Academic Priorities Council  
Minutes of October 18, 2011

Attendees: Eliot Moss, Susan Sturgeon, Savannah Van Leuvan-Smith, Scott Stangroom, Elizabeth Chilton, Bryan Harvey, Ernie May, Kathy Debevec, Dick Bogartz (Chair)

1. The Council reviewed a proposal for an M.S. in Applied Molecular Biotechnology. This is a one year Professional Science Master’s degree program with lab courses but no thesis requirement. Biotechnology companies in New England are supportive of this program of study and the degree is expected to give students the research and laboratory skills they need to be competitive for jobs in industry and academia. The laboratory component of the program complements faculty research efforts; students will be provided problems and research questions by faculty. The Microbiology Dept. has dedicated lab space for the program. An enrollment of approximately 10-14 students per year is expected and the program will be revenue generating. The Council unanimously supported the proposal.

2. A proposal from the Isenberg School of Management for a Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management was reviewed. Concerns were expressed that some components of the proposal are not in alignment with the criteria established for Centers as described on the Faculty Senate website. A Center is defined as follows:

“Centers and Institutes are organizational units on the Amherst campus created to implement academic and training programs, clinical or community service, or research activities that cannot ordinarily be accommodated within existing department structures. Centers and Institutes cannot award degrees or offer majors or courses for regular University credit, nor can they hire tenure-track or tenured faculty.”

The current proposal describes the Center as developing “academic and experiential programs, including: Repackaging existing entrepreneurship courses with the goal of creating a minor in Entrepreneurship for students…Developing additional courses to round-out the range of topics necessary for a full complement of entrepreneurship and innovation education.” The proposal goes on to describe courses developed in Isenberg, BDIC, UWW, and Continuing Education focused on entrepreneurship which are dispersed throughout campus and indicates that “CEIM will create the aforementioned academic and non-academic programs, considering new opportunities as the program evolves, and assist in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation management campus-wide.”

The guidelines restrict Centers from offering courses for University credit. Centers tend to be research focused while this Center seems more like an academic unit offering educational programs. There is a need to justify this new entity and why a Center is being proposed rather
than an educational program. Bryan Harvey will consult with the proposer in Isenberg to sort out what is needed for the proposed Center to be consistent with University guidelines.

3. At the next APC meeting, a proposal for Higher Education Leadership will be reviewed.