Keeping up with the Credentialing

Session Overview

- Introductions
- Motivation & Origin of Valencia's System
- Faculty Credentialing Procedures
- Management and Documentation
- Accreditation Compliance
- Ongoing Issues & Next Steps
- Questions & Additional Discussion
Introductions

Darren Smith
- Heads Valencia’s IE department, dealing with strategic planning, accreditation with SACSCOC, and faculty credentialing
- Serves as Chair of Valencia’s Credentials Oversight Committee
- Has been at Valencia College for 2.5 years

Noelia Maldonado Rodriguez
- Coordinates Valencia’s faculty credentialing process and records.
- Has been at Valencia College for 11 years

About Valencia College
- Founded as a community college, now offers a wide range of Associate and Bachelor degrees
- Located in Orange and Osceola Counties in central Florida
- Serves more than 60,000 students
- Eight campuses divided into three regions
  - Each region is led by a Campus President; smaller campuses have an Executive Dean
- Last decennial reaffirmation was in 2014
Motivation

- Valencia’s last decennial reaffirmation was in 2014
- Numerous faculty were flagged for additional review by the off-site team (surprise!)
- Most issues were resolved by the time of the on-site visit, but this required a huge push to get missing or outdated documentation in order to present additional evidence
- This led to college-wide discussions about a new system/approach, coordinated centrally

Issues with Previous System

- Done by regional HR staff and individual Deans, so there was quite a bit of variation in process and record-keeping
- Regional interpretations of qualification guidelines led to inconsistency in how faculty credentials were reviewed and approved
- Frequently, faculty wouldn’t go through the credential process until after they had already been in the classroom for a semester (or more)
New System Outline

- The new system established a centralized mechanism to conduct the faculty credentialing process

- Established a Credentials Oversight Committee, comprised of Deans and faculty with a range of disciplinary and regional representation from across the College, chaired by the SACSOC liaison

- Deans initiate a credential application on behalf of the faculty they supervise

- One of two subgroups of the Committee reviews the application and votes to approve (or not) the faculty’s qualifications as sufficient to meet requirements

Workflow

**New Faculty:**
- Hiring

**Existing Faculty:**
- New Degree/Level
- Credentialing for courses not already included

**Credentialing Committee Review:**
- Traditional
- Alternative

**Approval**

**Campus President Final Approval**

**Human Resources/ Payroll**

**Disapproval**

Faculty not approved for credentialing; **NOTE:** faculty should not be assigned to teach courses for which they are not credentialed
Workflow, continued

- A Dean fills out one of two application forms: traditional or alternative (more on this in a moment)
- The application details the faculty member’s academic or other qualifications that demonstrate qualification to teach courses (either individually or in a discipline)

Workflow, continued

- The credentialing coordinator checks the application and supporting documentation (usually a transcript at minimum) and sends it for review to the relevant Committee members

- Committee members may request additional information, in which case the coordinator collects items from submitting Deans or pulls data from existing records.

- If approved, the application is forwarded to the corresponding Campus President, then to Human Resources for employee records updates
Credentials Oversight Committee

Composition of Committee: Faculty, Deans, and other administrators from all regions of the College
- Currently 9 members (2 positions vacant)

Two Groups:
- Traditional (TC) – 4 members (Chair + 1 Dean from each region)
  - Reviews applications for faculty whose academic qualifications meet established discipline credentialing requirements
  - Unanimous voting for approval
- Alternative (AC) – full Committee
  - Reviews applications for faculty whose qualifications are non-academic or whose academic qualifications don’t match established requirements
  - Majority voting for approval (Chair only votes in cases of a tie or to override a decision)

Voting Process
- Applications are sent (via email) to the relevant committee members, who review the submitted documentation for completeness in demonstrating faculty qualifications
- There is frequent discussion, particularly for AC votes, that is captured as part of the record and can be helpful
- Ultimate decision is the Chair’s, as that signature is required to move the form along in the process
  - This is one reason the Chair is the SACSCOC liaison; helps to avoid issues later on where an approval would be hard to reconcile with accreditation guidelines
Management and Documentation

- Coordinator acts as the central interface between the Deans (regional) and the Committee
- Each application is numbered and details are saved in a spreadsheet for easy tracking if questions arise later
  - TC & AC requests are numbered and recorded separately
- Application packets generally contain all the necessary supporting documentation should a SACSCOC reviewer wish to see the qualifications of any particular faculty member

Creating the Faculty Roster Form

- Information collected on the application process provides (most of) what’s needed to fill in the faculty roster form template
- Some additional information from HR and from the College Catalog are required but are relatively easy to access (e.g., faculty FT/PT status)
- The AC process is particularly important here, because it provides the information and documentation needed for Column 4 in cases where there isn’t an obvious match between course assignments and academic qualifications
Creating the Faculty Roster Form, Cont.

Ongoing Issues

- Credentialing is a post-hire process at Valencia; occasionally a faculty member may receive an offer letter but not get approved in the credentialing process
  - Also, it’s not initiated automatically so there are still sometimes faculty who haven’t been through the process prior to teaching assignments

- Although centralization has helped, there are still issues with regional interpretation that can cause problems that need to be addressed

- Responsibility for maintaining official documentation is sometimes unclear

- With the current 5-signature form and communications via email, sometimes workflow steps can linger
Next Steps

Fully digital transition

- In 2016, Valencia began using a system call Xitracs for a variety of purposes, one of which is faculty credentialing
- This system allows for entry of faculty records needed to complete the faculty roster form, allows us to create application forms, and has workflow tools to manage this process more efficiently (we hope)
- Still working on troubleshooting the workflows we’ve set up and on how to sort through decades of historical data and records to get them into the system

Questions & Additional Discussions
Contact Information

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