

# MINUTES

April 10, 2019

## University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

**Members Present:** Bender, Boehm, Clarke, Gay, Geisinger, Johnson, Hinchman, O’Connor, Plowman, Purcell, Purdum, Ratcliff, Smith, Sollars, Tschetter, Zeleny

**Members Absent:** Bloom, Hibberd, Purdum, Wilhelm

**Others Attending:** Hunter Traynor, Julia Reilly, Interim VC Nunez

**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

Bender called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

### 2.0 Introduction of Emily Johnson, new ASUN President and Shawn Ratcliff, new Graduate Student Assembly President, and Recognition of Hunter Traynor’s Service as ASUN President and Julia Reilly’s Service as GSA President

Bender welcomed Johnson and Ratcliff and thanked Traynor and Reilly for their service on the ASUN and commended them on the excellent job they did representing ASUN and the GSA.

### 3.0 RCM Committee Update (Clarke and Nunez)

Clarke reported that the RCM Committee’s responsibility is to discuss and consider a new budget model for the campus. She noted that currently the campus runs on a central funding model, but the RCM model would be more transparent. She stated that the Committee has met three times and is working with the consultants to determine what the RCM model would look like for UNL. She stated that the Committee has been discussing the overall planning process for the budget, where the revenue comes from, and what the expenses are. She pointed out that some units support the activities of the campus while others bring in the revenue. She stated that the goal is to have a plan that we can test run for next academic year, but it would run parallel with the current budget model. She reported that more detailed information can be found on the RCM webpage: <https://budget.unl.edu/responsibility-center-management>. She stated that the Committee is making it a priority to support communication with the campus about the proposed model and to gather input and Committee members are speaking with the Faculty Senate, the APC, and various other groups on campus. She stated that the Committee will be meeting during the summer.

Bender stated that he had heard the goal was to have a parallel model in place by July 1. Nunez stated that the basic calculus of the model would be developed, but it probably wouldn’t start until September. Bender asked if the goal was to get feedback during the next academic year on the proposed model. Clarke stated that this is the idea and feedback would be provided to the units on what the impacts would be with the new model. She noted that interdisciplinary

research is something that needs to be considered and we need a budget model that can support it. Bender asked if the plan was to go with the RCM budget a year after the model shadows the current budget. Nunez stated that this is correct. He pointed out that if we consider the models carefully and get the needed input we should not encounter problems such as issues with interdisciplinary research. He noted that we do not want a budget model that would be detrimental to the University and the objective is not to weaken departments, but to change the culture of how budget decisions are made.

Clarke stated that the RCM Committee will be looking at the additional information that colleges will need in order to make the kind of financial decisions that will be required by the RCM model. She noted that we should see some improvements to our data systems because of the needed information. Nunez agreed and stated that having the necessary information will be crucial for the RCM model to work. He stated that great data and great leadership is needed for this budget model to work, and the experiences at other universities that have gone to the RCM model show that data has improved greatly.

Purcell stated that she heard that the RCM model would help address the low salaries of Lecturers and asked if this was true. Plowman pointed out that the salaries are decisions made within the units. She noted that the RCM model does not address these kinds of issues. Nunez stated that the RCM is a budgeting model, not a decision maker.

Nunez stated that there are a range of RCM models and the RCM Committee is looking at a contemporary, decentralized budget model where the decision authority is delegated to the colleges. Clarke noted that the metrics that will be used with the models still needs to be decided and this will help determine the model that will be chosen. Nunez pointed out that the decision process about the model will be vetted to the campus as much as possible and the Committee is committed to keeping the process transparent.

Geisinger reported that he was recently at another Big Ten university that is using the RCM model and the faculty there dislike it because of the negative impact it has on collaborative work. Nunez stated that the proposed model would have to be considered carefully to make sure this does not occur.

Bender pointed out that the RCM model will require a lot of counting of various metrics, but asked if metrics that will be counted differ from those currently used. Nunez stated that the goal is to keep things simple and noted that the more technical and complex the metrics are, the more difficult it makes the budget. He noted that understandability translates into transparency. He pointed out that nothing has been decided yet. He stated that the N150 plan looks at student success and how the campus will grow, move forward, and stand out as a University. He stated that we need a budget that will support these goals. Boehm noted that a lot of what we already count as metrics is already monetized, but there are some critical things that are not. He stated that the campus needs to decide what our values are and what we think is important. He noted that a poorly timed crisis could have impacts and this all needs to be taken into consideration when determining which budget model will be best for us.

Nunez stated that he will be happy to come and speak to the APC as often as needed.

#### **4.0 Approval of March 13, 2019 Minutes**

Zeleny moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Geisinger and approved by the Committee.

#### **5.0 Revised Proposal Social Justice and Diversity in Education Graduate Certificate**

Sollars stated that the main concern with the initial proposal was that most of the courses that were offered for the certificate were special topics and it was not clear that they would be offered consistently for students to complete the program in a timely manner. She stated that there was also concern about whether the special topic courses would be designed for the program. However, she stated that the situation seems to be rectified with the new proposal.

Gay pointed out that the program does not seem to accept students from outside the university. Plowman stated that this is unfortunate, and the department needs to consider the revenue that would be lost with this plan. She understands that there might need to be some prerequisites that need to be taken to get into the program, but the department should be encouraged to open the enrollment.

Geisinger stated that he has concerns about the revenue. He noted that the program says they are going to be able to generate revenue without any additional costs which seems optimistic. Sollars stated that she can revisit and address the questions that were raised. The APC will reconsider the proposal once the questions have been addressed.

#### **6.0 APC Representative Report on the Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion Design APR (Hinchman)**

Hinchman reported that the APR was held last fall and the external review team was well put together. He noted that Associate VC Walker made it clear that the APR was an experiment in shortening the length of time due to budget constraints, and although the review went well, there was concern about the shortness of the time available for the APR. Plowman stated that there have been other reviews that have complained about the lack of time and her office will need to take this under consideration and may return to the longer time, although it can be difficult to recruit people to serve on a two-day APR.

Hinchman noted that the TMFD department is in the College of Education and Human Sciences but is also linked with IANR and this connection is very fundamental to who they are as a department. He reported that the demographics of the department was pointed out by the external review team. The department is smaller than similar units and the majority of the faculty are young and are more recent hires. He noted that while they are energetic there is some concern regarding succession and future leadership. He reported that the undergraduate numbers are down, and while this is occurring around the country, the numbers are worse here. He stated that the graduate programs are doing fine, but the review team feels the department has too many graduate programs and suggested that areas of expertise should be established.

Hinchman stated that during the team's visit to the Quilt Center the staff did not have the opportunity to provide input without the director being present because the director was there the whole time the team was at the Center. He noted that the relationship between the department

and Quilt Center are not ideal and needs to be improved. He stated that the Quilt Center used to be in the department, but is now a global force on its own and there needs to be discussion on what the Center's place is at the University. Plowman pointed out that the Quilt Center is changing its name to the International Quilt Center and it is very much a museum, not an academic department. She reported that a Memorandum of Understanding is being established that the Quilt Center will be under the Chancellor's Office, but quilt studies will stay within the TMFD department.

Hinchman noted that the department was identified as a potential program that could be eliminated due to the budget cuts in 2017 and the department was recommended by the team to focus the graduate programs. He noted that the faculty members are still concerned that the department could be cut if budget shortages occur again.

Plowman stated that the review team had some very innovative ideas on what TMFC could do.

### **7.0 APC Representative Report on Philosophy APR (Tschetter)**

Tschetter reported that the external review team was excellent and very positive. She noted that the team felt that, although the Philosophy department was small, it was a real gem and barely missed being ranked in the top 50 in the *Philosophical Gourmet Report*.

Tschetter stated that a real issue for the department is the graduate student stipends. She noted that increasing the number of graduate students is among one of the priorities for the department, and while the graduate students have success in finding employment upon graduation, the number of students in the program is low. She stated that the team recommended creating a masters' program and certificate programs and having graduate minors to try to build the graduate program. She reported that the number of undergraduate students in courses is increasing, but the number of majors is not. She stated that the department wants to break the top 50 international ranking of Philosophy programs and wanted feedback from the team on how this can be done. The team recommended that high powered faculty members be hired for the department, but the college suggested hiring some junior faculty members.

Tschetter reported that the team felt rushed and had concerns with having concurrent sessions. She stated that the overall report was a very positive review. She stated that the team felt that having a stepping stone masters' program would not require funding because there would be increased enrollment. Plowman asked if the team felt that the masters' students would pay tuition for the courses. Tschetter stated that the team felt they would generate tuition revenue.

Smith asked how many Ph.D. students the department is graduating. Tschetter stated that only one or two a year are graduating. O'Connor noted that the Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education is looking at graduate programs every five years. Plowman stated that the CCPE is getting more rigid in requiring a certain number of graduates for programs. Tschetter stated that the question of how you justify a Ph.D. program needs to be considered before programs are just discontinued. Boehm stated that Philosophy is a critical department, especially in the study of ethics, and we need to ask questions on how we can build stronger bridges between Philosophy and the STEM fields. Gay stated that the department should be

reaching out to other departments to make these bridges. He noted that the department could have seminars a few times a year and widely advertise them to the University.

Tschetter noted that the Philosophy department is willing to try things to make improvements. She noted that it is an incredibly collegial department, but they need to expand that collegiality to other units. She stated that overall the APR went very well.

### **8.0 Discussion Regarding Modern Language & Literature APR**

The APC discussed whether there may have been a procedural error with the Modern Language & Literature department's APR and whether another APR should be conducted.

### **9.0 Report on Long Range Planning Subcommittee Meeting with Associate VC Walker Regarding APRs**

Clarke reported that the LRP subcommittee met with Associate VC Walker to discuss the APR process. She noted that the APC's role is to monitor the APRs. She stated that one question that was raised was whether we should appoint APC representatives sooner. Gay questioned whether APC representatives should play a more active role in the APRs. Clarke stated that the APR Guidelines are fine, but there is an issue with the timing. She stated that smaller department APRs might be able to be conducted with the shorter schedule, but larger units need two days. She suggested the idea that departments should provide input on whether they want a one day APR or two day.

Plowman stated that she sees no problem with adjusting the timetable for the APRs. She pointed out that what needs to be determined is how to make the APRs more meaningful. She suggested having a follow-up report from a department a few years after the APR to see if they have acted on any of the recommendations that were in the external review team's report. Boehm stated that an APR is a strategic document for a department and we need to make sure we are sensitive to whether the APRs are working well for the units. He stated that the departments should report on how they have made improvements based on the recommendations made in the team's report. Sollars pointed out that IANR's APRs are conducted differently than Academic Affairs'. She noted that some departments have used their APRs extraordinarily well. Geisinger suggested that departments be asked what they learned from the APR.

O'Connor stated that there needs to be clear communication and external review team members need to be educated on what is expected. He noted that the external review team members should know that the APC representative serves as a resource person for the team. He reported that Walker is willing to work with the APC to ensure that we have successful reviews.

O'Connor stated that the discussion with Walker on the timetable for the APR was a good discussion and Walker noted that nothing was left out of the APR even though the length of time for it was shorter. Tschetter noted that the morning breakfast meeting was eliminated which did not provide the team a chance to have discussion amongst themselves. Boehm stated that while there may be an expense to doing breakfast and dinner meetings, they are important and valuable for the team members to communicate with each other. O'Connor noted that it can be difficult to get people to come for two days. Plowman noted that this was the main reason for shortening the time for the APR process. Boehm pointed out that we pay \$500 less than other universities

for people to serve on an external review team. Gay stated that we may need to raise the amount to entice people to serve on an external review team.

Clarke stated that she will develop a list of points identified by the APC and will talk to Walker about them.

#### **10.0 Reports from the Executive Vice Chancellor, Vice Chancellor for IANR, Vice Chancellor for Research & Economic Development**

Plowman reported that the candidates for the Dean of Libraries will be coming to campus in a couple of weeks and she asked APC members to encourage people to attend the public presentation as this position is an important role for the campus.

Plowman stated that she is excited about the new Husker Hub that is being created. She stated that the Hub will provide service to students on a number of things such as registration and financial aid. She noted that the staff will be cross-trained and will be able to answer a variety of questions for students. She noted that this should be very helpful to students.

Boehm reported that the University's effort to assist with the flood relief efforts is well underway and Extension Educators are heavily involved in providing assistance. He noted that Plowman is leading the university's academic officers in reviewing policies that could assist students impacted by the flooding.

Boehm reported that the renovation on the East Campus Union is progressing quickly and the new dining facility will open this fall. He noted that once that opens the second floor will be closed for renovation. He stated that the Gnotobiotic Mouse Facility is going through the final approval process with the Board of Regents and should break ground in July.

Boehm stated that the CYT Library temporary housing will be where the Dairy Store was located. He stated that CYT will be closing in the middle of the summer and the new Dairy Store location will shift to an unused part of the food processing center. Gay asked if the external structure of CYT will be renovated or whether it will just be internal renovations. Boehm reported that there will be renovations to the external feature of the building and two front doors will be on the east side but the west side doors will continue to be the main entrance. He noted that the road in front of CYT will be eliminated.

Boehm stated that a new director for EPSCOR has been hired as Professor Choobineh is stepping down. He noted that Dr. Matthew Andrews from Oregon State University has been hired as the new director. He noted that EPSCOR's new office will be located at NIC.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, April 24, 2019 at 3:00 in the City Campus Union, Georgina Suite. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.