

ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES
December 8, 2004

Members Present

Barbara Couture
M. Susan Hallbeck
Matthew C. Hansen
Jeffrey F. Keown
Richard M. Kettler

Marjorie J. Kostelnik
Derrel L. Martin
Deborah W. Minter
Nancy Mitchell
Sarah J. Morris

William J. Nunez
Giacomo M. Oliva
John Owens
Wendy R. Weiss

Members Absent

Craig J. Eckhardt

Prem Paul

Others Present

Donald A. Wilhite, Director, National Drought Mitigation Center
Gail F. Latta, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

Keown called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes

Minutes from the November 10 meeting were approved without dissent.

Announcement

Keown said Mitchell had spoken with Associate Vice Chancellor Latta and had obtained a list of 52 UNL centers. An APC document revised in 1998 outlined the process for establishment and review of centers. No center reviews have been conducted for a number of years. Keown charged the Long-range Planning Subcommittee to investigate the status of centers and make a recommendation to get the review process back on track. The list of centers, the APC document titled "Center Establishment" and a memo to the APC from Keown were distributed to the APC members.

Proposal to rename the Mathematics and Statistics major

Minter, Morris and Oliva served as a subcommittee to review the proposal to change the name of the major in "Mathematics and Statistics." The request reflects the restructuring of Mathematics and Statistics into two separate departments. A minor in statistics, but no major, is offered by the Department of Statistics. The major offered by the Department of Mathematics is to be renamed "Mathematics."

Motion

The subcommittee recommended approval of the proposal. The motion passed without dissent.

National Drought Mitigation Center proposal

Wilhite and Owens were present to answer questions regarding the proposal from the National Drought Mitigation Center. Wilhite had previously submitted written responses to questions

asked at the November 10 APC meeting by Hallbeck and Kettler, the subcommittee that reviewed the proposal. Kettler explained the center proposal that passed at the last APC meeting was reviewed by a different subcommittee. He said the big questions about this proposal were “Why it is important to have center status?” and “Are the Coordinating Commission guidelines relevant?”

Wilhite said most centers are not organized at a higher level than a department, although some are across departments in a college. He said it is hard to have one definition for a center. The purpose of centers is to respond quickly to an emerging disciplinary area. Having official center status would raise the unit’s visibility within the University.

Owens said he talked to Dean Darrell Nelson about seeking official center status for the National Drought Mitigation Center. The center has almost daily national and international visibility and close connections with international organizations. Couture said it is good to have institutional recognition of a center as it signifies long-term commitment that is helpful when applying for grants. Wilhite said drought is an underlying theme in the School of Natural Resources among its interdisciplinary faculty. Keown thanked Wilhite for his information. [Wilhite left.]

Motion

Hallbeck and Kettler’s recommendation in favor of the National Drought Mitigation Center proposal served as a motion and second. There was no further discussion. The motion passed without dissent.

Proposal for a Classics and Religious Studies major

Latta was present to testify in favor of the proposal. Minter, Oliva and Morris served as the proposal review subcommittee. Latta said the proposal acknowledges the growing interest of students in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies. The new major will allow specialization in either classics or religious studies. Its multidisciplinary approach to the texts, languages and cultures of the ancient world is unique in the region. The proposal was endorsed by the Religious Studies faculty at UNO and by the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Nebraska Wesleyan, ensuring that reciprocal enrollment agreements will remain in force.

Minter observed that strategic hiring in support of the new major was underway. Weiss asked if the Center for Judaic Studies was related to the new major. Latta said there is no formal connection, but there are some shared courses. Oliva related the proposal to equipment expenditures and focused hires in his own college in support of the new area of digital arts. He suggested the proposal would be strengthened to mention that the new major draws on the expertise of Nebraska Wesleyan faculty.

Motion

Endorsement by the subcommittee constituted a motion and second for APC’s endorsement of the proposal. The motion passed without dissent.

Proposal for a Classical Language major

Latta said the new proposal would allow students to complete a major without being required to choose between Latin and Greek. A combined degree program could be completed in four years. At present, students wishing to major in both languages need five years to complete a double major. [Martin arrived.] Latta said it is simpler for the department to offer one major in languages instead of two. Morris said students might lose something by combining Greek and Latin instead of having a double major. Keown said it is good to design programs that allow students to graduate in four years. Latta said the new major better prepares students for graduate work. Oliva asked what would happen to students who are presently majoring in Latin or Greek. Latta said it is University policy to allow presently enrolled students to complete their degree program as it was when they began the program. Students could choose, however, to transfer their credits to the new degree program.

Motion

The subcommittee's support of the proposal served as motion and second. APC voted without dissent to endorse the proposal. [Latta left.]

Issues from the Vice Chancellors

As Owens needed to leave at 4:00, Keown asked if there were issues from the Vice Chancellors. Owens had no issues to present. Paul was not present. Couture presented next on the agenda.

Proposals for Programs of Excellence (POE) funding

Couture distributed draft materials corresponding to the proposed Programs of Excellence for the upcoming year. She said this is the third year that funds for POEs are being distributed. The first year some 80 proposals were submitted and there were 20 final recipients. The second year preproposals were submitted and evaluated for expansion into full proposals. This year proposals were invited by October 1, but it was not clear whether full proposals or preproposals were being requested. The responses, therefore, were uneven. Of the 13 proposals submitted, Couture recommended returning 11 to the proposers for refinement and refocusing on increased institutional capacity. She requested APC input on returning the proposals.

Couture said the purpose of POE funding is to increase institutional capacity, that is, to add faculty, fund faculty setups, and fund graduate assistantships. To the extent the proposals address that purpose they should be funded. Enhancement activities not directly related to increased institutional capacity might be funded from other sources.

Funding to be distributed this year (before June 30, 2005) totals \$1,050,000. However, not all of the proposals require funding during this year. Couture suggested that funds not needed this year be applied to one-time needs in the broad area of undergraduate education enhancement, an ongoing POE area. She proposed a procedure for distributing POE funds for the 2004-05 academic year. APC endorsed the procedure by consensus.

There was discussion of the potential proposals, one-time funding for undergraduate education enhancements, and the POE process. Couture said UNL has a more elaborate process for

determining POE funding than the other campuses and APC is an important part of the POE process.

Motion

Mitchell moved and Oliva seconded a motion to ask Couture to request full proposals from those requiring expansion or those needing additional focus to address institutional capacity. Minter recused herself before the vote was taken. APC passed the motion without dissent. Couture said she would bring back the requests for one-time funding to be considered at the January 26 meeting.

Other Business

Keown said he had the results of a graduate student survey to which 22 departments responded. He will present the results at the January 12 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lona Kramer, APC Coordinator