PRESENT: Jeanne Butler, Tim Burkink, Andrea Childress, Karin Covalt, Mary Daake, Rick Miller, Glen Powell, Kim Schipporeit, Sarah von Schrader, Mary Sommers, and Gail Zeller

ABSENT: Donna Alden and Daryl Kelley

New members Andrea Childress, Director of Information Systems in the Division of Information Technology, and Mary Sommers, Director of Financial Aid, were introduced to the Committee. In addition, Chair Butler congratulated Sarah von Schrader on receiving her Ph.D.

Old Business:

At the last meeting, Shelly Haberlan’s presentation was about the unified college assessment data base being built in the College of Education. The committee discussed ways of working with COE to help develop a university-wide database for assessment.

Butler then asked the Committee if they had thought of any issues connected with a campus-wide database, either pro or con. Miller felt it was important that end users have an opportunity to provide input at all phases of building the databases and that definitions of data must mean the same to all.

Schipporeit explained that their office provides two types of data: census data is taken at a specific time each year (currently done on first day of classes, sixth day of classes, and upon grading) and can be compared annually. Snapshot data is based on live data and will change with each entry. When someone wants a quick report from the Registrar’s office, it is based on snapshot (i.e., live) data.

Although Student Services does not assess academic outcomes, their data is still relevant to retention, etc. The things that have an impact on student success should be accessible to decision-makers (departments, deans, VCs, etc.) for resolving issues related to student success. The question was raised of whether Kathy Livingston would be on the committee. However, the office of Institutional Data does not deal with assessment data, i.e., student outcomes and student success. She assembles, rather than generates, data requested by outside sources.

Burkink reported that the College of Business and Technology has a college-wide database called Sedona for AACSB accreditation. It is basically for faculty activity, i.e., teaching, scholarship and service. It was suggested that perhaps Bob Young could come and talk to the committee about it at the next meeting (January).
In the future, it should be possible for program and departmental assessment reports to be submitted on-line, but at present they are in narrative form that is emailed to the Assessment Office. When fields are determined and information is submitted in those fields, information can be entered in a database for the purpose of campus-wide sharing of information. Guidelines were given this year for submitting assessment reports. This was an initial step in making reports more comprehensive and comparable across departments. From submission to review and editing and then putting the reports on-line using Ektron is a huge undertaking. Online submittal would reduce this effort.

New Business:

Butler & von Schrader attended the IUPUI Assessment Conference in October. Butler mentioned that one of the interesting new trends is to put all accreditation materials on-line rather than utilizing hard copies in a room full of binders.

At the conference, von Schrader attended a workshop on “New Rules Call for New Tools: Accreditation and Electronic Institutional Portfolios”. The workshop was presented by two professors who had received a grant to study this topic. von Schrader accessed the IUPUI website and shared a handout she received at the workshop. IUPUI had three main foci for their accreditation, i.e. teaching and learning, civic engagement, and research, scholarship and creative activity. They developed an institutional portfolio wherein all reports are on the website and can be accessed by anyone interested. Twelve computers were available to the accreditation team for their convenience in accessing university reports and assessment data. Student portfolios were also developed; a speech was shown as an example wherein the student’s speech could be heard along with the comments and critique of her instructor and peers.

Butler shared a copy of an interview with Margaret Spelling, Secretary of Education and head of the Spellings commission. She is a supporter of “no child left behind”, and feels that assessment of educational institutions should be more standardized and transparent. Trudy Banta, known for her work in assessment, has reminded people that this concept was set up in the mid-80s and failed; was again pushed and failed in the mid-90s. It was determined to be cost prohibitive and a logistical nightmare.

Some of the NE Regents are pushing the CLA as a standardized test that could be used to assess how each institution in NE is doing in teaching their students. It is important that we be aware that this is a proposed initiative, as it could have a huge impact on faculty and institutions.

There were several software vendors attending the assessment conference that have applications for institutional portfolios and student e-portfolios. We may have some of these groups provide demonstrations of the software at future meetings.

Butler proposed setting up subcommittees to divide the work that is before the committee. Three suggestions for subcommittees included: 1) campus-wide databases
[Powell & Childress volunteered]; 2) identification of assessment data to be collected (which the committee felt had been accomplished last year and just needed updating); (3) identifying key data being collected that could be used by decision makers and in planning. [Burkink, Miller & Daake volunteered]. The strategic plan handout from August 2006 was made available for committee members if they did not have a copy. Butler advised that she will confirm committee composition by e-mail. She would like to organize these committees as soon as possible so the first meetings of these subcommittees can take place in December in place of the regular full committee meeting.

The next regular meeting of the entire committee will be on Monday, January 11, 2007, at 3 p.m. in Founders Hall Room 2147.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.