

Lebanese American University

December 12, 2005

Approved as amended

Memo to : Members of the Accreditation Subcommittee STD#6
From : Mona Nabhani
Subject : Minutes of the meeting of the Accreditation Subcommittee for Standard 6, held via video conferencing December 5, 2005 at 5:00 pm.
Present: A. Lahoud, E. Samia, S. Garabedian, G. Abi Fares, M. Nabhani, E. Badr, V. Papazian, M. Semaan, M. Othman, B. Prescott-Decie, R. Mouawad

The meeting started with a silent prayer.

The meeting agenda was to discuss business arising from previous minutes, share Dr. Samaan's report about the Steering Committee meeting of November 26, discuss gathering data methods to be used by the subcommittees, and share the team reports. The agenda was adopted and approved without amendments.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Report by Dr. Semaan

Dr. Semaan summarized main points of the meeting of the Steering Committee that was held at Le Royal on November 26, 2005. Dr. Semaan had sent an attachment of how data should be collected and labeled by the subgroups to be easily accessed later on. For example, any documents including relevant questionnaires for staff, students, or faculty under item 6.1 should be labeled 6.1.1, 6.1.2 and so on. The target respondents should be indicated as well. This helps in avoiding repetition and duplication in case the same information is needed for another substandard. Dr. Badr gave the example that results of questionnaires are exhibits and should be labeled accordingly. The collected data should cover the past three years.

Discussion of data gathering methods

*Subcommittee members need to think carefully of what data they need to collect and questions to ask so the Steering Committee can send, in January, all the questions of the subcommittees as one questionnaire to save time for respondents. Subgroups should have such questions ready by next meeting. Standards 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 will consolidate in one questionnaire because the target is faculty at large.

*Ms. Abi Fares commented that sometimes she is asked for information that her office does not normally generate. It was suggested that she states that the office has the raw data but the information is not extracted. This shows that we should have such information whereas we do not. The President had discussed four things that are needed to succeed in our efforts: honesty, integrity, evidence, and timeliness, Dr. Semaan commented.

*Mr. Papazian commented that providing all the needed information for the subcommittees is overtaxing for the various offices. Dr. Badr had asked Dr. Sfeir for extra staff to help with reducing data and perhaps in the next Steering Committee

meeting, the chairs will be asked to nominate staff with free time to help out. Another suggestion is to allow overtime pay for staff that work beyond 4:30 for that purpose. The accreditation budget can cover that.

*Mr. Papazian stressed that subgroups should avoid analysis and appraisal of the data that they collect because at this phase, what is needed is only descriptive data supported by exhibits listed as appendices. Dr. Badr reminded that the details are in the exhibits and not in the write up part. Dr. Semaan commented that numerous exhibits are needed to show clearly how things are done at LAU and plan improvement accordingly.

Team reports

* Reports for Substandards 6.12 and 6.14 were sent by Ms. Abi Fares. Report for Substandard 6.13 was sent by Mr. Garabedian, and report for 6.9 will be ready by next meeting whereas work on 6.14 and 6.17 needs more time.. Mr. Garabedian had accumulated data for his decade of work including information from his counterpart in Byblos campus. Dr. Semaan reminded of the need for closer coordination with Byblos and commented that in some cases, business is done differently on the two campuses, so we should indicate that honestly, then during analysis we choose the better way for LAU.

*Dr. Badr suggested making sure that all sub-teams are collecting correct indicators and not just bulk data and that we identify exact data, vertically not horizontally, that is, by digging deeper. He commented that some substandards are more vague than others such as statements on student leadership and the statement that financial aid ensures LAU's mission is accomplished, for example.

*Dr. Samia gave the example that health and orientation data are sub-categories of services, so we need to collect data about these from the various offices, and that safety services for the students should be reported as well.

*Mr. Prescott-Decie suggested that all data from the various groups be available via hyperlink so it can be borrowed when needed, and that despite the overlap between the various sub-sections, we should compile all information even if duplicated then trim at a later stage.

*Report for standards 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 was presented by Mr. Prescott-Decie. More data are expected from studies being currently conducted on student attrition. He and Dr. Nabhani plan to collect data about advising from students in all the Cultural Studies courses because they contain a large spectrum of LAU students.

Other business:

*The next meeting of the Steering Committee is on December 17. Before that date, all sub-groups should prepare questions they want to address to faculty, staff and students. Mr. Papazian and Dr. Semaan will go over the questions and create a document that will be presented to the Steering Committee.

*Dr. Semaan called for a meeting (Standard 6 committee) on Monday December 19.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:25