

**University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Academic Planning Committee**

**Approved Minutes
September 16, 2009**

Members Present

John Bender
William J. Nunez
Jeffrey F. Keown
Dwayne Ball
Barbara Couture

David H. Allen
Craig J. Eckhardt
Miles Taft Bryant
Jennifer Brand
John Owens

A. J. (Jamie) Radcliffe
Jennifer Mostek
Megan Collins

Members Absent

Gary Cunningham

Shelley Fuller

Prem Paul

Bender stated a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 3:05 P.M.

Bender noted there were no Minutes to approve at this meeting; however, Minutes would be completed and ready for approval at the next meeting.

Project Initiation Request on Animal Research Facility North and West Wing Renovation

Bender informed the committee there had been a late change to the agenda. He noted this item had been removed from the agenda apparently due to a lack of funding. He said he hoped to see a resolution soon.

APC Representative APR Report for Department of Geosciences [Copy of report attached to permanent record]

Bender introduced the next agenda item and asked Fowler to present his report.

Fowler stated, as written in his report, he thought this Academic Program Review (APR) was a model for the APR procedures. He noted the self-study document was excellent and was provided to him well in advance. He expressed the Review Team seemed to be very knowledgeable of the many sub-specialties in this department as well as knowledgeable of the background of this department and some of the cross-campus issues. He informed APC members that he was invited to every meeting that he should have been included in, including the exit meeting. He noted, however, he was not able to attend.

Fowler indicated he also attended the graduate and undergraduate student interviews and was present during several tours of the department. He stated the Department consists of three main research divisions – Earth, Air, and Water – with many numerous sub-specialties in each category. He stated, as in any department, there are some problems. He said some of the weaknesses noted by the Review Team included: lack of strategic vision or plan for guiding departmental hires, a specific need for the water group within the Department to find a meaningful place within the program, a small number of students graduating annually relative to the size of the faculty, and a lack of clear self-identity, both within and outside the University. He stated the Review Team suggested a name change for the Department and the need to establish the Department “...as the place on the UNL campus to learn

about Earth and the atmosphere.” He stated the Review Team noted the following strengths of the Department: department leadership by an effective Department Chair, positive communication within the Department, and a faculty committed to successful research and education – the ANDRILL project and ADVANCE-Nebraska funding were mentioned. He said the Department response to the Review Team report was very candid and outlined a plan showing clear resolve to focus on continued improvements as suggested by the Review Team. In conclusion, Fowler indicated he did not see a need to recommend a formal APC hearing.

Bender asked if there were any questions. Collins inquired what steps, if any, were being taken regarding the low student graduation rates. Fowler replied the Department acknowledged in their response report that some of the faculty members are not as productive as they should be and they suggested two lines of strategy – 1) more involvement and continuation of evaluation processes already in place and 2) in-depth internal reviews and formation of committees of peers for mentoring. This committee could also recommend reassignment of a faculty member to a higher percentage of effort devoted to teaching. Bryant asked how many faculty members are in the Department. Fowler replied the Department includes 29 faculty members. Bender inquired how many majors? Fowler replied he believed about 120 undergraduate students and 40 graduate students. [Allen and Couture arrived]

Bender inquired if there were further questions, comments, or discussion and there were none. Eckhardt moved to accept the report and Radcliffe seconded. The motion passed without dissent. Bender thanked Fowler for his report. [Fowler left]

APC Representative APR Report of Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders
[Copy of report attached to permanent record]

Bender introduced the next agenda item and asked Radcliffe to present his report.

Radcliffe stated the review process went very smoothly, the self-study was available to the Review Team members before their arrival at UNL. He felt the Review Team did a very good job of managing issues that occurred during the process. He explained the review only involved the Division of Special Education and noted that this Division is an academic department that works in partnership with the State of Nebraska, the Department of Education, and Lincoln Public Schools as a service provider to the state’s educational mission. He noted as the review process proceeded one of the questions asked of the Review Team in the self-study document was “whether appropriate mentoring and support structures are in place for faculty to achieve promotion in rank?” He said during discussion of that question it was judged that the most appropriate response to this issue was to make a report to the office of Equity, Access and Diversity. He conveyed he believed the referral of this matter was not relevant to the APR process. He said some of the other primary issues in discussion were dealing with the mandate of No Child Left Behind and the difficult situation of “one faculty member” programs in the Division. He stated some of the Review Team recommendations included: explore reasonable ways to consolidate programs or components of programs whenever possible and invest one or two faculty members in autism and move the Severe Disabilities program towards having an autism focus. He noted the Division agreed with many of the Review Team’s recommendations and were already involved in efforts to implement them. He concluded that a formal APC hearing was not needed.

Bender commented on the “one faculty member” programs and wondered if there was any concern with this department being “overly fragmented”. Radcliffe replied this is a serious national problem

with all special education departments and noted the department is continuing to explore the possibility of adding more courses and programs via distance technologies. Couture commented that there are some state requirements that the department does have to meet and at some level the dilemma is out of their hands as they are required to have that type of functionality in that department. She stated there are ongoing negotiations with the state to resolve this dilemma. She also said the Division is looking at ways that they can combine strengths across those barriers to help faculty feel more part of a group rather than a “one member” program. [Mostek arrived]

Bender inquired if there were further questions, comments, or discussion and there were none. Ball moved to accept the report and Bryant seconded. The motion passed without dissent. Bender thanked Radcliffe for his report.

Long-Range Planning Subcommittee Discussion

Bender stated the Long-Range Planning subcommittee has asked to address APC membership. Brand indicated the Long-Range Planning subcommittee (subcommittee members are Brand, Ball, Fuller, and Keown) believe that the APC should address, and become involved in, current significant matters, such as the appointment of two task forces mentioned by Chancellor Perlman in his State of the University address and the impact on academic programs with the development of Innovation Campus at State Fair Park. She stated the Long-Range Planning subcommittee would like to meet with Chancellor Perlman to discuss these matters, in particular how this subcommittee could become more involved. She then asked for input from membership. Discussion concluded with Bender charging the Long-Range Planning subcommittee to further explore these matters. Brand said the subcommittee welcomed any comments or suggestions.

Review of September 18, 2009 Budget Hearing

Bender stated the next agenda item was to review the agenda for the September 18 Budget Hearing. [attached to permanent record] Bender asked Nunez if he had any comments on this item. Nunez noted, per the request of APC membership to better accommodate members calendar schedules, the Hearing would begin later in the day at 2:30 P.M. and would most likely conclude after 5:00 P.M. He briefly described the set-up of the room the Hearing would be held in.

Bender asked if there were any questions on the budget hearing agenda and there were none. Nunez asked membership to contact him as soon as possible if any changes needed to be made. He commented budget reduction documentation had been posted on the Academic Planning Committee sites as well as on the Office of the Chancellor website. He noted that the Hearings, as always, are open to the public and that this also was communicated to faculty and staff via public announcements.

[For reference the Office of the Chancellor is located at the following URL:
<http://www.unl.edu/ucomm/chancldr/2009budget/>]

Matters from Vice Chancellor(s) of Academic Affairs, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
Bender asked Couture if she had any matters to discuss or share.

Couture said she was delighted to announce that tomorrow is the first of a series of three workshops planned to promote ADVANCE Faculty Recruitment and Retention. These workshops are sponsored by Academic Affairs, the Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, and ADVANCE-Nebraska.

She stated from 10 A.M. to Noon, UNL's ADVANCE team will report on the results of research conducted by faculty. She said the information will be presented by Mary Ann Holmes, Program Director of ADVANCE-Nebraska and noted the research project was conducted by Christina Falci. She stated the Recruit and Promote Committee, who are faculty representatives on the ADVANCE team, will present their findings. The Recruit and Promote Committee were charged with finding what kind of opportunities there are to find pools of faculty members within the various disciplines. This committee is investigating those practices.

Couture stated from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., the Cornell University Theatre Ensemble will be doing an interactive presentation, where they will emulate a typical discussion that might happen in a faculty search committee meeting. She said they have done this kind of work at several other universities as part of the ADVANCE project and their objective is to provide a provocative environment that will allow us to start thinking about the dynamics that occurs in a search committee meeting and how that might create some conditions that make it difficult for us to make good choices. Sixty individuals have signed up to attend. She informed the second workshop is scheduled to be in early October and that details would follow. She expressed that she is very proud of the faculty Recruit and Promote Teams. She said they have worked extremely hard to provide some good information to our chairs and other interested parties.

Bender asked if there were any questions or comments. Bryant asked if the research reports would be made available for public viewing. Couture replied yes, the results would be posted and invited membership to view the ADVANCE-Nebraska website, which, she noted, can also be accessed through the Academic Affairs website. She shared the results that will be presented tomorrow would not be posted yet as that would "spoil the surprise".

Bender asked if there were further questions, comments, or discussion for Couture and there were none. He then asked if Owens had anything to share.

Owens said that he did not have much to discuss or share and commented he was sad to hear that the Project Initiation Request on Animal Research Facility North and West Wing Renovation had to be removed from the agenda. He conveyed "it did not score higher enough in federal funding competition and we will have to go back to ground zero." He stated he believes our university has a very serious challenge in its facilities and how we handle the research enterprise dealing with animals - mainly in this case, small animals. He said we are in dire straits and it is very difficult to stay up with our national competition, so whether it is federal funds or some other matter, we have to find a way to solve this as this is very serious for the campus.

Bender asked if there were any questions or comments for Owens. There were none.

[For reference the ADVANCE-Nebraska is located at the following URL:
<http://advance.unl.edu/index.shtml>]

[For reference the Academic Affairs is located at the following URL: <http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/>]

Other Business

Ball mentioned budget reductions guidelines and wondered if certain concerns should be monitored during the APC process. He wondered, generally speaking, if the budget reduction process and

guidelines and the APR process and guidelines could be more of a useful tool in the process for improvement once issues have been identified. He said if a unit or department is not at their best, they should be made aware of this so that they can improve their profile. Eckhardt agreed with Ball and wondered if the APC could possibly begin to keep a record of such units or departments. He spoke of comparison models such as how you compare, for example, a science department to a literature department and wondered if such comparisons should be looked at to see if these comparisons could be somehow incorporated into the APR process.

Bender asked if there were any comments or discussion and there were none.

Bender informed APC membership a proposal was in process that will eventually come before the APC for review. He said, as some of you are aware, at the April 28th Faculty Senate meeting, one of the issues that came up was a proposal from Professors John Wunder and Wes Peterson to scrap the current budget reduction procedures and reinstitute the procedures that had been in place before that. Their concerns were that there was diminished faculty representative on the committee that reviewed the proposed budget cuts and also less transparency than had existed under the previous proposals. The motion was defeated; however, there was a common sentiment, even among those that voted against the motion, that the current procedures were not ideal.

Bender shared that John Fech, President of the Faculty Senate, and he had met over the summer to discuss this matter. He reported an ad-hoc committee, chaired by Kathy Prochaska-Cue, had been created to work on “tweaking” the present *Procedures to be Invoked for Significant Budget Reallocations and Reductions*. He said the goals of this committee are to increase representation, not only from faculty, but from interest groups in the university community such as students and UNOPA and to increase the transparency of the process while recognizing that there are legitimate needs for confidentiality. He said the hope is that perhaps by the end of this semester there will be a proposal to bring to the APC, Faculty Senate, and all other groups who would need to review the proposal. Keown reported to APC membership that Fuller and he were members of this ad-hoc committee and stated this committee welcomed any input or comments from APC membership.

Bender asked if there was further discussion.

Eckhardt commented he had recently been contacted that he would need to attend a re-training session so that he could sit on a search committee and wondered if this re-training was federally mandated. Couture responded that Linda Crump is the correct contact to have this question answered. She commented, as with most training, there is an expectation for renewal of training and would assume this is a requirement to make certain we are legally meeting and implementing fair procedures; however, again, Linda Crump should answer these questions.

Brief discussion ensued regarding possible on-line training or re-training sessions. Owens commented a recent session on harassment was conducted on-line and that this training went very well. He conveyed he was in favor of on-line sessions as they are valuable as well as practical. Couture stated she and Owens could bring this matter before the Senior Administrative Team for further discussion if membership agreed. Membership agreed.

Bender asked if there was further discussion or any other business.

Radcliffe commented the recent redesign of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln website appears to be less helpful and user-friendly and wondered if membership felt the same as he and also wondered what were the processes used to come up with the new re-design. Couture commented she had heard comments to the opposite and suggested that possibly Meg Lauerman or Bob Crisler in the office of University Communications could assist in answering questions on the processes used. Allen commented Meg and her staff gave a presentation last week to the deans and directors and he felt that this presentation addressed these questions. Bender inquired to membership if this topic was something they would like to hear more information on. Membership concurred they would like to view this presentation at a future meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle (Shelly) Green
APC Coordinator