Building Community through Accreditation: The Story of One IEP

Ketty Reppert
English Language Program
Kansas State University

Mid-TESOL October 2013
The Story Begins.

The graph shows enrollment numbers from 2004-2005 to 2009-2010. The years are categorized as Fall, Spring, and Summer.
Getting the Right Frame of Mind

CEA Pre-TESOL Workshop
The self-study should “[foster] a culture of continued improvement and [produce] positive change.”

Teresa O’Donnell at CEA Pre-TESOL Workshop 2011
Organizational Tip:
Color-code from the beginning

- Resources in different colors:
  - Highlighters
  - Page flags
  - Sticky-notes
  - Folders
Organizational Tip:
Color-code from the beginning

- Different colors for different areas of the program
  - Curriculum/assessment
  - Advising
  - Administration
  - Faculty
Organizational Tip: Figure out how to mark (and track) your “to do’s”

- “star method” ( * )
- sticky notes
- Bullet Journal
- other ideas...?
Taking/making time to lay the groundwork

Summer Interlude
Summer Interlude:  
Taking/making time to lay the groundwork

LaFasto and Larson’s Characteristics of Effective Leadership

1. Focus on the goal.
2. Ensure a collaborative climate.
3. Build confidence.
4. Demonstrate sufficient technical know-how.
5. Set priorities.

LaFasto and Larson, 2001
Summer Interlude: Taking/making time to lay the groundwork

1. Focus on the goal.
“…almost any kind of strategic-planning process works better than none at all. Almost any kind of goal-setting process works better than none.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001

Summer Interlude: Taking/making time to lay the groundwork
Our Goal is to:

- conduct a thorough, helpful, and accurate self-study based on the CEA Standards
- ensure that everyone in the ELP is involved
- document the process
- suggest and implement changes based on our findings
- write a clear and well-documented report that demonstrates how we meet the CEA Standards and
- demonstrate our fulfillment of the CEA Standards to the site review team

so that the ELP will be granted 10-year re-accreditation, demonstrating that it is a valuable part of Kansas State University and is an excellent place for students to study and faculty and staff to work.
Champoux’s Team Characteristics: ranked by importance

1. Commitment to a clear and common purpose  \textit{(buy in)}
2. Alignment of authority and accountability  \textit{(act on defined roles and expectations)}
3. High level of trust  \textit{(rely on)}
4. High level of respect  \textit{(regard for)}
5. Willingness to and ability to manage conflict  \textit{(ask tough questions)}
6. Focus on results  \textit{(measure achievement/outcomes)}

Champoux, 2013
Champoux’s thoughts on “buy in” (The Goal)

- “It must be clear before it can be common.”
- Other aspects:
  - A “higher order reason”/ purpose larger than self
  - WIIFM (What’s in it for me)
  - Room for Disagreement
Champoux’s thoughts on Authority and Accountability

- Know what we’re accountable for
- Why we’re accountable for it
- How to ask for accountability
- Have the authority we need

Champoux, 2013
A final thought on teams and goals

True teams “spring from two related sources”:
- “A mutual sense of purpose.”
- “Tangible goals based on that purpose.”

Hill & Lineback, 2012
In the real world

Making the most of the process
Some of our “real world” issues

- Turnover in Associate Provosts
- Extremely rapid growth
- Funding for Admin support hasn’t kept up with rapid student and faculty expansion
- New things (e.g., Ecuador! TOEFL fraud! MA TEFL Degree! Afghanistan!)
- Other outside constraints (e.g., grad school policies, etc.)
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

“Most of the time, if the team isn’t working well, you’ll find something has been elevated above the team’s goal. It might be office politics. It might be individual agendas. It might be ego and control needs. It might be competing goals and priorities. Whatever it is, it’s draining the energy of the team away from the goal. And that’s a recipe for failure.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001 (emphasis added)
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

“Work backwards from goals to milestones to tasks”

“Break down the work into smaller and smaller chunks until you have specific tasks that can be accomplished in a few hours or less.”

Pozin, 2011
2. Ensure a collaborative climate.
One of my foundational assumptions:

“Blaming does not help…. Everybody shares in the responsibility and that’s the truth.”

Wheelan, 2005
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

- Identify (and acknowledge) the biggest challenges in your situation
  - Focus on problem solving, rather than venting (LaFasto & Larson, 2001)
- Don’t delay
- Deal with them strategically
  - prioritize
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

- Get input from a variety of sources
  - Identifying issues
  - Working through them
- Can the challenges provide an opportunity?
  - Demonstrating a real need to outside administration
  - The chance to tackle something there’s never time for
  - Rethinking “the way we’ve always done things”
  - Problem solving that people can be engaged in
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

- Be flexible
  - If the plan/process isn’t working, try something else
  - Don’t be afraid to change course mid-stream

- Be realistic
  - When it’s OK to be “adequate” (which does not equal mediocrity)
Meeting the Standards

- There is some latitude within the Standards for how we meet them.
  - CEA accredits many different types of programs
- Beyond that, we have to do whatever we say that we do.
- If we use glowing terms of excellence, that’s what we have to show that we are.
- Mary’s mantra: We are adequate
We are Adequate…

But Consistently Aiming for Excellence

- We are good.

- We are striving for excellence.

- We only have to demonstrate to CEA that we are adequate.
  - [We meet the standards and do whatever we say that we do.]

- We are not perfect (and never will be).
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

“Team problem solving is not harmony; it is the constructive integration of diverse perspectives.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001
Making the Most of the Process: In the Real World

- Don’t lose your sense of humor

http://www.funnytimes.com/cartoons.php?cotw_id=20100310#.UlRqPhCVqV1
Organizational Tip:
Don’t throw too much away

- Keep in mind what you’ll need to have documented for the site visit/supporting documents
  - Meeting notes
  - Evidence of changes made
  - Communication with faculty, students, etc.
Getting the ball rolling

Engaging Faculty and Staff
Engaging Faculty and Staff:
Getting the ball rolling

Why?
- Accreditation is not a one-person job
  - Thoroughness and accuracy
  - Workload
  - Site visit
Engaging Faculty and Staff: Getting the ball rolling

How?
- Communicate

“Use every means at your disposal to ensure that goals and priorities are clear. Leave nothing to chance. Communicate repeatedly in a variety of media. And when you think you’re done, do it again.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001
Engaging Faculty and Staff: Getting the ball rolling

- Communication via:
  - Email announcements
  - Postings by copiers and printers
  - Updates at faculty meetings
  - Surveys asking for questions/feedback
  - Subcommittee involvement
  - Documents shared in secure online environment
  - Informal face-to-face communication
  - Open meetings/focus groups
Engaging Faculty and Staff: Getting the ball rolling

- How?
  - Less text is more
Engaging Faculty and Staff: Getting the ball rolling

- **How?**
  - Invite people
    - Be realistic in terms of:
      - Interest
      - Time
Engaging Faculty and Staff: Getting the ball rolling

**How?**
- Listen
- Ask
- Address the hard questions
- Be realistic and communicate the bigger picture
Tailoring it to your context

Making the most of the process
Making the most of the process: Tailoring it to your context

- Do the standards (or the stipulated process) address any areas of real weakness in your program?

- Where is there latitude in the standards or the process?

- Get several perspectives
  - There’s probably more than one “right” way to do things

- Ask the accrediting agency

- Which other parts of the university/outside players could/should be involved?
Making the most of the process: Tailoring it to your context

3. Build confidence.
Making the most of the process: Tailoring it to your context

“Clarity drives confidence. Confidence drives commitment.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001
**Student Learning Outcome:**
A description of what the student will know or be able to do with the language as a result of the course of instruction. A student learning outcome is written in terms of observable and measurable language skills. Along with course objectives, student learning outcomes provide the foundation of assessment by inferring what will be assessed and appropriate methods of assessment.

**Course Objectives**
Specific curricular elements taught through course content and activities. The course objectives guide instruction in order to provide a learning experience for all students and, in aggregate, address the course goals.

**Course Goals**
The overall intended outcomes or targets for the courses. The goals guide the development of meaningful course objectives.
Making the most of the process: Tailoring it to your context

“Communicate repeatedly in a variety of media. And when you think you’re done, do it again.”

LaFasto and Larson, 2001
Making the most of the process:
Tailoring it to your context

4. Demonstrate sufficient technical know-how.
Demonstrating sufficient technical know-how

- Depends on your situation, but should include:
  - Familiarity with standards and accreditation process
  - Facility in communicating
  - Awareness of different aspects of the program/what’s going on
  - A plan for managing documents and data produced by the accreditation process
  - Confidence using the programs/systems your program uses
    - If you don’t know, learn or find someone who does
Organizational Tip: Have a plan for naming files before you get started

- Year_month_day_Standard#
- Double digits for month and day so computer will auto-sort into chronological order (2013_08_24_Standard 5)
- Decide if/how to utilize
  - Headers
  - Footers
    - date/, file name/path, last revised by, etc.
    - page #s
Organizational Tip:
Have a plan for storing/sharing files before you get started

- Shared/networked drive
- Secure online space
- Appropriate folder structure
  - Including a way to tell what’s current
- Access for everyone who needs it
Digital Records Naming and Management Resources

- Digital Records information from the State Archives of North Carolina

  [http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/systems/digitalinitiatives/docs/filenameguidelines.pdf](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/systems/digitalinitiatives/docs/filenameguidelines.pdf)

- Naming Conventions for Electronic Documents from the Information Management Branch of the Government of Alberta
For the long haul

Engaging Faculty and Staff
Engaging Faculty and Staff: For the long haul

How?

- Get creative
  - Goal of the week
  - Trivial Pursuit ®
  - Brainstorming race
  - Virtual scavenger hunt for documents/policies
  - Taboo ®
  - Link checking “party”
Engaging Faculty and Staff: 
For the long haul

- How?

  - Recognize and utilize their expertise
    - More than 20 volunteers read drafts of parts of the report
      - Editing/proofreading
      - Feedback
Engaging Faculty and Staff: For the long haul

- **How?**
  - Say “thank you”
  - Update people on progress toward the goal
## CEA Self-Study: Track our Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Projected Date</th>
<th>Done!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Form Steering Committee (SC)</td>
<td>25 April 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appoint subcommittees and chairs and assign standards</td>
<td>25 April 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Present overview of process to faculty</td>
<td>28 April 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Initial Meeting of Steering Committee</td>
<td>2 May 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Submit Self-study plan</td>
<td>17 June 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Present overview of process to new faculty</td>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>First planning meetings of subcommittees</td>
<td>16 September 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Second planning meetings of subcommittees</td>
<td>30 September 2011</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Work time and meetings for subcommittees and working groups (e.g. Curriculum Committees)</td>
<td>October 2011-February 2012</td>
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<td>Progress report presentation at faculty meeting</td>
<td>December 2011</td>
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<td>Subcommittees submit supporting documents</td>
<td>January-February 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Self-study coordinator sends first drafts of responses to sections A. and B. of all standards EXCEPT Curriculum, Length and Structure, and Student Achievement to Steering Committee for subcommittees to review</td>
<td>February 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-study coordinator sends first drafts of responses to sections A. and B. of remaining standards for subcommittees to review</td>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open faculty meetings to review drafts and provide feedback</td>
<td>April 2012</td>
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<td>Subcommittees submit revisions of sections A. and B. and first drafts of section C.</td>
<td>May 2012</td>
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<td>General faculty/staff meeting to discuss recommendations</td>
<td>May 2012</td>
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<td>Subcommittees submit final revisions</td>
<td>Summer 2012</td>
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<td>Compilation of Final Self-study Report</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Editorial Review</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submit Self-study report to CEA</td>
<td>1 November 2012</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Site visit</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
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<td>CEA makes decision on Reaccreditation</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>✔</td>
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**Notes:**
- ✔ indicates the activity has been completed.
- The table includes all key dates and milestones for the CEA Self-Study process, detailing activities, projected dates, and completion status.
**Organizational Tip:**
Charts and check-lists are your friends

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**CEA Re-accreditation 2012**

**Task List for Subcommittees**

Things you and your Subcommittee are responsible for in the CEA Re-accreditation process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1 | Understand the CEA Standards that are assigned to your Subcommittee. This includes the following information:  
   - CEA Standards  
   - The Discussion and Context that accompany the standards  
   - The Required Responses (part A) for each Standard in the Self-Study Template  
| 2 | Clean up/organize the W drive for your area and **maintain this organization** into the future.                  | Initial Clean-up: January 2012, 
Maintenance: Ongoing                  |
| 3 | Go through the Document Guide by Standard and make a list of what documents the ELP has and where they are located. | January-February 2012           |
### Organizational Tip:
Charts and check-lists are your friends

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
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<td>X 4--incomplete draft (pending conversation w/ Kris)</td>
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</table>
Lessons Learned

Along the way

Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned
Along the way

5. Set priorities.
Advantages of “leading from the periphery”:

- A different perspective or a “better view from the edge of the circle. Sometimes being farther away enables you to see things more clearly.”

- If you’re leading from the front, “it is almost impossible to see clearly what is happening behind your back.”

Curtis, 2013
Setting priorities and managing performance

Keep track of who needs to know what
…and then tell them

- Make sure they know
- Check on completion/follow-up
Setting priorities and managing performance

- Focus on creating the conditions for success rather than actively managing individual causal factors
  - Site visit example

“[H]ave the basic conditions established such that the natural course of events leads to the desired outcomes.”

Hackman, 2002
Setting priorities and managing performance

### CEA Self-Study Steering Committee

#### Tasks and Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee Meeting on 30 August 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create list of tasks for Subcommittee Chairs</td>
<td>Ketty</td>
<td>8 September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October Survey as part of C&amp;A Review process</td>
<td>Leena</td>
<td>November 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up database reports as part of C&amp;A Review process</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Tabled while iSIS project is underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up appointments with Subcommittee Chairs to lay the groundwork for subcommittee work</td>
<td>Ketty</td>
<td>1 September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile data for LSPS 2 and SA 1 Worksheet</td>
<td>Leena</td>
<td>Ongoing activity; data should be collected for each semester beginning with Spring 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put copy of Worksheet for LSPS 2 and SA 1 in folders for Subcommittee 2 and 3</td>
<td>Ketty</td>
<td>31 August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss dates and plan for Subcommittee Meetings</td>
<td>Ketty, Bev, Abby, and Leena</td>
<td>7 September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting on 12 September 2011</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get copies of Site Review Team report made for Abby and Leena</td>
<td>Ketty</td>
<td>19 September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If necessary, set up separate to-do lists for each subcommittee</td>
<td>Ketty w/ input from chairs</td>
<td>Drafts created: 11 October 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Tip:
Approach meeting prep like class prep

- Be as prepared as you would before standing in front of a group of students
- Have clear objectives in mind
Organizational Tip:
Allow people to walk into meetings “guilt-free”

- Provide whatever handouts are needed for the meeting, even if you’ve already handed them out in the past
Lessons Learned
Along the way

“…waiting is work…”

Hackman, 2002
Lessons Learned
Along the way

"Any activity becomes creative when the doer cares about doing it right, or better."

John Updike
Lessons Learned
Along the way

“…there is always a choice. But it takes the courage of informed conviction, plus a good measure of willingness to innovate and experiment, to find ways to exercise that choice that can simultaneously harvest the diverse contributions of team members and foster efficient collective action.”

Hackman, 2002
Organizational Tip:
Back-up files early and often
And in a secure location
Organizational Tip:
It’s not over till it’s over
Be ready for last-minute tech disasters
Did it work?

“Well done is better than well said.”
Ben Franklin
How did we do?
“a culture of continued improvement”

- Revised review cycles
- Currently undergoing “Program Review”
“positive change”

- Shared network clean-up and organization
- Website updating
- Re-organization and updating of Program Handbook
- Updated Student Handbook
- Revised process for handling student complaints
- Re-worked procedure for approving official policies
- Created Advisor Handbook
- Summer schedule increased to 18 hours
  - Addressed end-of-summer placement problems as well as standards
  - Extensive investment in better data management (integrated with University’s PeopleSoft system)
How did we do?
“10-year re-accreditation”
“Life is a journey, not a destination.”
References

Activities and Resources

- Brainstorming Race (
  http://adulted.about.com/od/icebreakers/qt/brainstormrace.htm)
- Bullet Journal (http://www.bulletjournal.com)
- Effectiveness Institute (http://www.effectivenessinstitute.com)
- What makes good collaboration? 10 Real World Tips (http://www.thoughtfarmer.com/blog/good-collaboration-10-tips/)
Digital Records Naming and Management Resources

- Digital Records information from the State Archives of North Carolina
  

  
  http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/systems/digitalinitiatives/docs/filenameguidelines.pdf

- Naming Conventions for Electronic Documents from the Information Management Branch of the Government of Alberta
  
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A version of this presentation will be posted online:
http://www.k-state.edu/elp/professional_presentations/
http://tinyurl.com/pfvxf9p