UPDATE ACTION PROJECT

Data-Driven Decision Making Model

1. Describe the past year’s accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.
This past year it was decided by President Johnson that we should search for a director of institutional research and establish an office. It was felt that when the position was filled then that person could be part of the data survey work for the first project. So in essence we switched the first and second steps of the initial project plan around. This search took a full year before we hired Dr. Elizabeth Owolabi in early August, 2011.

2. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.
There were eight people who served on the committee to determine the needs of this new office and to select candidates for interviewing. Two were at the VP level, three were at the level of the Deans and three others came from the faculty. We used most of the committee members to do phone interviews and all of the committee members were involved each time we brought candidates to campus for face-to-face interviews. When candidates came to campus they were asked to give a presentation, at which time the rest of the faculty and staff were also invited to meet and ask questions of each candidate.

3. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.
Dr. Owolabi is the director of the Office of Institutional Research for Concordia University. Her task is now to begin to set parameters of the office and determine what work her office should undertake and what work should remain within agencies and colleges of the university. (step 1)

Dr. Owolabi, Dr. Deb Serra, and Katherine Brandon are all currently involved on a committee (now step 2) to develop the survey tool we will use to collect information about the ‘silos’ of the university and current data collection. We need to determine who collects data in each college, department, or agency of the university both faculty and staff. We also need to know how the data is used and if it is reported to outside constituents. Since we now have an Office of Institutional Research, we will also include some questions about possible anticipated needs of each group as well.

4. Describe any “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.
After two unfruitful campus interviews it was determined that phone interviews should occur before we brought candidates to campus. We also determined that the salary range needed to be published to candidates as soon as we identified them as that has been the ‘sticking point’ for the first two possible candidates.

5. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?
Dr. Owolabi will continue to develop the office and determine needs and expectations. The committee could not really anticipate some functions of the office never having had the office prior to this time. The current challenge at this time is that everyone on campus
seems to have their own ideas about what this office should do and how it should function. The final and probably the most challenging step will be the implementation and evaluation of the data-driven decision making model throughout the institution (step 3).