12-2-2013

Updates in Academic Affairs - 12/02/13

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/provost_news

Part of the Higher Education Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, "Updates in Academic Affairs - 12/02/13" (2013). Updates in Academic Affairs. Paper 1.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/provost_news/1

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the Provost at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Updates in Academic Affairs by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
Dear Colleagues:

I pledged that I would increase communication with you. To that end, this is the first edition of a newsletter that you will be receiving from the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs every few weeks.

Simply titled Updates in Academic Affairs, the newsletter will provide faculty and staff with additional information about issues and activities that impact the University’s academic mission.

This newsletter is not intended to minimize or eliminate the information that is provided by deans or department chairs and directors to faculty and staff, nor is it intended to reduce the information shared at departmental meetings.

In each edition, my intention is to address three or four key subjects that may impact us as we educate our students, develop scholarship and provide service. If there is a topic that you would like me to address in the newsletter, please email me at: tim.greene@wmich.edu or office-of-the-provost@wmich.edu.

Please also know that I am always happy to meet with faculty and staff to listen to feedback and to share in constructive dialogue about advancing our academic mission. Invite me to one of your upcoming meetings. I want to have a better understanding of the issues that are impacting you and your colleagues.

This fall, I met with several departments, schools and colleges to discuss issues of concern. I plan to meet with several more units before the closure period. I believe these meetings can be mutually beneficial in providing collegial, two-way communication and offer opportunities to gain a better understanding of issues that impact the units and the University.
New methods for reporting progress on strategic planning
by Jody Brylinsky, associate provost for institutional effectiveness

One of the key aspects of the inaugural WMU Strategic Plan was to provide transparent and timely reporting of its implementation to our campus stakeholders and our regional accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission. The first year of implementation consisted of four quarterly reports, with an annual report submitted to the Board of Trustees and the Faculty Senate this past July.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness began working in July to increase the efficiency in strategic planning report collection and the effectiveness of communications about strategic planning initiatives.

Early this fall, the office launched a SharePoint site as a repository for the work generated by the Tactical Action Communities (TACs). A master calendar was created in SharePoint so that meetings could be easily tracked and managed. As sharing capabilities become available, the goal of the institutional effectiveness office is to make the work of the TACs available to the University at large through the SharePoint site.

Another step toward improving strategic planning reporting has been the employment of the widely used software system, TracDat. In November, colleges and associate/vice provost areas received emails generated by TracDat to request updates to the strategic plan initiatives they reported in June.

The emails allowed the individual units to fill in web-based forms and submit them directly to the system. Using TracDat will enable academic affairs’ units to be proactive in their planning and allow the institutional effectiveness office to run uniform reports that demonstrate how the strategic pursuits of the units are advancing the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan.

Both of these initiatives are exciting next steps in embracing a culture of integrated planning. For more information, please contact me at jody.brylinsky@wmich.edu. You may also contact Brynne Belinger at brynne.belinger@wmich.edu.
Transparency reporting

WMU’s homepage serves as a portal to all manner of vital information about the University. Have you noticed, for instance, the Budget and Performance Transparency Reporting icon featured on the lower right of the homepage? Click on this icon and you will find a website with detailed financial data, University metrics as evaluated by the state of Michigan and other information.

This site serves as a helpful reference point for information regarding our continuous planning, as well as the implementation and use of resources. The site also offers context for the information the University is required to provide for the State of Michigan as a public, nonprofit entity per Section 245 of Public Act 201 of 2012.

When you explore this site, you will find links to the WMU Strategic Plan and Measures of Institutional Effectiveness. You will find data regarding the annual operating budget, personnel expenditures, general fund expenditures, human resources reports, collective bargaining agreements and contract administration documents.

One of the last items reported on this site is the academic student dashboard/report card. This report reflects three-year trends regarding undergraduate and graduate student enrollment, six-year graduate rates and the University’s student-to-employee ratio. The graphs in this report are aggregate measures of some important performance metrics addressed by the University strategic plan and the academic affairs strategic plan.