Responses to the Case Study on accreditation and assessment
Great Plains Conference – June 2, 2007

Engaging Departments
• Meet w/ departments to plan departmental portfolios
• Use existing documents/assignments
• Use those portfolios to model this for other departments
• Use the faculty from those departments to share process/success/opportunities
• Faculty should be offered incentives (thank you, not a bribe) i.e. course release, etc.
• Work to alter perspectives so that the assignment is viewed as an opportunity to develop a five-year plan
• Use the opportunity to tell the departmental “story”
• Focus on departments that we hear are doing well and develop with them evidence they can use to show that they are doing well

Engaging faculty in assessing their own work
• Have a problem with the provost
• Organize a task force and identify allies to create alliances
• Looking at assessment with attitudes that assessment is for “us” (not done “to us”) )
• Collect best practices (success) stories
• Collect problems also
• Department wide workshops
• Simple tools that they can use
• It really is all about the hokey pokey!
• Focus first on “what is the purpose of evaluation?”
• Collect testimonials and share across campus

Institutional Level Assessment
• Why does the director of assessment know that there are great programs?
• Why is this separate from the assessment plans?
• Why aren’t the successful programs aligned with the assessment planning?
• What evidence exists that alumni are happy?
• Why is the director of assessment sitting in her/his office?
• Director should be out talking with people
• “Tyranny of the urgent” – ultimate purpose is lost in the “we gotta"

Connections between teaching/learning centers and assessment/accreditation
• Assessment director should talk with the faculty in the departments about their success stories
• Educate faculty/departments about how what they do is assessment
• Educate the dept. chair to learn how to write up the information to share up the ladder
• Each department should have their own way of “buying in”
• Invite the “venting”
• Take the things that faculty members have said and turn them into positives
• Faculty are bringing critical thinking in and this is good (discussing the negative statements that faculty had said)
• Develop supportive questioning strategies to lead others to explain their reasons, justify their thinking, focus on what works or doesn’t

Best practices for program review and faculty development
• Faculty/staff need to get some type of affirmation for what they are presently doing
• Focusing on student learning in the classroom, course, program
• Need to show evidence that better teaching happens as a result
• Assessment leads to better teaching and learning
• Use Massy’s principles – use quality enhancement
• What are you doing to promote lifelong learning? For example…
• Let faculty teams work together on common issues to create outcomes that are meaningful (this could be a way to placate divisiveness in a department and address different program outcomes)
• The overall negativity of assessment indicates a need to “sell the concept” away from accreditation
• Setting assessment up as something that is ongoing rather than just for accreditation
• Formative, continuous processes
• Cross departmental fertilization

Synthesis
• This process really does take leadership
• Comments are reflective of the leadership (they are reactive)
• Negative aspects of assessment show when it is done by someone else and when standards aren’t detailed enough to know what they are
• Assessment should be based on what our successes are and on issues we are still addressing
• How open are we to criticism? We should create what is important to us (tools, reporting, outcomes)
• When we care about outcomes there is a level of excitement
• We should look at different forms of feedback so that the feedback is valuable
• Praise-question-polish method of responding (try to find something good, have a question about the main concept/issue, mechanics or rhetoric that can be enhanced/improved)
• Hard for some to get criticism because we are all used to being “A” students
• Collaboration is difficult because we are often used to competition (being the best)
• The conflicts are actually part of the process and can be good
• we need to value and recognize the differences
• Fostering a campus culture that moves assessment from a job (yucky – cleaning the bathroom) to become an “exciting and fun” process that needs to involve all in a creative way

What am I going to bring back to my campus?
• Create an “assessing a capstone course” workshop
• Ask “what are our goals” at the beginning of a course
• Build the reflective aspect into working with graduate students
• Faculty are already excited about their own discipline. Now, they are being asked to talk about how faculty teaching impacts students. Tie in assessment with faculty love of the discipline – extending, not interfering with the discipline
• People don’t like change. Assessment brings about change. What is this going to lead to next? This may be the fear. Don’t just create the assessment process, develop the change process.
• Give resources whenever possible. This can help with resistance to the process.
• Create an “assessment scholar” position