ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
CORRECTED APPROVED MINUTES
April 14, 2004

Members Present
Lloyd Ambrosius                   Jeffrey F Keown                   Nancy Mitchell
David B Brinkerhoff              Richard M Kettler                 William J Nunez
Sarah J. Morris                  Marjorie J Kostelnik              Barry T Rosson
Matthew C Hansen                 Ronald E Lee                     Wendy R Weiss

Members Absent
Derrel L Martin                  John C Owens
Cynthia H Milligan               Prem Paul

Others Present
Alan E Baquet, Associate Vice Chancellor, IANR (for John Owens)
Sarah B Campbell, Former Undergraduate APC Representative
Rita C Kean, Dean, Undergraduate Studies
Michael J Zeleny, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Research
Douglas R. Beals, Facilities Planner, Facilities Planning & Construction

Rosson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. The minutes for March 10 were approved as submitted.

New Members
Rosson announced that Professors Susan Hallbeck of Industrial and Management Systems Engineering and Deborah Minter of English were recently elected to APC. Minter represents APC this year on the Curriculum Committee. Jack Oliva, Dean of Fine and Performing Arts, will replace Dean Milligan on APC. The new faculty and dean terms will begin August 1, 2004.

Campbell introduced Sarah Morris, the new Undergraduate Student Representative. Morris majors in English and Political Science and is in the Pre-Law program. Rosson welcomed Morris to the APC. He announced Matt Hansen’s reappointment as the Graduate Student Representative and thanked him for his excellent service to APC during the past year.

Report from the Transition to the University Task Force

The Task Force held a series of focus groups during fall semester 2003. Over 150 undergraduates participated. Students were asked about their expectations of college prior to coming and the kinds of experiences they had at UNL. The most successful students were those who had made connections with faculty. Meetings with advisors also contributed to success. Few students remembered the content of the New Student Experience (NSE) that occurred during the summer prior to their freshman year, but
many remembered their group leaders. Even such basic information as the importance of attending classes was lost on many students. Few students knew the advantages of attending a major research university. Weiss said she had found students need to have an exploratory approach in any course they take. She said NSO staff could inform students that faculty expect them to go beyond the bare bones on their assignments.

The Task Force also talked to the Century Club, faculty who teach classes of more than 75 students. Many members of the Century Club are Senior Lecturers. They enjoy teaching large classes and are good at it. However, they believe other faculty members do not respect their work. Some colleges do not give lecturers a voice in faculty governance. Senior Lecturers want more recognition of their role in orienting new students. The Century Club members agree that quality advising is very important. Advising among the colleges is uneven and should be more uniform.

The Freshman Experience Task Force recommended a charter seminar: a content-based course giving an overview of the discipline early in students’ college career. One freshman course in each department might be enhanced to make it a signature course. The Library 110 course required of all freshmen could be made more specific to different disciplines. Other recommendations for more student engagement are study abroad, curriculum-driven registration systems, and requiring deans and other administrators to teach classes from time to time to keep in touch with students. Kean said there are differences between departments that would impact the point at which a signature course for the discipline should be taught. Brinkerhoff said relating the course content to jobs or to seminars on current issues would be helpful but is not typical of a survey course.

The Freshmen Experience Task Force found that students often change majors six or seven times, and need to explore options. Lee said many courses in Communication Studies acquaint students with the communication field, but not at the freshman level. He said many students don’t declare a major in the first year. Kean agreed that exploration was appropriate for the first year in college.

Some recommendations of the Task Force would be easy to accomplish and fairly inexpensive. First, there should be continuing engagement by email with the New Student Orientation (NSO) leader through at least the first half of the first semester of the freshman year. The fourth week of class should be a checkpoint where new students are contacted by their former NSO leaders and meet their advisors. The Task Force wants advisors to keep in contact with their advisees by Blackboard. Resident Assistants also should encourage students to keep in touch with their advisors. Mid-semester grade reports should be reinstated and freshmen performance should be evaluated no later than the sixth week of classes. Those who have no feedback until the tenth week of classes often do not realize they are in trouble until it is too late to salvage their academic work for the semester.

Kean said General Studies has been very successful in keeping students in school. However, 20 percent of GS students are juniors and seniors who should have declared a major by that point in their college career. Somehow GS needs to push upper-level students out of the nest to make room for first- and second-year students. Enrollment management is needed to make General Education classes more accessible, and to make course enrollment more sequential.

The Task Force recommends replacing the Summer Read for Honor Students with events such as the E.N. Thompson Forum where students and faculty can mingle and discuss issues. Learning communities, both resident and non-resident, are good for retention, at least into the sophomore year. Their effect on longer-term retention is being investigated. [Bateman arrived.]
Lee asked what recommendations in the report were specific to connecting undergraduate students with the research activities of the university. Kean said the Task Force wants faculty to share their endeavors of discovery and application of research with undergraduate students. Rosson said that faculty should participate in engaging undergraduate students in their research, but that would mean changing the way we view our traditional teaching and research duties. Lee said disciplinary research is more appropriate for upper-level courses.

Kean said research requirements wouldn’t be practical for every discipline, but courses shouldn’t be all facts and data, either. Faculty have a responsibility to revise courses and change teaching methods in order to raise the level of student involvement. Rosson asked what the next step would be to move the Task Force’s recommendations along. Kean said there will be meetings with faculty, deans and chairs. They will be encouraged to look at possibilities and break down barriers to student involvement.

Brinkerhoff said the Comprehensive Education Program is in its initial stages of campus discussions. The Undergraduate Dean is working toward consensus on best practices. Some things, like increased NSO involvement, are easy to implement. Forging core-course experiences, getting students to be more sequential in their coursework, and managing enrollment take more work and planning but are also needed. Rosson added that something needs to be done about students pre-registering for classes without ever seeing an advisor. Kean said students might be required to go to their advisors to get PIN numbers for on-line registration. Kean invited APC members to send suggestions to her by email or to call her. She left the meeting.

**Independent Study High School**

Bateman distributed a report on enrollment, tuition, and programs of the ISHS. A status report on the high school, including its profitability and competition, was also distributed. The ISHS is fully accredited and has been serving high school students for 75 years. Since the Division of Continuing Studies was disbanded in 2002 it has been under the supervision of Jim Main, Associate Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance. In July, 2003 it was integrated into Extended Education and Outreach under the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. It is expected to be self-supporting except for the use of facilities. Bateman said enrollments are down ten percent from 2002-03 but are still at a high enough level to break even by the end of the fiscal year. [Kostelnik arrived.]

Students may obtain their diploma from the ISHS, or may supplement their curriculum. Fifty-one courses are offered online, and 105 are presented through printed materials and CD. Twenty-six percent of the ISHS market is diploma students and the remainder are supplementing their curriculum. In Nebraska, 108 high schools supplement their curriculum with ISHS courses. Fifty-four percent of ISHS students are enrolled in private or public high schools, eighteen percent are home-schooled, ten percent attend learning centers, five percent are children of government or missionary personnel stationed abroad, five percent are international students, and the remaining eight percent are in various other situations. Tuition is $150 to $250 per course.

Other university-based programs, state-run programs, and private, for-profit programs compete for students. [Zeleny arrived.] A benefit of the ISHS is the creation of an image of UNL with students and parents. There is a new course management system called “Way Cool” that allows students and proctors to view course content, submit tests online, and view grades. Other schools are copying the “Way Cool” system. Not only is it attractive to students and schools, it allows better service and is more economical than traditional, labor-intensive course management.
Weiss asked how courses are developed. Bateman said the ISHS contracts with high school teachers and instructional designers. Keown asked if UNL faculty develop ISHS courses. Bateman said except for a few courses being developed through the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) the courses are designed and taught by high school teachers. In CASNR’s case, there is the intention to teach the courses for college credit. Bateman also said the only ISHS Advanced Placement course at present is an AP history course. He said the AP history course is a test of the market for AP courses. Rosson thanked Bateman for his briefing. [Bateman and Zeleny left.]

Charge to the Long-Range Planning Subcommittee

Keown told APC that the LRPS had received information on faculty tenure and graduate assistants from Institutional Research and Planning. He wants the subcommittee to meet and discuss the information before presenting it to the APC. He said there were only a few inconsistencies in tenure homes out of the entire faculty, and most of those were assignments in the Agricultural Research Centers. Nunez suggested giving the list of exceptions to the expected tenure homes to the appropriate deans for them to straighten out. He wanted to determine whether the exceptions were systematic errors or individual cases. Ambrosius agreed that questions of tenure should be taken to the deans before APC considers them. Kostelnik and Baquet looked at the list and found the exceptions in their units could be explained. Rosson agreed that the deans should have the opportunity to make corrections before APC discusses the list.

Lee said APC should recommend that tenure homes be determined in a consistent manner. He asked if it was a problem to have people in Research and Extension centers have tenure in academic departments. Ambrosius said he didn’t see it as a problem. Kettler asked whether President Smith’s letter of a year ago about tenure is relevant. Kostelnik said the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs wrote a memo stating that faculty tenure would be maintained in new units. Because the memo did not name a particular unit or level of tenure, she said she imagined that would be true in any restructuring at UNL, not just for Human Resources and Family Sciences. She said universities are changing and have a variety of structures. Tenure homes may need to be considered differently in the future.

Rosson charged the Long-Range Planning Subcommittee with preparing a white paper for the annual meeting of APC on May 12. He wants it to include the graduate research and teaching assistant studies and comparisons with UNL’s peers as well as information on tenure and tenure-track faculty.

Kostelnik asked what processes are being used to edit and clean up data. Nunez said many errors come from departments’ processing of PAFs. He said it is each department’s responsibility to assure their own data are correct. Rosson said deans could easily review tenure locations annually based on reports generated from IRP. Kostelnik said it would be easy to combine that task with other annual tenure tasks. [Zeleny and Beals arrived.]

Project Initiation Request for a Modular Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory on East Campus

Nunez introduced the PIR. The PIR subcommittee received copies of the PIR a few days before the meeting. Photos and layouts of the proposed facility were distributed to all those present. Nunez said the laboratory would be about 1800 to 2000 square feet. The choices were to have a freestanding unit or one that is attached to the Veterinary Diagnostic Center. The laboratory is to be located on a part of East Campus that would not be accessible to students, visitors or the public. Access to the laboratory will be tightly controlled with multiple levels of security, including a security fence that is already in
place. Nunez said the BSL-3 lab is needed for NIH-funded research that is already underway. He said the project fits into the Strategic Plan and the Campus Master Plan. [Brinkerhoff left.]

Zeleny said two researchers, Cirillo and Barletta, would not be able to complete their work at UNL without a BSL-3 facility. He said it would be the first true BSL-3 on campus. Beside Cirillo and Barletta’s work, biosecurity research with infectious agents needs the lab. Zeleny said it would be less expensive to construct the lab as a free-standing unit. Nunez said funding of $1.4 to $1.5 million would be provided through the Office of Research. Zeleny added that other funds would come from IANR, tobacco settlement funds and research grants.

Zeleny said the facility would be permanent with normal maintenance and is part of a long-term plan. He said the Virology Center will need BSL-3 lab facilities. Mitchell asked whether one could be built in Beadle. Beals said adding a BSL-3 lab to an existing structure would be very expensive and the construction would take longer. Lee asked about security for the lab. Zeleny said it would have a security fence, shower in-and-out facilities, and additional police attention. Other details would be determined during the programming phase of the project. Keown said he thought a stand-alone option would be best. Nunez said it would be more expandable if additional space is needed.

Mitchell asked why the PIR was presented to the subcommittee on such short notice. Zeleny said two star faculty members are thinking about leaving if they don’t get the facility, and the Colorado company that is bidding could begin construction immediately. Kostelnik said UNL needs the facility even if the two faculty members mentioned were to leave. Weiss asked whether the facility would be outdated by technology changes. Beals said the intention is to over-build to allow for future needs. Zeleny emphasized that the laboratory is not just for two faculty members. He said the PIR for the Virology Center is coming to APC later in the month. That facility will take three years to build. The modular BSL-3 facility should be ready six months from the time the footings are done, so laboratory space will be available 2 ½ years before the Virology Center is ready. Lee asked who would be using it if Cirillo and Barletta leave. Beals said it will be put to immediate use. Some grant proposals have not been submitted because there is no BSL-3 facility available. Baquet said it is important to stay on the cutting edge of technology to obtain funding.

Motion
The PIR Subcommittee, Mitchell, Nunez and Weiss, recommended that the project proceed to the planning stage. The APC voted without dissent to endorse the PIR. [Beals, Baquet and Zeleny left.]

Academic Program Review Report Criteria
APR reports submitted to the APR Subcommittee since February 2003 were distributed to the APC members. Rosson requested the Committee’s opinion on what should be included in the APC representatives report. He said APC does not evaluate all programs at the university. Many colleges undergo accreditation visits, but don’t undergo the same APR process. He said while the self-study procedure is being revised APC should address the lack of oversight of these other reviews. He said the subcommittee should dig deeper into this issue and provide a recommendation.

Kostelnik said her college appreciated its APR being combined with the national accreditation visit. She said together the reviews covered more aspects of the college than each alone would have. She said that units should be allowed in their self-studies to ask some questions unique to them, but should not be required to answer all 200 items. She suggested that reviews look for units’ strengths and weaknesses.
Rosson said the format of the APC representative’s report is open-ended at this time. It is difficult to spot trends or recurring themes. Kostelnik said the APC might standardize some pieces of the report and ask whether some items that should be included are being missed. Lee asked why APC doesn’t talk to the deans and chairs on every APR now. Rosson said that procedure could still be done, but at the APR Subcommittee level. He said the old process went into deep detail on a few programs being reviewed at the time, but missed many colleges and departments. He suggested that the dean of each college with a recent accreditation visit could send a summary report to the APC of the review and its findings. Kostelnik said it’s good to have outsiders looking at a unit. APC can point out some similarities between units that reviewers from within the discipline might miss. Weiss said the subcommittee could list what they want the APR Representative to report on to APC, such as graduate and undergraduate education. Lee said APC also needs comments on the quality of the review process and the review team.

Rosson charged the APR Subcommittee to make a report at the annual meeting on May 12. He said since the APR self-study report requirements are likely to change, he wants the Subcommittee’s recommendations on what should be included in the APC representative’s report and how APC can gather similar information on units that do not go through the APR process. He appointed Ambrosius Chair of the Subcommittee’s work on this charge.

**Issues from the Vice Chancellors:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lona Kramer