

MINUTES

October 6, 2021

University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

Members Present: Bloom, Boehm, Buan, Clarke, Doll, Hachtmann, Hebets, Rodene, Spiller, Theiss-Morse, Tschetter, Vuran, Wilhelm, Zeleny

Members Absent: Ankerson, Ibrahim, Latta Konecky

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Academic Planning Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

1.0 Call

Hachtmann called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

2.0 Approval of September 22, 2021 Minutes

After hearing some minor revisions, Bloom moved for approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Hebets and approved by the APC.

3.0 Review of Additive Manufacturing Graduate Certificate Proposal (Clarke, Vuran)

Clarke stated that the proposal is to develop a certificate program in the making and manufacturing of new metals. She noted that the certificate program is offered only on campus and students must take 12 credit hours and the proposers would like to offer it to both degree and non-degree seeking students, although the students do need an engineering or materials science degree. She reported that there is one required course and students can then choose three other courses from a list of five. She stated that there are no concerns with the availability of the courses and the faculty members are well qualified and knowledgeable of the discipline. She stated that the University already has the necessary equipment which will provide the students with hands-on-experience in addition to the teaching of theory.

Clarke noted that it is uncertain how many students outside of Mechanical and Materials engineering would take the program, but the proposers are hoping that they would have five students a year. Vuran pointed out that even though there may be only five to possibly ten students a year, the program is low cost, and he sees no major issues with the proposal. Buan stated that other students might be interested in the graduate certificate because of the 3-D printing component and questioned if the program would be expanded. Clarke stated that if there is enough interest in the certificate program there could be the opportunity to expand. Vuran noted that there may come a time when the department needs to decide whether to make the program more attractive to a larger group of students. Tschetter asked if the courses already exist, and Clarke confirmed that there are existing courses.

Wilhelm moved for approval. Motion seconded by Spiller and approved by the APC.

4.0 Review of Chromatography and Analytical Separations Graduate Certificate and Review of Bioanalytical Chemistry Graduate Certificate (Bloom and Moriyama)

Bloom reported that the two proposals were very similar, from the same department, and they are targeted at providing advanced skills. He stated that the proposals are straight forward and the courses for both programs are regularly offered courses. He pointed out that there is also considerable support from other departments that are offering electives for the program. He reported that the expected enrollment is very low with only one student per year, but the proposers stated that the programs could be scaled to accommodate more students. He reported that he and Moriyama recommend approval of the programs.

Moriyama agreed and noted that the proposals were well written, and a grant has been acquired by the Chemistry department to help with the program. He pointed out that companies are looking for people with the skill sets offered in the program which would be very advantageous for students enrolled in the program.

Wilhelm motioned to approve both proposals. Tschetter seconded the motion. Both programs were approved by the APC.

5.0 Review of Proposal to Create the Financial Analytics Graduate Certificate (Hachtmann and Latta Konecky)

Hachtmann reported that Financial Analytics is the science of predicting business performance through data. She stated that the program would be offered completely online and the students that it mostly serves are MBA students and industry people who might want it for professional development. She noted that the program could recruit more students for the MBA program and the courses in that program would count towards the graduate certificate. She stated that the courses for the program already exist, and the proposers hope to offer it in the spring of 2022. She reported that there are specific guidelines that must be met for admission to the program, although it is not clear who would be reviewing the applications for admission.

Doll asked if there was a sense of value added for the MBA students to take these courses and she questioned whether there would be an overlap of courses. Hachtmann pointed out that the courses in the graduate certificate program can count towards an MBA, and while there might be some overlap with the business analytics graduate certificate, it is not really a duplicative effort.

Buan noted that a GMAT score is required but some universities are saying that the GMAT is no longer necessary. She asked if the language in the proposal is consistent towards where the MBA and the certificate are moving. Hachtmann stated that this was not addressed in the review. Heng-Moss reported that Graduate Studies has revised the graduate admission process and it is now a more unified, streamlined process which begins with Graduate Studies and is linked with department graduate committees. Clarke stated that Graduate Studies feels that the decision to require a GMAT or GRE score should be left up to each department.

Heng-Moss moved for approval. Hebets seconded the motion which was approved by the APC.

6.0 Review of Proposal to Create the Sales Excellence Graduate Certificate (Hachtmann and Latta Konecky)

Hachtmann reported that the Sales Excellence Graduate Certificate program would be an online program administered by the Marketing department. She noted that the program would be for 12 credit hours and requires no additional resources as the courses already exist. She stated that the goal is to give current MBA students the ability to develop leadership in sales, and it would be one of only 13 such programs in the country offered at the graduate level. She stated that the review of the program will be conducted by a faculty committee and if there is a need to accommodate more students and expand the program the department would hire faculty on an overload basis. She pointed out that there is a huge need in the industry for this kind of skill and the program offers professional development and is a vehicle for recruiting more people for the MBA program.

Wilhelm moved for approval of the proposal. Motion seconded by Doll and approved by the APC.

7.0 Subcommittee Needed to Review the Data Science Major Degree Proposal

Clarke noted that this is a large proposal and suggested having 3-4 people review it. Theiss-Morse, Doll, Bloom, and Clarke volunteered to review the proposal.

8.0 Reports from EVC Spiller, VC Boehm, and VC Wilhelm

Spiller reported that there has been a significant number of increases in freshmen applications for admission in the fall of 2022. She noted that ACT scores are optional and that a very large number of the applications were submitted without this score. She stated that the number of non-resident applications is currently down and stated that we still have a lot of work to do with diversity but pointed out that over a ten-year period our student body has become more diverse in almost all categories. Vuran asked if there is any indication whether the current increase would be sustainable. Spiller stated that there are a finite number of K-12 students in Nebraska and there will be a time in about three years when the number of high school graduates will be low. She pointed out that we really need to work on increasing the number of out-of-state students and one way to do this is by offering unique, cutting-edge programs. She stated that the one-tuition model is being reviewed which could also help with enrollment numbers.

Spiller reported that the compensation of faculty salaries, particularly in the tenure lines, has not kept up with our peers and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee had many conversations with President Carter about this issue. As a result, President Carter created a window of opportunity to close the gap by providing UNL with \$5 million this year and another \$5 million for next year to address the salary gaps. She reported that each college had to conduct a gap analysis review of tenure line faculty salaries, and the results were that 63% of tenure line faculty are receiving a salary increase this year with the average increase being 6.8%. She stated that another gap analysis will be conducted next year.

Spiller stated that last year a process was put in place for an annual cycle of reviewing national salary benchmarks for all faculty salaries, particularly lecturer salaries. She stated a \$500,000 commitment was used to improve non-tenure track faculty salaries and the average salary increase was 16%. She noted that there was the opportunity to also move some lecturers to a professor of practice position which resulted in an average salary increase of 12%. She stated

that she strongly suggested to deans that they use benchmarking each year to look at every single faculty member's salary in their college to see where salaries are lagging.

Theiss-Morse noted that not all tenure line faculty would be receiving an increase and asked how this would be dealt with. Spiller stated that when the deans developed their recommendation list, they looked at the salaries of every tenure line faculty member. She pointed out that some people are doing outstanding work and are already being compensated as well as our peers. Bloom asked why we don't give increases for all tenure line faculty since 63% of them are receiving an increase. Spiller stated that it might turn out that all tenure line faculty members will get an increase in the next few years. She noted some colleges, and departments, have greater salary compression than others and these disparities need to be addressed first. She pointed out that the availability of these funds to make such strides in improving tenure line salaries is a rare moment.

Spiller reported that there is a sense that we want people to collaborate and consult as early as possible in the development of programs. She stated that there is now a standing agenda item in her meetings with the deans to look at the curricular pipeline with the intent of developing interdisciplinary programs and reported that a number of potential program proposals are already being developed.

Rodene asked if there was any news about improvements in graduate student stipends. Spiller stated that she has been in conversations with the new Dean of Graduate Studies Deb Hope who agrees that the graduate student stipends are not where they need to be to allow these students to graduate to the best of their potential and improving stipends is a high priority. Rodene asked how UNL ranks with our Big Ten peers. Spiller reported that this varies by department and disciplines. She noted that some of our Big Ten peers receive a lot of private funding which helps fund graduate student stipends, but it would be revealing to conduct a benchmark study similar what was recently done for tenure line faculty. Vuran stated that undergraduate workers and research need to be considered as well.

Boehm reported that IANR followed a similar approach in looking at the tenure line faculty salaries and each faculty member was looked at individually to see who was above the average in salary compensation and who was below. He noted that those faculty members whose salary was already above the average of our peers were not in the pool and the increases were used for those people whose salary were below the market. He reported that the performance of a faculty member for the past seven years was reviewed, and the vast majority of the faculty had good performance records. He stated that the IANR deans were intimately involved in the process and consideration and IANR dove down to analyze the salaries at the department level. He noted that there is another step in the process for IANR, but the confirmation letters will be sent out soon afterwards.

Boehm reported that the university had another outstanding team effort speaking to the Unicameral Appropriations Committee to present the university's need for funding from the American Relief Act. He noted that one of the plans for the funds is to increase the capacity of the Holland Computing Center, and another plan is to develop a companion facility on Innovation Campus to the USDA National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision

Agriculture. He stated that if we get all of the funding being requested it would positively impact our programs and make UNL attractive to students across the country and around the world.

Boehm reported that he was coming back from a meeting in Kansas City to talk about how we adjust to the Covid era. He stated that there is a \$3.7 billion allocation from the federal government to improve the infrastructure at land grant universities and pointed out that we have 100 Extension offices throughout the state and many of these buildings need renovation or to be replaced.

Wilhelm reported that after conducting an internal search, Associate Professor Eric Weaver has been named as Director of the Nebraska Center for Virology, and Associate Professor Hernan Garcia-Ruiz has been named Associate Director of the Center.

Wilhelm stated that Bloom is working with VC Nunez and others on how we handle the university-wide research centers in the new budget model. He noted that ORED is working on some new initiatives and is coordinating with the NU system. He stated that we will start seeing installations to improve the Holland Computing Center and a mid-level cyro-electron microscope is being purchased which will be available for use by faculty members from different colleges. He noted that it will probably take a year for us to get delivery of it and staffing will be needed to operate it, but it is a nice step forward with building the infrastructure of the university.

9.0 Other Business

Heng-Moss stated that getting approval for graduate certificates and other program proposals can take almost a year or longer to go through the entire approval process. She understands that there is the issue of timing for the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education but questioned whether the APC can discuss the possibility of shortening the time needed to get a program approved.

Spiller stated that this is worthy of a conversation and stated that there are some steps in the process that can cause delays. She noted that some departments do not have much experience in developing a program proposal and sometimes the proposal needs to be returned to the unit for revisions but there can be a delay in the department making the revisions. She pointed out that the more steps there are in the process, the more chances there are of having delays.

Zeleny reported that the Project Initiation Request Committee will be meeting next week to review the PIR to replace the Westbrook Music Building. He stated that the Committee will present the PIR to the APC at the October 20th meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 3:00 in the City Campus Union, Chimney Rock Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.