Human Services Advisory Committee Meeting

October 23, 2009

Advisory Committee Members Present: Beth Boland, Karen Box, Gwen Delp, Raine Dozier, Mike Henniger, Carolyn Hudnall, Sharon Kirkpatrick, Trula Nicholas, Kathy Ramsay, Tony Rhodes, Cal Scheidegger, Russell Whidbee

Introductions

Assessment

The Committee members broke into pairs and talked about what assessment meant to them and how student assessment should be a part of the overall process of program assessment. Summaries of these conversations were then shared with the larger group.

The whole group was then asked “Is student satisfaction an important aspect of learning or assessment?” Members talked about student feelings about the program and whether feelings are as important as professional preparation and whether the meaning of what they are learning will increase with experience. It was determined that the key is to make assessment a meaningful evaluation of learning rather than simply fulfilling an obligation to assess. Assessment at WWU is at the department and program level. Collection, analysis, and sharing of data derived from these assessments are used to improve programs and operations. The methods the Human Services Program is using to assess the program are creating course plans, the benchmark portfolio, and the student exit survey. The representative from Eastern Washington University stated that she liked seeing the portfolios that seniors put together last spring.

During Spring 2009, students enrolled in Dr. Dozier’s HSP 485, Program Planning and Evaluation course, evaluated the Capstone Portfolio process at the Bellingham site. They conducted interviews and a survey and provided concrete suggestions about how to “re-tool” the process.

Results on the exit surveys were varied between sites. It was suggested to keep site results separated since there were different perspectives between the different groups of students who make up the main campus program versus the extension sites. Overall, students generally seem happy with the program.

The Advisory Committee discussed changing the wording for the field visits question on the exit survey from “being valuable,” to “useful” or another similar term. There was also a discussion about asking the supervisors for their feedback. The student representative agreed that the program should keep the question, but reword it, possibly using a question like “student facilitating or coordinating the field visit is useful.” This wording would change the question to asking about a skill and reflects what is being practiced during the field visits.
Academic rigor scored low in the student exit survey for the Bellingham site. Members addressed this by talking about changing the curriculum. Discussion was mainly around the fact that in the Human Services program often rigor is around the discomfort of learning new skills and that students may not see this as rigor because it is not “academic work,” but it is skill-building work with students changing attitudes, values, etc. Students talk about how the difference of our program is the draw and what is good about it. Our program has a professional dynamic as well as academic. There is also the importance of the business aspect that they are learning, such as the budget, structure, and development of an agency. There will be more conversations about assessment within the program.

**Marketing and Recruitment at the Everett Site**

The Human Services Program Everett site director, Beth Boland, shared Everett’s marketing plan with the committee. Everett’s program is sending flyers to agencies with students to share with the employees and posting flyers on the Everett Community College campus. The Everett full-time faculty are visiting the local community colleges (Everett, Edmonds, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, and Cascadia) by speaking with advisors, visiting classrooms, and providing information sessions. The program coordinator is sending a recruitment e-mail to community college advisors the 3rd and 7th week of the quarter to forward to their students about our program. Program coordinators from Everett will also pair together to do information tables at the local community colleges for more focus on the site’s programs than at the transfer fairs where all colleges are competing for attention. Focus will be on a robust class for the Fall with 40 well qualified students.

Everett is making an effort to go paperless. Beth showed what Elementary Education and Rehabilitation Counseling have done with putting their handbook and information packets on CDs. The CDs have a table of contents, internet links, pdf files, forms, and anything else that would regularly be in the paper information packet that is mailed to prospective students. It is planned to use the brand on everything with the University Center and Woodring College of Education. The cost of a CD is much cheaper to make and mail versus the paper packets. The goal is to increase getting the word out and visibility of our extension site programs.

**Break and lunch**

**100 Community Conversations regarding Western’s future – Mike Henniger**

Notes sent to President Bruce Shepard attached.

**Next Step/Meeting**

Return to more conversation on assessment in late spring for three hours in Bellingham.