

Academic Priorities Council
Minutes
September 22, 2009

Present: Deborah Picking, Margaret Allard, Matteo Pangallo, Scott Stangroom, Jim Rinderle, Ernie May, Carolyn Cave, Monroe Rabin, Bryan Harvey, W. Curt Conner, Dayo Gore, Kathy Debevec (Chair), Guests – Steve Goodwin and Jim Kurose

1. Steve Goodwin and Jim Kurose were invited to discuss their experiences with the campus reorganization and formation of the new College of Natural Sciences over the past several months. They described the reorganization as being conducted in two phases, what went on behind the scenes before July 1 (e.g., conversations with administrative services, creating all new accounts) and what has occurred more publicly since then. It was agreed that no one could have predicted the amount of work in aligning 15 departments, including meeting with administrators, reaching agreements in principle, and working out the details of the reorganization. Commitments need to be understood and honored slowly. There have been no major conflicts in making money transfers equitable.

The biggest issues have been on the student side. Some additional hiring was necessary in order to accommodate and service the number of students. Student services needed to be consolidated and space in Morrill was renovated for this purpose. Yet, \$200,000 was realized in personnel savings as a result of the College reorganization and the money has been taken back centrally.

Working out the new College's requirements is a big and ongoing issue. This involves dealing with three sets of requirements coming in and reaching a compromise for the new College of Natural Sciences. NRE had no college requirements. Currently, they are treating everyone under the rules they came in with and allowing students to be grandfathered in or not.

There is also work to be done on the curriculum. They have initiated a curriculum review in order to look for the most effective ways to align the departments while avoiding redundancies. Four interdisciplinary programs in the life sciences is proving unwieldy. On a positive note, "the win" will be the curriculum that can be offered at the undergraduate level in the life sciences and these discussions are in place now.

In the research domain, business is occurring as usual. People who have worked together in the past are still doing research together. Faculty are generally happy. Their home is in their department. Personnel processes are more difficult. There are more cases for the Dean's office to handle. Given the size of the new college, these processes are more complicated. Currently, there is an option where a case will be evaluated. In the future, they anticipate a single personnel committee with one member from each department elected to the College personnel committee.

Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning (LARP) made a case to stay in the science college but was moved to SBS. The Stockbridge School of Agriculture has a two year program with courses from LARP offered for its Landscape Contracting. This poses a problem because Stockbridge has no faculty of its own and there is a future concern that two year students won't be accommodated.

A lingering concern is one of scale and moving from faculties of 260 and 140 to 400. It was questioned whether this new college will feel like home, even though they are all scientists. Future conversations need to be driven by the faculty and occur from the bottom up.

Students haven't really noticed the change yet, although some have noticed an improvement in advising. TA allocations may need to be revisited. The allocations are not rational but rather historical and political and were set up 20+ years ago.

2. Bryan Harvey briefly discussed the status of the current program review. There are three things now occurring on campus: 1) preparations for cuts in light of the expected budget shortfall, 2) an organization of resources, and 3) ideas currently being generated for increasing revenue. It is not clear what method will be used to absorb the cuts. A framework will emerge this year. The topic of monetization came up and it was proposed that the Council discuss monetization and look at models used at other universities at a future meeting. For example, UNH engages in "responsibility centered management" in which each revenue center acts on its own. Formula funding is another possibility wherein resources are allocated based on the number of students in a program. Providing subsidies for smaller programs that may be central to a University's mission is another.

3. Election of the Chair of the APC was the last order of business. Kathy Debevec was re-elected chair for the 2009-2010 academic year.

The meeting began at 3:00 and ended at 4:50.