AIEC Meeting Summary

Date: March 2, 2026
Chair: Sara-Beth Bittinger
Guest: President Darlene B. Smith

Attendees
Sara-Beth Bittinger
Janet A Mattern
Latisha V Cooper
Jennifer M Walsh
Jeffrey L Graham
Keith E Terry
John Lombardi
Lei Ye
Randall A Lowe
Jessica Grater
Sean Morton
Tim Pelesky
Yum Nguyen
Seniz Celimli-Aksoy
Darlene B Smith

Purpose of Discussion

The meeting focused on proposed revisions to the **Institutional Effectiveness Committee (AIEC) Charter** and the **Institutional Effectiveness Plan**, specifically aligning institutional assessment processes with the university's **Objectives and Key Results (OKR) framework** while ensuring compliance with Middle States standards.

Key Themes and Decisions

1. Shift Toward Efficiency and Alignment

President Smith emphasized the need to reduce redundant reporting processes and better align institutional effectiveness activities with existing OKR planning.

Key intentions include:

- Moving **analysis and reporting responsibility to divisional leadership (VPs and Deans)**.
- Eliminating unnecessary unit-level reporting directly to AIEC.
- Positioning AIEC as a **strategic review and advisory body**, rather than a compliance or report-collection entity.

The revised structure prioritizes:

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Timely decision-making
- Meaningful assessment rather than compliance-driven reporting.

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2. Revised Assessment Timeline

The committee supported adjusting the institutional review cycle:

New Proposed Cycle

- **Mid-Year Review (January):**
  - Assess progress toward OKRs
  - Identify barriers and resource needs
  - Inform budget and planning decisions
- **End-of-Year Review (June–July):**
  - Comprehensive annual assessment
  - Immediate integration into next academic year planning

Members agreed this timeline enables actionable feedback rather than delayed retrospective reporting.

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3. Role Clarification

Discussion clarified institutional responsibilities:

Level	Responsibility
Departments/Units	Execute priorities and report internally
Deans & Vice Presidents	Collect, synthesize, and ensure alignment
AIEC	Review divisional outcomes and provide institutional recommendations
Cabinet/Leadership	Accountability through performance evaluation

Consensus emerged that AIEC **should not conduct micro-level review** of unit reports.

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4. Education and Communication Gap

A major concern identified across members was inconsistent understanding of:

- OKR expectations
- Metrics vs. activities
- Alignment between unit, college, and institutional goals
- Reporting standards

Members agreed successful implementation will require:

- Campus-wide education and training
- Standardized communication
- Clear expectations regarding reporting scope and format

Some participants recommended formalizing **AIEC's role in institutional education and guidance related to effectiveness processes and specificity of who and how should be addressed in charter and IE plan**. The chair cannot lead the entire process.

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5. Transition Year Acknowledgement (FY26)

The committee recognized FY26 as a **transition year** following adoption of the OKR framework.

Proposed FY26 AIEC report narrative will include:

- Transition to OKR-based planning
- Process evaluation and refinement
- Identification of communication and training needs
- Recommendations to inform FY27 planning and resource allocation

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6. Committee Structure Considerations

Members recommended:

- Extending or staggering committee terms beyond two years to preserve institutional knowledge.
- Updating outdated charter language.

- Clarifying membership continuity expectations.

Emerging Recommendations for FY27

Preliminary direction for the AIEC annual report includes:

- Update and approve revised Charter and Institutional Effectiveness Plan.
- Establish structured campus education on OKRs and reporting expectations.
- Support leadership alignment from university priorities through unit implementation.
- Reinforce linkage between assessment outcomes and fiscal planning.
- Continue strengthening Middle States evidence of planning, assessment, and closing the loop.

Overall Outcome

Members broadly supported the proposed framework changes.
The committee acknowledged that while the transition reduces AIEC's operational control, it strengthens institutional accountability through leadership ownership and integrated planning.