TracDat:
Introduction to the roll-out for educational program chairs

KAREN H NELSON
FEBRUARY 2011
TracDat – an archive and reporting system

- Is a systematic approach that establishes a common understanding and language regarding institutional goals and success in achieving them;
- It allows us to define and align goals among all levels of the institution and compile information;
- We will document how results are used to improve programs and learning – for ourselves and others;
- You will ultimately be able to develop, review and revise your work in TracDat from any Web browser.
What makes a system like this necessary?

- **Pressures locally:**
  - Board of trustees
  - Institutional advancement
  - Institutional enrollment

- **Pressures nationally and regionally:**
  - Federal requirements regarding consumer information
  - National competition among liberal arts institutions
  - SACS -- we don’t have until 2019 (our next decennial review) but in 2014 will submit a 5th year review
    - 3.3.1.1 assessment of educational programs including at least three cycles, multiple methods of assessing each outcome – we will need to have the evidence by fall of 2013.
My purpose today

- Show you what TracDat looks like in broad terms as well as in educational programs;
- Illustrate what has been (or will be) loaded into TracDat for your program;
- Introduce the curriculum mapping exercise;
- Answer your questions.
Curriculum Mapping: Key questions

- How does the institution ensure that each of its degree programs demonstrates coherence in sequencing, increasing complexity, and linkages between and among program components? (SACS-COC, 2005, p. 12)

- A curriculum map is a visual representation of the structure of a program curriculum

- The map charts the relationship between courses, activities, and assessments in relation to intended outcomes
Alternative notions of “structure” in curriculum mapping

- A structure to engage in collective dialogue about the curriculum, instruction and student learning
- A deliberate process of curriculum deconstruction in order to better understand how the sum of the parts relates to the whole
- Representation of the underlying logic of curricular design
- The intellectual linkage that makes forty courses a story of learning
- An advance organizer – a set of principles or propositions that provide students with a cognitive structure to guide learning
Why can’t you just dive in?

• TracDat is a lot like Datatel;
• The curriculum mapping exercise *simply* asks you to identify where a program outcome is introduced, reinforced, and assessed;
• You will see your program mission and intended outcomes;
• They may not reflect your current views;
• There is no point in mapping your curriculum to old and inappropriate goals.
If I’m lucky, what next?

- When you open your program in TracDat, you may be pleased with the mission statement and goals you had provided in the past;
- You will look at the goals and easily envision where in your curriculum student learning outcomes are introduced, reinforced and assessed;
- Then you will plan to work with your department on how to enter other assessment evidence you have collected.
What if I am not so lucky?

- When you look at the mission statement for the program and/or the goals, you will **not** be pleased;
- You will look at the documents we have placed in your documents file and the courses we have uploaded and realize **you have a lot to think about**;
- You will want to print a number of screens and documents and **make plans for the spring**.
How can Karen help?

- Work with you during a session later this month;
- Meet with you and/or your department to talk about what needs to be done;
- Suggest ways in which your program goals seem to relate to the mission, general education, and strategic planning goals;
- Continue to meet with you as you need help during the spring or summer.
How TracDat changes things -- why it’s worth it

- You used to send things to IR that got loaded onto an IR server and you never saw them again;
- TracDat creates your personal archive of important documents and information;
- It enables Marjorie and senior leadership to extract data across programs without bothering you at all;
- It ensures that you hold the “big picture” in mind at least once a year -- why is what you do critical to our achieving the mission of Austin College?