

## MINUTES

### University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

November 29, 2017

**Members Present:** Aune, Bender, Bloom, DaSilva, Farrell, Franke-Schubert, Goddard, Hinchman, Marron, Nunez, O'Connor, Purdum, Sollars, Woodman

**Members Absent:** Boehm, Clarke, Plowman, Trainin

**Others Attending:** Barbara Homer, UNOPA; Associate VC Walker; Professor Deb Minter

**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**

Bloom called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Bloom reported that Hinchman will be on leave next semester and will be replaced by Minter who has graciously agreed to attend the meetings in order to be fully on board during the spring semester.

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

Bender moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Marron and approved by the APC.

#### **3.0 APC Representative Report on Biochemistry APR**

Bloom reported that the APR covered the review of three different units: Biochemistry, the Center for Biological Chemistry, and the Center for Redox Biology. He noted that there is a significant amount of overlap between the three units. He stated that the Biochemistry department is the tenure home department for the faculty and hosts the undergraduate major while the Center for Biological Chemistry performs the research and graduate education functions. He noted that there are 24 faculty members, some of which have joint appointments. He reported that the number of graduate students is relatively small, although there is a considerable number of post docs. He stated that the Redox Center is funded by an NIH COBRE grant and 15 out of the 24 faculty members in Biochemistry participate in the Redox Center along with faculty members from other departments and universities. He pointed out that a challenge for the Redox Center is that the NIH grant is coming to an end and efforts are currently being made to see how funding efforts can be sustained to continue the Center.

Bloom reported that the self-study document was very organized and polished, although the External Review Team felt that some things were missing such as the number of GTA lines and some other basic data. He reported that the chair's biggest concern was the space constraint and the long-term maintenance of the infrastructure, resources and how they are allocated.

Bloom reported that the schedule did not include a meeting with non-tenure track faculty. However, the Biochemistry department quickly corrected this error. He noted that everyone involved with the APR followed the right guidelines for their roles, but the APR relied heavily on PowerPoint presentations by Biochemistry faculty. He pointed out that it would have been better to have more unstructured discussions.

Bloom stated that the External Review Team was fully engaged and the members were very well qualified with four of the five external members being either current or previous chairs of biochemistry departments at other universities. However, he stated that the internal review team member was not totally briefed on his role and IANR needs to improve this in the future. He pointed out that another problem is that it took five months to receive the department and deans' report after the APR when the APC guidelines specifically state that the department response is due within 30 days following the receipt of the external report (external report received June 13, 2017) and the dean's response is due 30 days after receiving the department response.

Bloom stated that the APR recommendations included that the department chair needs to engage the faculty more and the culture and procedures for how the department communicates needs to be improved with better two-way communication in the department. He noted that faculty members need to participate in governance and there were some concerns regarding the mentoring process.

Bloom stated that the APR did a good job in identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of the program and some changes have already been made in the department in regards to faculty governance. He reported that the department is already discussing how they will formalize a program for faculty development and the department, and overall has been mindful of the recommendations. He stated that there is no need for a hearing on the review.

Sollars noted that she hopes to give the report on the Chemistry APR soon and pointed out that the Biochemistry department was a significant component of Chemistry's APR. She stated that the External Review Team on the Agronomy & Horticulture APR she served on also felt that there were too many PowerPoint presentations rather than discussions, but IANR's baseline expectation of APRs is to have these presentations.

Purdum pointed out that she hopes that the APR was respectful of IANR and students' needs for the service courses that Biochemistry offers, and that the need for these courses was emphasized. Bloom reported that the External Review Team was aware of the need for these courses. Purdum noted that Arts & Sciences and IANR undergraduates take many of the Biochemistry courses and she asked what the proportions are for these students. Bloom said he thinks the students from Arts & Sciences would dominate the classes. Purdum noted that IANR students might not consider a career track in Biochemistry but it is important that the role of IANR not be minimized in Biochemistry.

Walker stated that as a procedural point, she and Associate Dean Pilson of Arts & Sciences were involved in the APR, but they were disappointed to the extent in which they were involved. She noted that they did not receive a copy of the self-study until the day the review began. Bloom noted that there are not many departments on campus that have a presence in both IANR and

Academic Affairs. Hinchman asked how often APRs are conducted for programs that do not get accreditation. Bloom started that the APR is conducted every seven years. Walker pointed out that departments that receive accreditation are usually exempt from APRs.

#### **4.0 November 15 Proposed Budget Cuts**

The APC went into Executive Session to discuss the Chancellor's proposed budget cuts.

#### **5.0 Reports from the Executive Vice Chancellor, Vice Chancellor of IANR, Interim Vice Chancellor of Research & Economic Development**

Goddard reported that the Research Fair went well and some of the events were very well attended. He noted that the readings from faculty members in the English department went really well as did the faculty poster sessions. He stated that some things that went well last year did not go as well this year and his office is trying to determine why this occurred.

Goddard stated that the faculty are still doing outstanding research and that we have more awards at this time than last year. He pointed out that in spite of the budget cuts looming over the university, the faculty are still doing their day-to-day job. He noted that we are nearing the end of the semester and students will be graduating and pointed out that this is why we are here. He stated that he is excited about graduation and stated that some big announcements will be made soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 3:00 in the City Campus Union, Regency A. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.