Dawn and Nathan had a meeting recently with the Chairs of Planning, Budget, and Assessment Committees (Perry, Mike, Nathan).

In the past there has been more information shared between Planning and Budgeting, but the Assessment piece has not been quite as connected to these. We can do a better job of this by evaluating the strategic initiatives passed by the Planning and Budgeting Committees.

Lee Thornton (NWCCU) is coming to UM Aug 20 for an update on our project. This committee should meet with him, potentially at 2:00.

Dawn update:

Dawn provided the committee with three spreadsheets:

1. Report Card only metrics
2. All Assessment report metrics
3. Council of VP approved FY12-FY13 Budget Allocations

The items on the Report Card page are the ones recommended to be pulled out for the report card. OPBA followed the standard used in the past, which is that all of these figures are Mountain Campus only.

The plan is to update the full list of data that is provided each end of the Academic Year. That way the committee can decide what indicators they want to pull out. The full list is not yet completed for this year—OPBA is working on it.

Dawn proposed that for the complete list, Missoula College data would also be included (but reported separately) for every measure. That way we could choose which to include for the report card in the future.

But for this year, we are only including Mountain Campus on the report card.

It is important that when people look at this information they know the definitions.

Dawn showed a draft version of the report card online. It will be helpful to have all this information available to the public.

As OPBA is computing the data, Dawn will contact the group if she has questions about how a number is reached. Then the group can weigh in at that time rather than doing it all at once.

Nathan would like to share this information with the Deans at the AO retreat in a couple of weeks.
Dean Zhang thinks it would be good to know what the individual programs need for their accreditation as well.

Dawn thinks it would be good if we could get program-specific information up on the website for those programs too. OPBA will work on that.

NWCCU really wants to hear about our “mission fulfillment”.

- What essential learning dimensions represent mission fulfillment?
- How are we defining quality?
- What is the rationale for selected indicators and methodology for data collection—especially direct measures of student learning?
- How does our feedback system inform continuous improvement?

Dean Zhang asked how our strategic issues align with what NWCCU wants?

Our strategic goals are also the same as the core themes we report to NWCCU.

NWCCU wants us to demonstrate--How can a University say that they are providing quality education at an institutional level? Not just in terms of graduation rates but in terms of learning. There isn’t a silver bullet but it takes a multi-faceted approach that involves things like our rubrics and direct assessments (writing, gen ed) and the report card and the CLA, etc. We are trying to make a collection of approaches that paints as full a picture as possible.

John DeBoer wants to know how these assessments fit into the larger list of metrics. It might depend upon the metric.

John feels that the dynamic learning environment area is weak on metrics. The more we can emphasize people’s involvement and participation, the better. Things like “classrooms with innovative and sustainable technology” and “faculty student ratio” are more meaningful than sports attendance and national entertainment. We should lead with the heavier metrics.

Dean Zhang mentioned that the Internet 2 work could be included in the Dynamic learning environment because it helps support faculty research. This might not be a metric every year but we could include it in the assessment report for this year.

Degrees awarded-- is only 11 away from the 2020 goal. Dawn agrees that we need to think about the 2020 numbers. Sometimes the 2020 goal was meant to include both campuses, but we would only report the mountain campus along the way.

We were thinking of sending the President and Carey Shimek a draft this week. Is that realistic? Dawn said it’s possible.

Dawn will email the group about some of the definitions of the metrics. They will fill in the orange boxes and send out questions.
Strategic Initiative Assessment:

Perry (Planning Committee) and Mike (Budget Committee) want us to start assessing what’s happened as the result of strategic funding. When the planning committee suggests something to the budget committee and then gets approved... then what? Has the initiative fulfilled its intended goal?

How should we start doing this?

- Nothing is funded for FY16 so far. The budget and implementation committees have made their list. The benefit promised by the strategic initiative leads us to a particular thing to assess. Dawn almost feels that we need to go back to each of the proposals to find out what the goal is before we can think about assessing it. Until we know what the purpose is we can’t assess whether it’s been successful. Dawn doesn’t know the background.
- Once we understand their goals, how will we assess their effectiveness? Qualitative? Quantitative?
  - Dawn says both.
- This makes the Core Themes metrics assessment look easy!
- In the future, the proposals should include this right with them so they could fill this out for them.
- Perry has a template for the 2016 template for the planning proposals.

We might be able to go back and ask people to fill it out retroactively.

- How supportive will people be for filling this out? Not very.
- But, there are budgetary consequences.
- This is confounded by the fact that we are in a budget crisis. It would be very different if it had been a normal trajectory.

The original design of the planning-assessment continuum had a separate implementation committee with the President having ultimate oversight. Now these are agenda items that need to be addressed in the cabinet meetings. Dawn relies on her Committee Chairs (Mike and Perry) to bring this information back to her from the Cabinet.

We could identify 5 to 10 of these that are considered the most important, or easiest to assess. Probably the base budget and just do those.

Dawn agrees that trying to bite off this entire list is impossible.

Let’s set the stage and the standard for the practice going forward. We are serious about evaluating the success of these initiatives from now on.

The committee chose 5-7 initiatives to try and assess for now:

1. Re-Accelerate Campus Network Upgrade
2. COT and Bitterroot College
3. GLI (Big Questions pilot)
4. HR Professional Training staff member (has it fulfilled the needs of the campus)?
5. Montanan Funding
6. Faculty and other Base Additions
7. AISS program Coordinator
8. DSS Interpreter position

The committee wants to do this in a way that is positive, to avoid seeming punitive.

Dawn will send the next draft of the metrics by the 12th of August.