

MINUTES

January 13, 2021 University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

Members Present: Ankerson, Bloom, Boehm, Buan, Clarke, Everhart, Gay, Geisinger, Hachtmann, Hebets, Latta Konecky, Miller, Moberly, Rodene, Smith, Spiller, Tschetter, Wilhelm, Zeleny

Members Absent:

Others Attending: Chancellor Green

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

1.0 Call

Geisinger called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green – Budget

Chancellor Green thanked the APC members for all of their efforts last semester in processing the proposed budget reductions. He noted that the APC's recommendation to not eliminate the Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion Design department, which he agreed with, created a remaining deficit and noted that he is now presenting new proposed budget cuts which would be available to the Committee after the meeting.

Chancellor Green wanted to thank Dean Jones of CEHS for the work she has done to identify the new cuts and he noted that most of the new cuts come from CEHS with some additional cuts coming from IANR. He reported that EVC Spiller reviewed and endorsed the proposed cuts.

Boehm pointed out that while IANR had approved the reduction of the Hospitality, Restaurant, Tourism and Management program in CASNR, the tenured faculty line is not being eliminated.

Geisinger asked the APC members to review the new proposed budget cuts prior to the next meeting so the Committee can begin working on them at the January 27th meeting.

3.0 Minutes of December 2, 2020

Geisinger asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Bloom and Spiller suggested minor revisions after which the APC approved the minutes.

4.0 Subcommittee Needed to Review Mathematics Education Graduate Certificate Proposal

Gay and Geisinger volunteered to review the Mathematics Education Graduate Certificate proposal.

5.0 Subcommittee Needed to Review the School of Computing Proposal

Hachtmann, Bloom, Clarke, and Wilhelm agreed to review the proposal to create a School of Computing. Bloom noted that the proposal calls for moving programs to a different college and pointed out that the APC needs to approve these changes, yet the documentation was not included in the proposal. He requested that the documentation be provided. EVC Spiller stated that most of these program changes are just moving the program from department level administration to college level administration so she does not believe the APC has to act on these changes, but there is one program that will be jointly administered which the APC needs to consider. She suggested that the reviewers speak to AVC Batman who can answer any questions regarding these changes.

6.0 Subcommittee Review on the Proposal for the Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. (Buan and Bloom)

Buan reported that the proposed Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. will be a standalone program that will replace the current specialization under the unified Engineering Ph.D. degree program. She noted that in recent years more graduate certificates are morphing into standalone programs in the Engineering College. She stated that the courses for the program will be delivered at UNL and UNO and enrollment is robust. She noted that there are fewer of these programs in the Midwest and predictions are that there will be good growth in the program. She pointed out that the undergraduate option has 130 students and two-thirds go to graduate school, but many choose not to come to UNL because we currently do not have a specific Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering. She reported that 15 faculty members have been hired in this field and many of these faculty members want to recruit graduate students to work in their labs. Bloom pointed out that while there are projections for future enrollment growth, it is not clear that there is interest here for the program. He stated that there will be a series of unbundling of Ph.D. programs in Engineering and he thinks the APC will be seeing more of these kinds of proposals in the future.

Boehm reported that faculty members from multiple departments are extremely supportive of the proposal, but the proposal is lacking the letters of support from some department chairs. Geisinger asked if the Committee wants the letters from the chairs of the departments that are currently participating in the existing program and does there need to be clarification on the evaluation process of faculty members from the departments that offer courses outside of the program.

Boehm moved to table the proposal until all of the letters have been received. Buan also asked that the first chair be named for the program. Spiller asked if identifying the process and timeline would be sufficient since it is not determined yet who would chair the program. Buan agreed that this was fine. The APC agreed to table the proposal until all letters are received.

7.0 Subcommittee Review on the Proposal for Law and Business BSBA (Boehm and Geisinger)

Boehm reported that the proposal was well-founded, and the intent of the proposal is for people in business who need to understand the finer points of law to help them with their business. He noted that the proposal fits well with the Business Entrepreneurship program and courses already exist both in the College of Business, Law College, and the College of Arts & Sciences. He stated that the proposal provided evidence of the need and demand for the program and did a

good job of explaining any possible duplication with other colleges in Nebraska. He stated that there are only four high-end universities that have a similar program, but they are aimed at pre-law students. He pointed out that the budget is neutral, and he fully endorses the proposal and recommends that the APC approve it.

Geisinger stated that the proposal did a very good job of identifying jobs that students could get after they complete the program. He noted that very few new resources are required, and the proposers stated that they would only need to obtain more resources if the program has an enrollment of 160 students or more. Moberly pointed out that the undergraduate courses are taught by law professors through the College of Business.

Ankerson seconded the motion to approve the proposal. The proposal was approved by the APC.

8.0 Subcommittee Review of Plant and Landscape Systems BS Program (Everhart and Latta Konecky)

Everhart reported that the proposal seeks to combine three existing majors into a unified major which would have 15 emphases. Latta Konecky pointed out that the proposals merge and rebrands the existing majors which would allow them to reach a larger population of students and students will be able to craft their emphasis. She noted that the combining of existing majors and having emphases is a model for programs in the future.

Everhart stated that the proposal was well-written but one area that is weak is justifying the need for the program. She pointed out that the demand for graduates is not well synthesized. Latta Konecky noted that the market analysis at the end of the proposal is not clear and there needs to be clarification.

Geisinger asked if the APC wanted to wait on voting on the proposal until further documentation is received. The Committee agreed to table the proposal until the documentation is complete.

9.0 Subcommittee Review of the Proposal for the Animal Science Undergraduate Certificate (Clarke)

Clarke reported that the motivation for developing the undergraduate certificate is due to the demand from people already in the workforce who are interested in working in the animal industry and in animal management. She noted that the proposed program would be open to non-degree seeking students who would like to add to their academic credentials and stated that the program provides basic understanding of all aspects of animals. She reported that it would be an online certificate program. She noted that a group of faculty members have been identified who will manage the certificate and advise students. She pointed out that there needs to be some clarification about hidden credit hours. She reported that she discussed with the proposer how important it is to promote the certificate and asked how promotion will occur since there is no budget associated with it. She stated that the Animal Science department has said that there will be a website on the program and Extension will assist in publicizing it.

Clarke moved to approve the proposal. Geisinger seconded the motion and the APC approved it.

10.0 APC Annual Report to the Faculty Senate

The APC reviewed the draft report summarizing the work of the Committee for the past year. Zeleny suggested adding review of the procedures for budget reductions to the committee's suggested work for next year.

11.0 Reports from EVC Spiller, VC Boehm, and VC Wilhelm

EVC Spiller

Spiller reported that there was a solid level of performance from students in the fall and given that we have been in a pandemic, it has been a very good semester. She stated that there was strong interest in the two 3-week sessions with some students taking courses in both sessions. She reported that we saw the best increase in our 6-year graduation rate and noted that we want to continue to make good progress in each of our graduation rates.

Spiller stated that the enrollment for spring is down slightly, but this is better than at other institutions and our sister campuses which have seen some significant decline. However, she reported that we are seeing a significant increase in the number of credit hours students are registered for this spring. She noted that we have put together a strong initiative to help students fill out a degree plan in their first 18 months of college and when this is done there is a substantial increase in the number of students graduating on time. She reported that our applications for next year look positive and at this time we are up in first generation students and URM students seeing strong numbers in both state and out-of-state enrollment. She pointed out that international student applications are still opaque at this time. She noted that at some point, perhaps during the first fall meeting, she would like to give a more in-depth account of what we are seeing with respect to degree programs being developed in the system and at other schools in Nebraska.

Gay asked for some examples of courses that were offered during the 3-week sessions. Spiller stated that there were some topical courses such as courses about anti-racism, COVID and pandemics, and there were career readiness courses. She noted that the advantage of the 3-week session is that students were able to stay on track with their courses, particularly with the vertical sequenced courses.

Bloom asked how we are doing in terms of net tuition revenue per student and asked about remissions. Spiller stated that we are making sure that remissions are getting to a sustainable place and we have been very conscientious to make sure that our remissions are being better managed. She pointed out that for students the decision on whether to come to the university is based on the total cost of attendance, not just on tuition or scholarships. She reported that her office has worked with Student Affairs to target students who are not from Lincoln and for who housing costs are a real consideration. She noted that in comparison to our peers, she is confident that we are doing well.

VC Wilhelm

Wilhelm reported that ORED was successful in hiring Jessica Herrmann as Director for Federal Relations for UNL and she began working on January 4th and is already working with many people around the campus. He reported that the federal 2021 omnibus bill passed finally by the federal government and it yielded different opportunities across the board including increased

research opportunities. He noted that NIH grants saw a 6.7% increase, the National Endowment for the Humanities had a 5% increase, our strength in water research resulted in U.S. Geological Survey funding increases of 10% and in one case in cooperative research there was a 30% increase. NSF and USDA both saw close to a 3% increase.

Wilhelm stated that there was a great deal of collaborative effort in developing PPEs, hand sanitizers, and other safety items not only for the campus, but for the Lincoln and Lancaster community. Collaborators included Innovation Studio, the Food Processing Center, and the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering department, which was recognized nationally with an award for its association with the efforts. He noted that more than 200,000 gallons of hand sanitizer was manufactured at Innovation Campus and other items were created there as well. He started that work is still going on to ensure the safety of the campus during this pandemic.

VC Boehm

Boehm reported that in association with ORED, faculty across the campus have been working hard on the N2025 grand challenges one of those areas being food and water security. The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine recently put a report out pointing out how critical advancements in food technologies is going to be and what was highlighted in the report fits right on top of the work that we are doing here in Nebraska. He noted that within the federal 2021 omnibus appropriations bill is funding of \$11.2 million for the planning and design of a USDA Agriculture Research Facility which will probably be located at UNL. He pointed out that obtaining this research facility was the result of tremendous effort and partnership between IANR and ORED and the help of Congressman Fortenberry and Senator Fisher.

Boehm reported that \$45 million in appropriations were tied tightly to the University of Nebraska last year and \$22 ½ million of this was tied to IANR. \$4 million has been allocated for a particular USDA grant and we are well positioned to possibly get this funding.

Boehm stated that this fall IANR had the privilege of hosting Assistant Director of Homeland Security David Richardson and he spoke considerably about the security of food, water, and animals. Boehm pointed out that UNL is well situated to conduct research in these areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 3:00 by Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.