Report on the Meta-Evaluation of the
Pierce College Shared Governance and Planning Assessment
February 14, 2017

Background

The plan to assess the effectiveness of the College's planning process and participatory governance derives from the analysis of accreditation Standards I.B.7, IV.A.7 and IV.B.3 as presented in the 2016 Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). As indicated in the ISER, the College planned to conduct the meta-evaluation of its participatory governance structure simultaneously with the evaluation of the College's planning process in fall 2016. To that effect, the Pierce College Council (PCC) formed the task force on the meta-evaluation of the participatory governance structure and the overall planning process of the College on July 28, 2016. The task force held its organizational meeting on October 5, 2016, and agreed to develop a survey that was distributed online to all Pierce College users on November 22, 2016. The task force met again on January 12 and 25, 2017, to review and analyze the responses. The task force also discussed the committee self-evaluation dashboard.

Data Analysis

The survey was sent to approximately 2,500 e-mail addresses that included the entire College community. The pool of respondents was 112, which represents a 4.5% response rate. In reviewing the results, some common themes emerged, including a high volume of "No Opinion/Don't Know" responses, the need for better communication by committees, and the need for training about the purpose of the committees and planning documents. In order to better understand the responses, the survey results were disaggregated by role: Administrators, Classified Managers, Faculty, Classified Staff, and Students.

The task force found, in general, that the high percentage of "No Opinion/Don't Know" responses indicative of deficiencies in how the College communicates and trains its constituent groups on the purpose and opportunities to serve on committees as well as how representatives are selected. A consideration of the disaggregated responses by role revealed that the same proportion of "No Opinion/Don't Know" responses persisted through the major categories of classified staff and faculty, which highlights the dearth of awareness on both the planning process and the roles of committees across all groups.

Results and Analysis by Question

Q1: *Your Role.*

> The majority of the respondents were comprised of Faculty and Classified Staff at 51.8% and 31.3% respectively. The remaining respondents were as follows: 7.1% Classified Managers, 8% Administrators, and 1.8% Students.

Q2: *Do you currently serve on a Pierce College Council (PCC) participatory governance committee?*

> The vast majority of the respondents currently do not serve on a PCC committee (64.9%).

Q3: *Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with all of the following statements:*

"I feel I have sufficient knowledge to be an effective committee member."
"I feel I have sufficient training to be an effective committee member."

> Although slightly more than half of the respondents Agree and Strongly Agree that they have sufficient knowledge (56.6%) to be an effective committee member, only 45.5% Agree and Strongly Agree that they have sufficient training. Between 20.5% and 23.2% of respondents answered No Opinion/Don't Know.

Q4: *The following questions will inform the PCC about the membership of committees:*

"Administrators and managers are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making."
"Faculty are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making."
"Classified Staff are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making."
"Students are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making."

> The volume of No Opinion/Don't Know responses for all four questions ranged from 33% to 42%. The data show that there is a lack of knowledge overall of how membership is represented for each committee. If the No Opinion/Don't Know responses are removed from the aggregate total, then the majority of those who identified as being "in the know" agreed with the statements above. Overall, respondents Agree and Strongly Agree that Administrators and Faculty are adequately represented in decision making (85.3% and 73.6% respectively). Comparatively, there was less agreement about Classified Staff and Students with only 63.6% and 56.9% responding Agree or Strongly Agree.

When looking at the responses of faculty only to the statement "Faculty are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making," 60.5% Agree or Strongly Agree.

When looking at the responses of classified employees only to the statement "Classified Staff are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making," only 52.6% Agree or Strongly Agree.

Q5: *The following units are appropriately and adequately represented in decision making:*

"Academic Senate"   *"Local 99"*
"AFT Faculty Guild 1521"   *"Supervisors 721"*
"AFT Staff Guild 1521a"   *"Teamsters"*
"Building & Crafts"   *"UMCE"*

When question 4 responses were further disaggregated based on constituent groups, 30%-63% responded No Opinion/Don't Know. If these responses are separated from the total, respondents overwhelmingly Agree or Strongly Agree that the Academic Senate (93.2%), AFT Faculty Guild 1521 (88.5%), AFT Staff Guild 1521A (80.6%), Supervisor 721 (83.3%) and Teamsters (83.3%) are appropriately and adequately represented. Of those who responded, 76.2% agreed that Unrepresented Managers and Classified Employees (UMCE) are appropriately and adequately represented. The Building & Crafts at 57.7% and Local 99 at 66.7% had responses showing these units have the least adequate representation.

Q6: *There are adequate opportunities to participate in the participatory governance process through service on a committee or task force of the PCC.*

Over half (55.4%) of the respondents Agree and Strongly Agree that there are adequate opportunities available to participate. However, only 31.4% of Classified Staff Agree or Strongly Agree with 42.9% responding No Opinion/Don't Know. This is contrasted with the faculty where 62.1% Agree or Strongly Agree and 25.9% responded No Opinion/Don't Know.

Q7: *The following questions will inform PCC about its committees: "I understand the role and function of the:*

"Accreditation Steering Committee" *"Enrollment Management Committee"*
"Budget Committee"   *"Facilities Advisory Committee"*
"College Planning Committee"   *"Technology Committee"*
"Diversity Committee"

The three committees in which respondents have the lowest understanding of their roles and functions are the College Planning Committee, Enrollment Management Committee and Facilities Advisory Committee, with 49.1%, 50.9% and 50.9% responding Agree or Strongly Agree respectively. These three committees also had the highest No Opinion/Don't Know response rate at 21.4%, 20.5% and 21.4% respectively. The three committees with the highest rates of agreement are the Accreditation Steering Committee (65.2%), Budget Committee (69.7%), and Diversity Committee (67.0%). Overall, these responses continue to support the idea that more communication about the purpose of each committee is needed.

Q8: *Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with all of the following:*

"Decisions made through participatory governance are based on research and data."
"Decisions made through participatory governance are communicated effectively to all stakeholders."
"The redesigned Pierce College governance Share Point Web site is an effective resource for information sharing."
"Decisions made through participatory governance are followed through in an effective manner."
"Administration supports participatory governance."
"Overall, I feel that College wide decision making is effective in supporting the College's mission and goals."

About a third of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with all of the above statements. If the No Opinion/Don't Know responses were removed from the total, less than half of the respondents Agreed and Strongly Agreed that decisions are communicated effectively to all stakeholders. However, 69% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that overall the decision making is effective in supporting the College's mission and goals.

The high number of No Opinion/Don't Know responses is a powerful symptom of the deficiency in awareness in the governance process.

Q9: *Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with all of the following:*

"The Strategic Master Plan is adequate to support the mission of the College and its operations."
"The Educational Master Plan is adequate to support the goals of the SMP."
"The Facilities Strategic Plan is adequate to support the goals of the SMP."
"The Plan for Enrollment Management is adequate to support the goals of the SMP."
"The Professional Development Plan is adequate to support the goals of the SMP."

"The Technology Master Plan is adequate to support the goals of the SMP."
"Overall, the College's planning process is effective."

> A slight majority of the respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the statements relating to the Strategic Master Plan and Educational Master Plan (55% and 52% respectively). One-third to two-fifths of the respondents had a similar opinion of the remaining plans (34%, 35%, 39%, 33%, and 41%). The large response rate of No Opinion/Don't Know, ranging from 37.6% to 51.5%, is a noteworthy indication of the lack of understanding on the purpose of each plan and the planning process. Additionally, 10% of respondents skipped this question entirely. Alternatively, if the No Opinion/Don't Know responses are removed from the total, the Strategic Master Plan and the Educational Master Plan had the highest rates of agreement at 89% and 87%, respectively. The Technology Master Plan had the lowest rate of agreement at 56%.

Q10: *There are adequate opportunities to participate in the College's planning processes.*

> Half (50.5%) of the respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that there are adequate opportunities to participate in the planning processes while 26.7% responded No Opinion/Don't Know.

Comments

Respondents had the option of commenting after each question as well as an opportunity for a final general comment about the participatory governance or planning in the College. Comments generated some themes, particularly that respondents are new to the college and are unaware of the governance and planning processes. Others showed confusion on the difference between Academic Senate and PCC committees. Comments suggest that respondents feel committee work is too time consuming and takes away from their primary responsibilities or there is lack of time to execute on their tasks. Lack of communication and follow-through of decisions made, as well as a strong sway of decisions made by Administrators was another theme. Respondents also commented on the need for outreach in order to make people aware of opportunities to serve and ensure constituent groups are appropriately represented. Lastly, many respondents commented on the need for training on the governance structure, Robert's Rules of Order, and how to be effective members of the committees they serve.

Task Force Recommendations

Based on the responses, there are four overarching recommendations: Training, Communication, Building a Culture, and Outreach.

- Training
  The task force recommends the College Professional Development Committee (CPDC) consider arranging committee/planning training for the campus community. The topics should include but are not limited to:
  - How the membership and the composition of each committee is determined;
  - The difference between Pierce College Council (PCC) Committees and Academic Senate Committees;
  - The purpose of each PCC committee; and,
  - The planning process and the purpose of each plan and its relationship to its respective committee.
- Communication
  The task force recommends that the College take steps to improve communication, such as:
  - Clear explanations of each committee should be more widely and easily accessible rather than housed in individual Web sites;
  - Uniform communication should be disbursed to constituency groups; and,
  - Uniform communication should be disbursed to the college community. The committee has two suggestions for improvement in this area and recognizes that others may have better ideas how this can be accomplished:
    - The Chair of the PCC can send the minutes to all users in addition to the agenda each month.
    - Continuous or weekly updates can be shared with the college community through a governance information Web page. For example, within one week after the committee meeting, a summary update can be submitted to a designated person who would be responsible for compiling the updates on the Web page and/or by e-mail with direct links.
- Building a Governance/Planning Culture
  - Spell out acronyms.
  - Infuse the concept that the committee minutes should state what data and supporting information was used that led to the rationale behind recommendations. The minutes should show that committees are indeed data driven.

- The benefits of SharePoint should be showcased by sharing direct links to documents rather than providing general committee site information.
- Increased Outreach to Constituents
    - Based on responses and comments, many people are unaware that opportunities to participate in governance and planning exist. Unit leaders should notify all constituents of opportunities to participate when vacancies exist.