

FROM THE DIRECTOR

“When change is discontinuous, the success stories of yesterday have little relevance to the problems of tomorrow.”

–Charles Handy

I ran across the title quote not so long ago and began thinking how appropriate it is to the new academic year that is upon us. We in IRPE are all about continuous improvement, which frequently involves change. Below are some of the projects and services I am pleased to highlight:

- This Fall is the kick-off for QEP implementation. After two years of planning, most of the 12 pilot projects commence with data collection.
- MyMav is changing the way we gather and compile data. You will note in the What’s New and Resources for You sections that we are making several types of information available on an automated, self-serve basis, some with the assistance of MyMav technology.

Continued on page 4



Pam Haws, PhD
Associate Vice President and Director
of Institutional Research, Planning
and Effectiveness.

UEP? QEP? ASAP? – What Gives?

What is the UEP? I think I have heard of it. Does that have something to do with the QEP? Or, are they the same thing?

You may have said these things to yourself about the ubiquitous acronyms. Maybe you know they are different and have a vague notion of the distinction, or maybe this is the first time you have heard of the UEP (or the QEP). This article aims to provide a brief explanation of both the UEP and the QEP so that you will know the functions and the distinguishing characteristics of each.

The UEP (Unit Effectiveness Process) and QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) are not just things cooked up by executive administration (or IRPE) to torture and overburden faculty and staff. The respective process and plan are the University’s effort at meeting requirements set forth by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in order to maintain our accredited status.

SACS Core Requirement 2.5 directs the University to conduct continuous, institution-wide, research-based planning and evaluation so that it can demonstrate that it is effectively accomplishing its mission. Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 is more specific and calls for the University to assess student learning outcomes, administrative outcomes and educational support services outcomes. In addition, the University is to provide evidence that it uses the results of



assessment and analysis to implement improvements.

The UEP is, in part, a response to Core Requirement 2.5 as well as fulfillment of the requirements of Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1. The process has been our system of continuous improvement since 1996.

It began as an annual process, but was then revised in 2001 to occur biannually. All University units, academic and administrative, are expected to participate in the process. The outcomes that are selected for assessment are chosen at the discretion of the individual unit.

Until recently, the acronym “UEP” referred to a portion of the reports that documented the planning phase of the process known as the Unit Effectiveness **Plan**. In 2006, a decision was made to give the process an official name. Unit Effectiveness **Process** was selected, in part, to maintain name recognition while acknowledging that institutional effectiveness includes not only planning, but assessment, analysis and improvement. You can find out more information about the UEP by checking out the UEP Assessment Handbook, available online at the UEP home page: http://www.uta.edu/irp/unit_effectiveness_plans/uep.htm.

SACS Core Requirement 2.12 calls for the formulation and implementation of a “Quality Enhancement Plan”

Continued on page 4

QEP CORNER

Active Learning Pilot Projects on Track

After several years of planning, the University's Quality Enhancement Program is now underway. Beginning this fall, faculty and staff in Business, Education, Honors, Liberal Arts, Nursing, Science and the University Libraries are implementing a range of innovative pedagogical strategies, each with an eye toward helping us better understand how active learning techniques might foster our students' development of higher order thinking. Students enrolled in QEP-linked sections are participating in this university-wide research project by providing data about their own learning / thinking styles, thereby directly contributing to the critical assessment component of the study. It is truly a cooperative enterprise.

Overseeing the implementation of this endeavor is a collective of staff and faculty, including members of the newly constituted University-Wide Committee on Active Learning and Higher Order Thinking as well as the assessment team from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness. As the administrator assigned primary responsibility for coordinating QEP efforts, I would like to thank these colleagues for their time and energy. Special recognition goes to Dr. Victoria Farrar-Myers for her tremendous work in taking the QEP from a broadly-defined SACS mandate to an institution-specific construct (Active Learning) to a fully operationalized, multifaceted inquiry into the connections among teaching, learning, and assessment.

As part of the University's efforts to promote the Active Learning/Higher Order Thinking initiative, the Office of the Provost, along with the Academy of Distinguished Teachers, is sponsoring a workshop by Dr. Virginia Anderson of Towson University titled "Effective

Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment." In this workshop, Dr. Anderson will help participants identify the sorts of learning that they want to take place in their classrooms and then develop the sorts of standards and practices that can help realize those learning outcomes.

Mark your calendars for the afternoon of **Thursday, September 20, 2007**.

To keep abreast of UT Arlington's QEP, visit the Active Learning Website Portal at <http://activelearning.uta.edu>.

– David J. Silva, PhD
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Unit Effectiveness Process (UEP) Updates

As the 06-07 assessment cycle is wrapping up, we are in the process of improving and updating the UEP materials in preparation for the upcoming 07-08 assessment cycle.

Below are some dates from the 07-08 assessment cycle timeline to help you with planning for your unit.

1/18/2008 Friday

Plan instructions distributed for 07-08 cycle

3/12/2008 Wednesday

1st Draft of Forms A & B due to Deans/VPs (suggested)

4/15/2008 Friday

2nd Draft of Forms A & B due to IRPE

6/30/2008 Monday

Final Version of Forms A & B due to IRPE

Resources for You!

IRPE has created, or in some cases updated, online resources for you. Take a look at what is available!

- **NEW** - Online calendar of upcoming events/reports including those related to the UEP, QEP and State (CB) reporting deadlines. [Click here to view.](#)
- **NEW** - Faculty Credential Form - This is available in the Forms section of the Provost's web page: <http://www.uta.edu/provost/facultysupport/>.
- **UPDATED** - 2006-2007 Fact Book. The Fact Book data are now based on official reports and will be updated every semester after official reports are certified. Although we are still in the process of beautifying the format, the data is available. [Click here to view.](#)
- **UPDATED & NEW** - Administrative Reports (e.g. preliminary head counts, degrees granted, etc): have been created to help departments operate more efficiently. [Click here to view.](#)

Training resources and instructions to access IRPE's automated data retrieval system are available online at: <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/training/index.html>.

INFORMER FEATURE

Completing the Assessment and Analysis Report (Form C)

We are nearing the end of Phase 2 of the 2006-2007 cycle of the Unit Effectiveness Process (UEP). By now you should have completed the implementation of the action steps and conducted your assessment. Use Form C, the Assessment and Analysis Report template, to document the data collected as well as any proposals for improvement.

The Form C template and full instructions (with samples) are available online at:
http://www.uta.edu/irp/unit_effectiveness_plans/uep.htm.

IMPORTANT DATES

9/28/07 units submit 1st draft of Form C to Deans/VPs

10/26/07 units submit 2nd draft to IRPE

2/1/08 units submit final version to IRPE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Refer to *Form B – Assessment Plan for Administrative Outcomes and/or Form B – Assessment Plan for Student Learning Outcomes* to formulate responses to Form C.
- Once the report is completed, submit it via email to Rebecca Lewis at rebeccal@uta.edu. **Any questions can also be directed to Rebecca at ext. 2-5133.**
- Even if assessment and analysis was not completed/ conducted, Form C must be submitted and should contain an explanation of the situation that prevented the process from proceeding as planned.

Be A Maverick.

**Get your report
done early.**

HELPFUL TIPS

- Make sure you address the methodology stated in your UEP plan by reporting on data collected and comparing it to the benchmark you selected to determine if you have achieved your intended outcomes.
- When reporting results, give specific information regarding the data (i.e. numbers, percentages, etc.) and indicate clearly that this data is either above, below or the same as the criteria of success that was established in the plan.
- Clearly state whether the outcome was achieved, partially achieved, not achieved, not assessed or that the results of assessment were inconclusive.
- When indicating resources needed to implement proposed improvements, state in approximate dollar values.

What's New?

IRPE's Data Request System

At the start of the 2007-08 academic year, the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (IRPE) launched a new data request system. The new system, described below, was created to increase office efficiency and better enable the office to meet its unit effectiveness goals. As of August 27th, IRPE will accept data requests via the Data Request Form located on its webpage: http://www.uta.edu/irp/dsp_datareq.php Requestors who submit requests via phone will be asked, in most cases, to also complete the Data Request Form.

Once the data request form is completed, the request is assigned to a Research Associate whose name will be

forwarded to the requestor. The Project Satisfaction Survey previously implemented by our office has been incorporated into our new system and the data requestor will receive an invitation to complete the survey about a week after their data request has been fulfilled.

It is our hope that our new system will streamline internal operations and thus provide better services to you.

We look forward to assisting you in obtaining the data you need. If you have any questions about the new data request system, or you are not comfortable completing the form, please contact our office for assistance.

IRPE Staff

Pam Haws, PhD

Associate Vice President & Director

Angie Barolet

Coordinator of Reports

Roger Chiu, MS

Business Intelligence Analyst

Terri Day, PhD

Institutional Research Associate

Mark Lansdon, MS

Web Developer

Rebecca Lewis, MA

Coordinator of Outcomes Assessment

Bob Lorick, MSMR

Institutional Research Associate

Araya Maurice, PhD

*Assistant Director of Assessment
for Student Success*

David Purkiss, MA

*Undergraduate Reporting
and Assessment Specialist*

Jacey Rotert

Administrative Assistant

Mansour Salami, MS

Institutional Research Associate

Sam Stigall, MA

Associate Director

Arnita Williams, BBA

Executive Assistant

The mission of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, a component of the Office of the Provost, is to conduct research and analysis in order to provide information to support institutional planning, assessment, policy analysis, and decision making, and to facilitate institutional effectiveness to advance the mission of the University.



UEP? QEP? ASAP? *continued from page 1*

that focuses on a temporally defined course of action purposefully designed to improve student learning. The University's QEP, *Active Learning: Pathways to Higher Order Thinking at UT Arlington*, is intended to determine the impact of active learning techniques on students' acquisition and development of higher order thinking skills. The University selected the topic based on faculty input as well as student, alumni and employer feedback from surveys.

Twelve pilot projects have been selected to investigate and provide data that will identify the most effective active learning techniques and best

practices. These projects are set for implementation in Fall 2007. The findings of the QEP will be used to direct decision-making regarding allocation of future resources. In addition, QEP data will be used to direct future initiatives intended to accomplish the University's first Strategic Planning Priority, "... to provide an environment that fosters broad-based education as well as professional studies designed to facilitate successful careers, personal development, and community service." You can find out more about the QEP by visiting the QEP web portal at: <http://activelearning.uta.edu/>.

From the Director *continued from page 1*

- In December, I and two other staff members will present a concurrent session at the SACS Annual Forum regarding the process the University used to develop the Compliance Certification document for reaffirmation. In addition, we expect that our reaffirmation of accreditation will be announced during the same annual meeting.
- This Fall we also wrap up the 06-07 UEP assessment cycle. This is the time when units examine the results of their assessments and determine any improvements that should be implemented. Soon after, thoughts will turn to considering outcomes to be assessed for the upcoming 07-08 cycle.



Institutional Research, Planning & Effectiveness

817.272.3365 ■ www.uta.edu/irp