to student learning” we can provide - I will now attempt a more fine-grained explanation of several key standards. In today’s column, I will address comprehensive standard 3.3.1.

SACSCOC standard 3.3.1 comprises a portfolio of five constituent standards addressing – and this is important, institutional effectiveness in preordained areas or units of compliance, viz.:

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: *(Institutional effectiveness)*

- 3.3.1.1. educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
- 3.3.1.2. administrative support services
- 3.3.1.3. academic and student support services
- 3.3.1.4. research within its mission, if appropriate
- 3.3.1.5. community/public service within its mission, if appropriate.

As highlighted below, the following SACSCOC table dramatically underscores the oft-found -noncompliance nature of these institutional effectiveness standards, e.g. for CS 3.3.1.1, 64%, 36%, and 21%, respectively from the initial Off-Site Review through the intermediate On-Site Review ultimately to the C&R Review. For me, it also underscores the significance of both institutional documentary preparedness as well as institution-to-On-Site-review committee communication within the stepwise accrediting process. [BTW: C&R Review is conducted by the Committees on Compliance and Reports (C & R), which is a 64-member standing committees of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. Among other things, it the reviews reports prepared by peer committees and the institutional responses to those reports. A C&R Committee’s recommendation regarding an institution’s reaffirmation of accreditation is forwarded to the Executive Council for review. C&R Committees make one of the following recommendations:

1. Reaffirmation of accreditation
2. Denial of reaffirmation
3. Removal from membership.

Then, the Executive Council recommends action to the full SACSCOC Board of Trustees which makes the final decision on reaffirmation and any follow-up activities that it requires of an institution. *Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation*, pp. 64-65, passim]
As demonstrated, the 3.3.1 standards are problematical for most institutions, which is the reason that SACSCOC itself takes such pains to elucidate IE compliance processes in its publications and in the many IE workshops conducted at its conferences. Based on my experience as an On-Site SACSCOC IE evaluator, many factors impactful successful 3.3.1 compliance. However, they can all be mollified simply by addressing all parts of the standard. In the *Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation* (pp 83-84), SACSCOC has very conveniently parsed each 3.3.1 standard into its parts as noted by the bolded and underscored keywords below:

3.3.1 The institution **identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves** these outcomes, and provides **evidence of improvement** based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas (Institutional Effectiveness):

3.3.1.1 **Educational programs**, to include **student learning outcomes**
3.3.1.2 **Administrative** support services
3.3.1.3 **Educational support** services
3.3.1.4 **Research** within its educational mission, **if appropriate**
3.3.1.5 **Community/public service** within its educational mission, **if appropriate**

In the “Glossary and Reference Guide” to the *Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation* (p.115ff), SACSCOC does define “educational program,” but not the other bolded and underscored keywords. Consequently, we are left to our own subjective interpretation or to scouring other SACSCOC sources as needed for additional enlightenment. This is a critical juncture, because as the *Handbook* avers,
**Understanding the Standard**

Like all good processes everywhere, the process of developing a Compliance Certification begins with establishing a foundation of understanding. Even the most diligent and conscientious writers will fail to develop a convincing argument for compliance if they do not first understand the meaning of the standard within the context of an institution with their unique mission. (p 24)

Therefore, I suggest examining the three key SACSCOC documents alluded to above for any and all interpretative information. All three documents are useful in this regard, especially the Resource Manual, which is organized to provide insights into each standard by means of the following:

- **Rationale and Notes**
  The rationale and notes provide a further explanation of the standard/requirement along with reasons for its inclusion in the Principles.

- **Relevant Questions for Consideration**
  For each standard or requirement, there is a series of questions designed to help an institution examine its current processes and practices.

- **Documentation, if applicable**
  Evidence that should be examined by the institution and provided as part of the documentation of its case of compliance with the requirement/standard. (Does not apply to all standards.)

- **Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable** (p. 2)

Additionally, SACSCOC indicates that:

> an institution’s primary resource, however, is its Commission staff member assigned to provide advice and to consult with the institution regarding the accreditation process, its expectations and applications. Such advice and information do not supplant the peer review process, but rather provide additional insight in assisting institutions reaching informed judgments about their self-assessment. (p. 2)

Having utilized these authoritative sources to galvanize our understanding of the standards, we may also examine other less authoritative sources found online, e.g. Googling “SACSCOC 3.3.1,” will generate a long menu of other universities’s Compliance Certification or Focused Report responses to this standard. Be forewarned, however, that those non-authoritative sources may or may not have interpreted the standard correctly.

For those deans and directors involved in departmental assessment under the auspices of the Office
of the Provost’s Planning and Evaluation Coordinating Council (PECC), a nascent culture of assessment may already be engrained. From those deans and directors, trickle-down assessment may have hopefully reached much deeper into the university’s organizational culture. In any event, most individuals will be familiar with the following 7-step continuous improvement circle (CIC), which I helped revise in 2010 from my earlier 4-step model. As illustrated below, the CIC is basically an iconographic representation of the SACSCOC IE standard to which I mapped its wording: to generate our seven-step CIC, which – after all, is only a visual processflow, I disaggregated the assessment steps intuited from the 3.3.1.1 standard, viz.:

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area: educational programs, to include student learning outcomes. (Institutional Effectiveness).
Then, to operationalize the CIC without being overly discursive, one might tabularize input, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify Measurement Instrument(s) (step 2)</th>
<th>Data Gathered / Analyzed (steps 3-4)</th>
<th>Implement Data-driven Improvement Plan (steps 5-6)</th>
<th>Evaluate resultant Improvement(s) (step 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collect your data on a survey, feedback loop, etc.</td>
<td>Analyze your data</td>
<td>In response to data, the Career Services department decided to....</td>
<td>As a result of this data-driven improvement, the xxx department was better able to .... By xxxx date, xxx department will do xxx, to improve data by xx% or XX number (whatever metric you choose to use).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SACSCOC is not prescriptive, and does not particular care how an institution provides evidence that it complies with its standards. However, as an evaluator, I often see tables used to consistently summarize IE processes for all campuses and delivery modalities across programs. As an exemplar, Nick Riggs has kindly allowed me to use his recent PECC presentation’s assessment plans, which model the use of tables to succinctly record CIC (and, hence IE-requisite) processes:
In their Evaluator Training Module: MODULE 4: FOUNDATIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (http://www.sacscoc.org/trngmods/IEModules.pdf), SACSCOC lists three institutional effective Case Analysis Factors (CAF). CAF 1 – “Knowing and Understanding the Language of The Principles of Accreditation,” represents what SACSCOC wants its volunteer IE evaluators to know. Accordingly, it is paramount that we who generate documents to support the university’s compliance with SACSCOC standards be equally knowledgeable and understanding. Therefore - in conclusion, “Think like a SACSCOC reviewer,” that is: know the standard’s IE requirements, address all parts of the IE standard, and follow all the stated IE processes including the ever-critical “closing the loop” on the prior year’s improvements.

I hope the coaching provided by this article has been helpful. If additional insights are needed, please let me know.
Are You an Appreciative Advisor?

By James M. Kearfott, MSDR

Director of Student Retention for the Sullivan University System

This last year has afforded me the opportunity to work closely with several senior staff members of several Universities in the area, and I found that many cope with similar problems with regard to student persistence. Most of these august institutions of higher learning have departments, or at least specialists, to work with students beyond the classroom whose job is to ensure that those students are on track to graduate in a timely fashion. This is said as an introduction to let you know your efforts to help our students persist and the time that you put in is appreciated. The goal of this article is to, possibly, provide you with some thoughts when working with your class, advisees, and or those students who come for you as a trusted educator which will improve the outcome.

Sullivan University does not have a stand-alone department of advising, but what it does have is a culture that stems back to its origin of “I CARE” and the view that our students are also our customers. The university invests a great deal of resources in ensuring student contentment with our offerings. You all are aware of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Course Evaluations which reports your class’s satisfaction both with course content and with the delivery method of same. Should that be enough? Absolutely NOT!

You are going to hear a lot in the near future about the Quality Enhancement Plan, so I will not take time in this article to steal any of that thunder. However, I do want to share with you a concept well worth your time to consider when working with your students both for retention issues and in advising for degree completion. The term is “Appreciative Advising” The term is defined this way:

“Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. It is perhaps the best example of a fully student-centered approach to student development. The great news is that it works” (Appreciative Advising. (2015). What is Appreciative Advising? Retrieved from http://www.appreciativeadvising.net/what-is-appreciative-advising.html)

What does this really mean when working with your students? Are you feeling that you already do this?

The answer may be that you do, at least in part, example some of the segments of the definition, but most of us should look to see if we hold to the six principles of the practice of
Appreciative Advising. All these steps can be found in greater detail by further research at www.appreciativeadvising.net. The six principles are these:

1. Disarm – This principle asks that you build a positive rapport with your student. It does not state that you are becoming their friend but that you show genuine concern and are approachable. Just doing the job or signing off on a schedule card are not examples of disarming.

2. Discover – This principle takes time. You should make sure that you are asking open ended questions to determine that your student’s real goals are being reached. When helping them schedule classes, are you finding out their time availability, life requirements, any challenges they may be facing, etc...? I think you get the point.

3. Dream – What are your students’ short and long term goals at this time? Is your involvement helping those goals? Are these goals realistic?

4. Design – You are now able to help the student craft a more realistic plan. We no longer work off a standard script of classes and many of our students, if not all, are looking to you as the subject matter expert to help craft their academic future.

5. Deliver – Stay involved with the students you help. I am pleased to hear, when talking to students, that they have built such a relationship with many of our faculty and come back quarter after quarter for their help and guidance.

6. Don’ts – The thrust here is not to settle for the status quo! When this kind of relationship is built a unique opportunity is now in place allowing you to ask, if not insist, on ever-increasing levels of academic achievement.

This practice suggests that each of us expect that our student can and will do what is required in our classes. It is also suggested that the student, when they see this to be genuine and proven, will respond with ever higher levels of productivity. In published research done by a professor at the University of Illinois Urbana, the following is stressed: “We need to treat each student as if he or she might someday be our own future physician, lawyer, next door neighbor, or other influential person in our lives.” (Bloom, J. & Martin, N. A. (2002). Incorporating Appreciative Inquiry into Academic Advising. Retrieved from http://dus.psu.edu/mentor/old/articles/020829jb.htm)

Enrollments for all but a few academic institutions both in this area and across the country are having the same census issues that Sullivan University is experiencing now. Reduced tax dollars are seeing state universities increase advertising as never before to make up for shortfalls. What this means to each of us is that everyone wants our students. Chancellor Sullivan has always stated that we “earn our students every day” and that “they vote with their feet.” These wise words are never more true than today. Sullivan University’s history of “I CARE” sets it apart and, even with others trying to mimic something similar, our students know that this is true every time they are in the classroom with you!
Academic Council Highlights

By

Nick Riggs

As chair of the Academic Council, I am pleased to write another edition of Academic Council Highlights (ACH). The goal of ACH is to keep faculty and other interested parties informed, on a quarterly basis, about the workings of the Academic Council (Council) and matters it addresses.

For this edition, I am writing to encourage all faculty members to give serious thought to serving on the Council as an elected at-large member. Council meetings are consistently held on Thursdays of the third and eighth weeks of each of the four academic quarters. Four faculty members are nominated and elected to serve on the Council for a year. The nomination and election process is conducted through the Provost’s office, usually during the winter academic quarter.

Those who serve on the Council, particularly at-large faculty representatives elected by their peers, do so for a variety of reasons. They want to be a part of the bigger picture, they have specific issues they want addressed, they like being part of the solution to both big and small problems and issues, and they enjoy the challenge of debate and collegial deliberation on all sorts of matters.

Here are some comments from the four at-large Council members whose terms of office recently expired:

“I have enjoyed serving on the academic council this past year. Before serving as an at-large member, I originally saw the effectiveness of the Academic Council a few years ago when I attended meetings as a guest to participate in discussions about tutoring center policies and purposes as an academic support service. I joined a committee of the academic council to hone the mission statement, policies, and job descriptions and create a handbook for the tutoring centers on both campuses. I welcomed the nomination to serve on the AC, to be a part of an effective body of faculty representatives. I was also willing to learn more about decision making processes, and where and how the AC fit in. It was refreshing to find that the
provost regularly attended the meetings to hear the discussions and to let the AC know the perspective of the Administration. That was clear evidence of the open lines of communication between the faculty and administration.”

Sarah Nichter  
Associate Professor  
Tutoring Center Coordinator  
Sullivan University

“Being a member of the Academic Council for the past two years has been a real pleasure. I was able to gain an insight and participate in the voting process for a number of issues. My reason for wanting to be part of this Council was to contribute to the continued successful operation and growth of the university.”

Bobby Dean  
Department Chair  
Marketing Program

“I decided to submit my name for possible member at large because I have always contemplated the official process of how things are proposed and then followed through both on the faculty and administrative side. After completing this year, I have learned many things about the process but also how the support of the administration is really there to assist in making things happen. It has been a great year to be involved on this council especially since we just completed our regional accreditation visit. By being a part of the Lexington branch campus, I feel that I assisted as much as possible with the visit and, I have true comradery with faculty at Sullivan University.”

Jill Ferrari, M.A. MT MLT (ASCP)  
Medical Assisting Program Director  
(Lexington Campus)

“If a faculty member wants to be a voice for the faculty as a whole and learn about the current activities impacting the university, this is the committee to be on. There is certainly a time commitment that needs to be understood but it is worth it if you want to stay abreast
of current events and be an active voice for the faculty. . . . It was a pleasure to serve on the (council) and I learned quite a bit.”

Dr. Michael J. Miller, CMA, CFM
Professor
School of Accountancy/Graduate School

From these comments, it seems all that is needed to serve on the Council is the desire to be engaged in the process of moving forward to achieve stated goals. These goals may be personal, departmental, administrative, or university-wide. And the commitment to attend two Council meetings a quarter is not overly burdensome. That’s a total of eight meetings a year.

Yes, the debate can be lengthy at times, but most university constituencies are represented at Council meetings. Accordingly, all present are provided the opportunity to present their point of view on matters under consideration. I have attended almost all Council meetings, and no one has been maimed or defamed at the meetings, mainly because of the civil and professional manner in which they are conducted. Nor are the meetings merely gripe sessions. We are proud to claim success in maneuvering through a wide range of topics and issues with constructive results. For examples, see my articles in the Summer 2013 and Spring 2014 editions of the Academic Illuminator. These can be found at:

http://library.sullivan.edu/SitePages/UniversityArchives/sulou_illuminator.aspx

If you are a faculty member, the next time you see the notice sent out by the Provost seeking nominations for an at-large position on the Council (usually during the winter academic quarter), please give due consideration to throwing your hat into the ring. Get engaged! I am sure you will be glad you did.

In conclusion, rest assured that the Council has lively debate and discussion at all meetings and regularly sends important matters to the Provost for consideration and requested action. With that in mind, please don’t hesitate to send me an item for Council deliberation at nriggs@sullivan.edu. The Academic Council is here to serve you!

Submitted 03/25/2015
Policy Review

The Revised Policy on Email Access for Adjunct Instructors Who Are Not Currently Teaching A Course

This issue’s policy review is on a recent revision to the “Use of Computer Software, Electronic Mail, and Internet” policy in the Faculty/Staff Manual, located at http://manual.sullivan.edu.

In May of 2013, it was brought up in an Academic Council meeting that adjunct instructors who were not teaching during a quarter had access to their employee email blocked. This proved inconvenient for several reasons. Over the next year and a half, the Academic Council, Provost, and Human Resources department worked together to revise the policy. The revisions are complete, and the new policy is in effect.

According to the new policy, an adjunct instructor’s university email access will not automatically be cut off as soon as he or she stops teaching. The new cut-off date will be in the second consecutive non-teaching quarter. In other words, if the instructor taught in Winter 2015 but took the Spring 2015 quarter off, he or she would have access to university email until the Summer 2015 quarter. If he or she taught in the summer quarter, his or her email access would continue uninterrupted.

Some instructors may only teach once per year, but they will still need uninterrupted access. The new policy has provisions to accommodate this. The director of the campus for which the instructor teaches, or the senior academic leader, can submit a request to Human Resources for an exemption allowing the instructor to retain access to his or her university email account. If an adjunct instructor feels that he or she, students, and/or the university as a whole would benefit from this exemption, the instructor is encouraged to contact his or her department head.

This revised policy will greatly assist instructors in maintaining appropriate communications with former students. For example, if a student needs a letter of recommendation, it will be far easier for him or her to request one from his or her instructor if said instructor still has access to the university email system. Additionally, instructors who are performing functions other than teaching, such as serving on PhD dissertation committees, will find it far easier to do so via their official email accounts.

N.B. — Please note that the Sullivan University Systems administration and campus leadership have the authority and responsibility to deactivate any employee’s university email account at any time if they deem it necessary to do so.
New Day Student Registration ................................................................. March 25, 2015
New Night Student Registration ............................................................. March 25, 2015
New Housing Student Registration ....................................................... March 25, 2015
Day School New Student Orientation ..................................................... March 27, 2015
Night School New Student Orientation .................................................. March 28, 2015
Late Registration .................................................................................... March 28, 2015
First day of classes ................................................................................. March 30, 2015
Last day that a student can enter an online class ..................................... April 2, 2015
International Registration and Orientation ............................................ April 3, 2015
Last day that a student can enter a day class* ......................................... April 6, 2015
Last day that a student can enter an evening or weekend class .................. April 9, 2015
Academic Council Meets ........................................................................ April 16, 2015
Spring Graduation Ceremony .................................................................. April 18, 2015
Adult Open House .................................................................................. May 9, 2015
Last day that a student can withdraw and still receive a “W” ..................... May 15, 2015
Academic Council Meets ........................................................................ May 21, 2015
Break ...................................................................................................... June 13-28, 2015
First Day of Summer 2015 classes ........................................................... June 29, 2015

*Standard protocol requires students to attend by the 5th meeting.

Note: For night/weekend classes, a roster will be placed in the instructor’s mailbox on each day of his or her class and that same roster with signatures is to be returned to Enrollment Services after each class by the instructor.
Dr. Coppock has always been on the cutting edge of technology!

“Picture Perfect” As Sullivan Focuses On New Video Age

In order to provide Sullivan students with the best possible educational tools, Sullivan College has entered the Video Age. With the purchase of two video recorders, a color camera, and a color monitor, students should be able to receive much more help in their preparation for careers.

Dr. G. Stephen Coppock, Vice President and Director of the College, said that the purchase of the video equipment was something that he had wanted to do for quite some time. “With this new equipment,” he said, “the possibilities for education are endless! We haven’t even begun to scratch the surface!”

Classroom Aid

Ms. Deborah Greene, instructor in Personality Development, agrees with Dr. Coppock. She has used the video equipment in the classroom to record mock interviews and to play them back so that the students can see how they are coming across. “It is amazing,” she said, “how you can see things on the screen that you would normally miss without the video capability. Things like tapping your foot, or shifting your eyes—things like that. The use of the video equipment will help the students to become more relaxed when they are in an actual interview situation.”

David Skinner, Accounting instructor and head basketball coach, has used the video equipment to tape the practices of the basketball team. He says that the equipment enables the team members to view both their strengths and their weaknesses. “With the stop-action and slow-motion capabilities of our equipment,” he says, “we are able to zero in on each movement—this will make our sports training more productive!”

Other plans for the video equipment include the taping of various lectures that would then be available, through the library, for review.

As Sullivan College enters the Video Age, it has continued its commitment to providing each student with the latest and the best in career preparation.
THE ACADEMIC ILLUMINATOR

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Editor: Nathan Ragland
Columnists: Charles Brown, James Kearfott, Dr. Kenneth Miller, Nathan Ragland, Dr. Nick Riggs, Dr. Mark Wiljanen
Special Thanks to: Kelly Snider

The Academic Illuminator is an informational publication for faculty members at Sullivan University. Issued before the start of each academic quarter, the Illuminator covers topics of interest to faculty such as policy changes, compliance with regulatory bodies, the ongoing process of accreditation, the activities of the Academic Council, and upcoming events. Back issues of the Academic Illuminator can be found at http://library.sullivan.edu/archives/sulou_illuminator.asp.

Questions, comments, requests for article coverage, and article submissions may be sent to editor Nathan Ragland, at nragland@sullivan.edu.

NOTES TO THE FACULTY

- If you know someone who could benefit from a Sullivan University education, be sure to refer them at http://sullivan.edu/referral/index.aspx!
- Reminder: If you need a Turnitin account for use with your classes, or need assistance with a Turnitin issue, contact a librarian. Printable instructions for faculty and students on using Turnitin can be obtained by contacting Nathan Ragland (Louisville/Online) at nragland@sullivan.edu, Kandace Rogers (Lexington) at krogers@sullivan.edu, or Jill Sherman (SCTD) at jsherman@sctd.edu.