

## MINUTES

### University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

March 1, 2017

**Members Present:** Bloom, Boehm, Busch, Correas, Farrell, Franke-Schubert, Goddard, Hinchman, Marron, Nunez, Plowman, Simpson, Sollars, Wagner, White

**Members Absent:** Delserone, Hartman, Trainin

**Others Attending:** Associate VC Amy Goodburn, Dean Kathy Ankerson, Jennifer Dam, Director of Campus Planning, Dean Archie Clutter

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

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#### **1.0 Call**

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

#### **2.0 Approval of February 15, 2017 Minutes**

Bloom moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Simpson and approved by the APC.

#### **3.0 Report on Student Matriculation Success Task Force (Associate VC Goodburn and Dean Ankerson)**

Wagner noted that the Chancellor has created four task forces to gather information that will be used when the campus goes through a strategic planning process this fall. The APC will be hearing reports from the co-chairs of each of the task force, the first being the Student Matriculation Success Task Force headed by Associate VC Goodburn and Dean Ankerson.

Ankerson reported that the task force was formed and charged in November. Strong attempts were made to assimilate a group of people from the various colleges with different strengths and ranks having strong experience in advising. She stated that a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis was conducted and best practices at other universities were reviewed. The task force also reviewed what practices and programs exist in the university that are successful and how success is measured. She stated that the task force identified five strategic areas that are critical for improving student retention and five subgroups were created to work on these areas. These are: academic advising; faculty, curriculum and academic policies; predictive analytics and data; financial aid support; and co-curricular and student support systems.

Goodburn reported that the entire task force met three times and the subgroups met between the meetings. She stated that all of the subgroups submitted their report at the end of February and she and Anderson are working to combine all of the information from the reports. She noted that each group had eight pages of recommendations, ideas to consider, data that might be needed,

and best practices that might be implemented. She stated that the Chancellor will be conveying information from all four of the task forces once the reports are completed.

Simpson pointed out that the long range planning subcommittee of the APC identified some statements from the Chancellor's State of the University address that aligned well with the four task forces. The idea to bring in the co-chairs in to speak to the APC is to possibly get some input from the APC at the beginning of the strategic planning process.

Ankerson reported that there was strong agreement by all members that a common data source would be very helpful, but the work to develop the database would be extensive. Goodburn pointed out that having the database would allow evidence based decisions to be made, but this is a decentralized university and getting all of the data will be challenging. She stated that the campus also needs to decide what academic policies mean and how to communicate the policies to the faculty and students, and how to determine which policies may not be benefitting our students. One policy that needs to be examined is regarding prerequisites. She noted that there are 6,000 courses that have prerequisites, but only 2,000 are enforced through PeopleSoft, and 342 are different from the undergraduate bulletin versus PeopleSoft. She stated that Associate Deans in the colleges are already working on resolving this issue.

Goodburn reported that there are some critical practices that have been identified that help with student success rates. Giving students an assignment and grading it in the first few weeks and getting mid-term grades help students. She stated that the task force looked at other universities to see how they help support faculty members. Financial aid was also looked at and there are some changes we are moving towards.

Marron asked if the Noel Levitz Consultants' review of academic advising showed similar results as the NSSE survey. Goodburn reported that the Levitz Consultants presented recommendations and the campus has already made changes based on the recommendations.

Wagner asked if we know why students drop out and what areas have the highest rates. Goodburn noted that there is a first-year retention report generated every year which is given to Deans. The report provides retention rates for each program. Wagner asked if students leave primarily for financial reasons. Goodburn stated that many of the students are on probation. Another reason for the lack of academic success is a sense of institutional belonging. Many minority students feel like they don't belong here. Financial issues are also a factor and if a student has a financial hold on their record, they may not be able to get the courses they need that year once the issue has been resolved.

Plowman pointed out that we need to get all of this information to faculty so they know the issues and can recognize if a student exhibits certain behaviors as it can be an indicator that they may not return to campus. The question is how best to get the information to the faculty. Goodburn noted that dashboards have been created and the APC can have access to them.

Farrell asked if national data has provided evidence regarding whether students feel they belong in the first five weeks, or if this information has been obtained from surveying our own students. Goodburn stated that the campus has conducted focus groups, provided exit surveys, and sent

surveys to students who have not re-registered, but the surveys do not provide information on whether the students will return. She noted that there are approximately 2,000 students in the first year class that aren't in any program and the campus needs to determine how we can make these students feel connected. Farrell noted that in a survey of non-tenure track faculty members, lecturers feel that they don't belong and addressing the issue of retention could impact both students and some faculty members. Goodburn reported that NSSE surveys since 2013 show that our scores for engagement with faculty members has decreased across the boards. She stated that the NSSE results are posted under assessment in the Academic Affairs website <http://academicaffairs.unl.edu/academic-program-management/assessment>. Marron pointed out that in her college the students do well in their first and second year, but transfer students and some graduate students are not engaged with the college and this is very problematical. Busch noted that a Gallup survey of graduates shows that only 13% of students said they had any meaningful experience with a faculty member. Goodburn stated that there are a lot of reasons for these problems. Two years ago nearly 3900 students already had satisfied their English requirements due to the dual courses with the high schools, but this does not provide them with the opportunity to start their college career in smaller classes where there can be more interaction with the faculty member. Bloom noted that he is the major advisor for his department, but students often don't come to see him. Goodburn stated that there has been some discussion about having required advising, some students really need it while others do not. Wagner stated that he read that active learning approaches in classes can connect students with each other and with faculty members.

Wagner thanked Goodburn and Ankerson for reporting to the APC.

#### **4.0 Report on Capital Construction Plans (Associate to the Chancellor Nunez and Director Dam)**

Nunez noted that one of the duties of the APC is to receive, review, and approve capital projects, although none have come to the APC recently. Dam reported that since 2000 the Board of Regents approved \$1.3 billion in facility investments. She noted that projects to be completed this fall include the new College of Business, East Campus Residence Hall, new CPN Dining Hall, Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, Behlen Lab, and Hamilton Hall renovations. The new Student Health Center should be open in the fall of 2018. Upcoming priority projects with a target completion date for 2019 are the CY Thompson, East Campus Student Commons, East Campus Union, Memorial Mall renovation, and Carson Center for Emerging Media. She noted that some of the projections have received some state funding, but private funds will also need to be raised. She reported that Chancellor Green has identified the Memorial Mall renovation as a high priority. Marron asked if the information provided can be shared with the faculty. Nunez stated he would share the presentation with the Committee.

#### **5.0 Subcommittee Report on Proposal to Establish Graduate Certificate in Social Justice and Diversity in Education and to Establish a Graduate Certificate in Education Technology Leadership (Franke-Schubert and Sollars)**

Sollars reported that she and Franke-Schubert agreed that the proposals were very good ideas, but they did have questions that applied to both proposals. It was not clear where the projections came from and it was unclear what the included graphs had to do with the proposals. In addition, the Social Justice proposal required students to take two out of three identified courses, yet these

courses did not have anything to do with social justice. She stated that almost all of the courses are special component courses of other programs and she questions the use of so many special topics courses.

Sollars stated that the proposal on Education Technology Leadership being offered by distance only is a complication because the courses are being offered on campus, not by distance education. Another problem is with the curriculum. Wagner suggested that the APC could ask the proposers to fix the distance only part of the proposal. Sollars asked if the proposal would need to be resubmitted if changes are made. Simpson noted that if the proposers address the questions without making changes to the proposal there should not be a need to have the proposal resubmitted through the proper channels.

Sollars stated that a concern with the Social Justice program is that there is a list of elective classes that students need to select three courses from. However, three of these courses do not have anything to do with social justice, so it is possible a student can fulfill the requirement without the student having any elective courses pertaining to social justice.

Goddard asked if a curriculum committee has looked at the Education Technology program. Simpson stated that it has and the Graduate Council has also looked at it. Goddard pointed out that special topics courses are used frequently. Sollars stated that she and Franke-Schubert are concerned that the use of the special topics courses may be used to expedite the approval process of the program. Correas stated that if a course is going to be required for a program it should be a regular course rather than a special topics because the course would need to be offered every year. He stated that certificate programs should have some flexibility, but the core topic needs to be addressed in a regular course. Goddard noted that there are different cultures in departments and colleges, but if special topics are offered more than three times they should become a course. However, we do not have a uniform process across the campus for this to occur. He pointed out that the APC could choose not to accept the proposal and require that the courses go back through the curriculum process. Simpson suggested that Sollars and Franke-Schubert can ask the proposers to address the questions or come to an APC meeting to answer questions.

Correas moved to table the item until the questions are addressed. Simpson seconded the motion which was approved by the APC.

#### **6.0 Subcommittee Report on Proposal to Establish the Nebraska Food for Health Center (Farrell and Simpson)**

Farrell noted that he and Simpson had some questions which were directed to Dean Clutter and Clutter's responses were then forwarded to the APC members. Simpson stated that the proposal was straightforward, but there was a question on how the external evaluation of the Center would be conducted. The question was easily addressed by Clutter.

Wagner noted that the proposal states that the Center is novel for Nebraska, but asked how novel it is nationally. Clutter stated that various areas are driving this proposal because the Center is very unique and the way it is being set up could impact the agriculture and the State of Nebraska in identifying value for agricultural production. Farrell pointed out that the Center would

connect all of the robust integrated systems that are already established at the University. He noted that he does not know if another program like this exists anywhere.

Bloom asked how much of the program is something new versus just combining what we already have. Clutter reported that the Center is really built around the gut function group which was identified as a Program of Excellence in 2015, but has since grown. He noted that there is a tremendous amount of integration with UNMC and there has been increased connection and momentum with the program in the last two years. He stated that the Center would create a platform to move the program even further. Goddard pointed out that the Center would allow even further connections with UNMC and creates a common theme and goal.

Farrell asked whether the proposal for the Center is a result of a group effort. Clutter stated that the gut function team had somewhat of a vision, but being designated as a Program of Excellence helped bring the team together. Furthermore, the Raikes and Gates foundation helped push the idea forward.

Correas moved to approve the proposal. Motion seconded by Simpson and approved by the APC members.

#### **7.0 Proposal to Eliminate Great Plains Studies Major - B.S. and B.A. Degree**

Wagner noted that the proposal is coming back to the APC because the original proposal only listed the elimination of the B.A. degree and the B.S. degree needed to be included. He reported that the College of Arts & Sciences faculty voted to eliminate both degrees due to lack of majors. Correas moved approval of the proposal. Bloom seconded the motion which was approved by the APC members.

#### **8.0 Matters from Vice Chancellors - Academic Affairs, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), and Research and Economics Development**

Boehm reported that the Associate Deans across the colleges have been working collectively reviewing processes to determine where cleanup is needed. They are also looking at the discrepancies between PeopleSoft and CREQ regarding prerequisites for courses and working with departments to get these problems resolved. Nunez noted that the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office has been developing a guideline to assist faculty to create, change, or delete a course or program. The information, along with forms, will be on a website that is being developed. Sollars stated that the website will be very helpful and will also provide a time line for how long the process will take.

Boehm reported that he and Plowman are quickly learning about their positions and visiting with departments where there has been good conversations which will help identify where we can pull our efforts together. He noted that the budget is still unknown and the recent news of the state revenues being down even further creates further concern, but President Bounds, the Chancellor, and others are working full force to try and move the University's budget forward. He noted that we are hoping for a flat budget, but even if we receive it, salary increases and a 10% increase in health care costs will need to be factored into the overall budget which will put us into a deficit. He stated that an unknown is what efficiencies the ten task forces, created by President Bounds, will recommend. He noted that the hope is that enough efficiencies in the operation of the

University can be found that will help protect the core academic mission of the University. He stated that if we get a flat budget we would probably be able to keep tuition increases below 10%, but that could change if the budget cuts are worse.

Boehm noted that Goodburn and Ankerson indicated the need for quality data which is really needed in order for the campus to be able to get an analysis of the faculty over a twenty year period and to understand diversity and inclusiveness issues. He noted that the IPEDS data is not the same for different ethnicities and we have started to collect this data. He stated that there has also been discussions around planning strategies and the APC process and collaborative efforts will happen this fall when the strategic planning process takes place.

Goddard reported that we are moving 2% ahead of the metric that was set by former Chancellor Perlman for research expenditures and we are still making progress in this area. He stated that there was a NSF career workshop and 50 faculty members attended. They learned how to write successful career awards. He noted that we have already received one of the awards this year and notification of other awards is currently in process. He reported that 20 faculty members are going to Washington, DC to meet with program officers and to talk about how to get funding.

Boehm reported that there is an IANR science summit coming up in April which will show case faculty member's work.

## **9.0 Other Business**

Wagner wanted to thank Sollars for stepping in so quickly to serve as the APC representative on the University Libraries APR.

Wagner noted that typically the Chancellor gives his report to the APC at the last meeting in April, but due to a scheduling conflict he will be giving the report on March 15.

Wagner reported that he recently spoke with Faculty Senate President Dave Woodman about the Senate Executive Committee's concerns with the Procedures to be invoked for Significant Budget Reductions and Reallocations. He noted that currently, the Faculty Senate President participates in the process, but Woodman is concerned that the confidentiality clause will prevent the Faculty Senate President from consulting with the Senate Executive Committee. He thought the concerns is reasonable and suggested to Woodman that he could bring up the issue at the first meeting between the APC and the Senior Administrative Team when the budget cutting process begins.

White moved for approval to adjourn. Motion seconded by Sollars and approved. Meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 3:00 in the Multicultural Center, Ubuntu Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.