1. We approved the minutes from 01/10/12 which were emailed on 01/11/12.

2. There was excellent attendance at Paul Gaston’s pedagogical luncheon on January 12. His presentations were not only interesting and open-minded, but the way he discussed potential nay-sayers was very helpful.

3. We decided to decline Dean Wittrock’s request to survey graduate capstones because it would take our focus away from our primary tasks.

4. Larry updated the Student Senate on January 22 about CULE’s progress and the capstone improvement project. He will do the same with the Faculty Senate later today.

5. Most of the data analysis teams were able to present their findings. Common themes among them were:
   a. Faculty and staff are more critical of present student performance and have higher standards for the future.
   b. All groups expect every outcome to be more important in the future.

6. Marion (and Kevin in absentia) presented information on the big picture. Kevin’s material analyzed the quantitative data and Marion did a content frequency analysis of the open-ended comments.
   a. Writing well and speaking well are high priorities among all respondents.
   b. Understanding literature and the arts and reading and speaking a second language are rated as the least important outcomes by every group.
   c. The percentage of open-ended comments ranged from 21-50% for each group depending on the prompt. About half of the students, faculty, and staff commented on “What needs to be improved?”
      i. For “What other outcomes are needed?” the most common themes were: critical thinking (faculty, staff, alumni); internships (students, alumni, employers); and communication (staff, alumni).
      ii. For “What are we doing well?” the most common themes were: large variety of topics (students, faculty, staff, alumni); good balance of subjects (faculty, alumni); writing classes (students, faculty); communication classes (students, alumni); and science and technology (staff, alumni).
iii. For “What needs to be improved?” the most common themes were: writing/speaking skills (faculty, staff, alumni, employers); better teachers (students, alumni); and 189 classes (students, staff).

iv. Many comments urged NDSU to explain the value of GE more clearly. Other frequent general themes were that recent graduates lack of social skills that the increasing emphasis on research is hurting teaching, and that the 189 classes should be uniform across campus.

7. Larry presented two sets of charts on the gaps between the rankings for “How well we are doing?” and “How important will this outcome be in the future?”
   a. The first set of charts showed the ranking of the outcomes (by means) for each group of respondents for each of the two questions.
      i. For “How well are we doing now?” working as a team member was rated among the top three by all groups.
      ii. In terms of future importance, writing and speaking clearly were rated as the top two by all groups. Working as a team member was in the top four for everyone except faculty. Thinking creatively and innovatively was among the top six for all groups. Thinking critically was in the top seven for all groups.
      iii. The first set of charts also showed the gaps for each of the outcomes between rankings for present performance and future importance.
   b. The second chart compared the rankings of ten largest gaps for each group of respondents.
      i. The highest ranking gaps are in speaking clearly, writing clearly, and understanding the viewpoints of societies other than the United States and Europe.

8. Seth presented the analysis for the outcomes: 1) Reading and understanding complex documents; 2) Reading and speaking a second language; 3) Understanding scientific methods and how they are used to increase our knowledge of the natural and physical world; 4) Understanding technology and its implications for society; and 5) Understanding and working with numbers and statistics.
   a. Except for “reading and speaking a second language” there was a high degree of convergence among all respondents for how important each of these outcomes would be in the future.
   b. “Reading and speaking a second language” was seen by all groups as the outcome present students are least successful in meeting, but was also rated as least important for the future by all groups.
   c. Students and alumni may think that “understanding scientific methods” means understanding scientific research skills.
9. Char presented the analysis for the outcomes: 1) Thinking critically about information, ideas, and beliefs; 2) Locating organizing and evaluating information from a variety of sources; 3) Analyzing and drawing conclusions from a variety of sources to solve complex problems; 4) Integrating and synthesizing information from a variety of sources; and 5) Using spreadsheets and databases tools to organize and analyze information.
   a. Alumni, employers, and students saw a much smaller gap between present performance and future importance.
   b. Relative to other outcomes, “Using spreadsheets and databases tools to organize and analyze information” is less important both now and in the future for everyone except employers.
   c. Employers were the most consistent in their ratings across items.

10. Carolyn presented the analysis for the outcomes: 1) Writing clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts; 2) Speaking clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts; 3) Using visual media (charts, graphs) to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts; and 4) Using electronic communication effectively (email, social media) in a variety of contexts.
    a. Alumni and employers rate present students the most positively on all outcomes.
    b. The highest absolute rating was by employers for students’ skills in “using electronic communication.”

11. Susan and Cynthia presented the analysis for the outcomes: 1) Working effectively as a team member; 2) Working effectively with people from different backgrounds and cultures; 3) Valuing lifelong learning and intellectual curiosity; 4) Examining one’s own values and conclusions; and 5) Completing an integrative experience (for example an internship, a lab, a seminar, a project, a capstone, etc.) as a junior or senior which requires students to synthesize and apply the knowledge and skills of their major field.
    a. Faculty and student ratings on the future importance of each item were quite similar.
    b. The largest average gap among all groups between present performance and future importance was for “working effectively with people from different backgrounds and cultures.”
    c. All groups agreed that these outcomes would be very important in the future.
    d. One benchmark for PNAS accreditation is to be concerned about anything where more than 20% of the respondents are dissatisfied. (Question from Larry, does that means combined ratings of “fair” and “poor” or only ratings of “poor”?)

Submitted by Larry Peterson

NEXT MEETING, 2:00, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, MANDAN ROOM