

Summary of Meeting of Task Force on Evaluation,  
Accountability and Measurement  
(Monday, November 3, 10:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

1. We met Monday, November 3rd. Susan Birnie, David Capson, Andrea Farquahar, Mita Giacomini, David Hitchcock, Aine Leadbetter, Jennifer McKinnell, Bob McNutt, Karen Menard, Jackie Osterman and Mike Veall were able to attend. Note that Bradd Hart has withdrawn from the Task Force because he is on research leave.

2. After reintroductions, there was some discussion of the report that the Chair had issued during the summer. At the next meeting, the Chair will ask whether the Task Force would like to adopt that as its report. Any members of the Task Force who will be unable to attend the next meeting are asked to contact the Chair if they have objections to any part of the report.

3. The next point of discussion was the obvious: "How do we move forward?" One member described the issue as wanting to know what the endgame looked like. It was suggested that if that were understood, it would be clearer what the current goals should be.

A related issue was that there was still uncertainty as to how our task force fit in with other task forces, particularly the alternative budget model task force. One view is that the alternative budget model will likely leave some discretionary funding to be targeted to units of particular "quality". Our task force could then be seen as recommending how that "quality" might be discerned. While there was discussion of what such a resource allocation process might look like and whether it would involve closing units, it was pointed out evaluating quality would make sense even if there were no resource shifting at all, as a means of improving resource use within the existing allocation and diagnosing what might be causing any quality shortfalls.

Finally, it was emphasized that the University will likely continue to receive external pressure from the Province to assess quality, so to some extent the current effort is to try to be proactive in that respect.

4. There was some discussion as to whether the Task Force should concentrate on one type of unit at a time or proceed on all fronts at once.

5. The main conclusion was that we needed to meet again with the Provost to discuss these points. She has agreed to attend the next meeting. The Chair of the Task Force will also discuss with the Provost how the Task Force can ensure that it is fulfilling its terms of reference with respect to all units (administrative, academic, administrative/academic, research groups and institutes), perhaps by meeting with other members of the Administration.

Karen Menard agreed to create an outline for the Task Force of what we might do (by comparisons with other universities, perhaps by using the G-10 or G-13 data) to meet the goals that pertain to the assessment of the University as a whole.

We also discussed the possibility of finding some small number of academic departments (perhaps only one) willing to volunteer to pilot the process of setting its evaluation criteria.