

MINUTES
March 8, 2023

University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Academic Planning Committee

Members Present: Ankerson, Boehm, Button, Clarke, Davis, Doll, Drake, Haake, Haverkost, Latta Konecky, Kelley, Ourada, Pechous, Theiss-Morse, Tschetter, Vuran, Wilhelm

Members Absent: Donesky, Hiatt, Moriyama

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

1.0 Call

Tschetter called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green

Chancellor Green reported that he was setting in motion the Procedures to be Invoked for Significant Budget Reallocations and Reductions. He noted that everyone is aware that we have a structural deficit of \$23.2 million moving into fiscal year 2024 and stated that the deficit is a result of enrollment decline due to multi-year record graduating classes, continued pressure on new international enrollment, combined with increased remissions. He stated that after carefully and conservatively modeling enrollment for the next two fiscal years the campus hopes to recoup a portion of the lost revenue but \$10,770,191 still needs to be cut from our permanent budget.

Chancellor Green stated that he was presenting his framework for the budget cuts which includes the timeline he is suggesting for the APC to consider the proposed budget reductions and when they would be enacted. He pointed out that the Committee can accept or revise the framework and he is proposing that the process begin on April 5 when he would present the detailed budget cuts being put forward. He noted that in order to implement the budget cuts within this fiscal year which ends on June 30, he will need to receive APC's recommendations by May 26.

Boehm moved to accept the framework document as proposed by the Chancellor. Latta Konecky seconded the motion. Kolbe asked when the deans were made aware of the percentage of budget reductions there would be for their college. Ankerson noted that the Chancellor had discussed the budget situation at the December 6 Faculty Senate meeting but the final figures were not known until March 6. Boehm reported that Chancellor Green had mentioned the need for reducing administrative salaries and pointed out that this was also a goal of the N2025 strategic plan.

Vuran stated that he has concerns with the short timeline for the APC to consider the recommendations and asked what would occur if the detailed proposed budget cuts were not presented to the APC on April 5. Davis stated that the intent is to have it to the APC by April 5. Kolbe asked Button and Heng-Moss if they had enough time to determine the budget cuts for

their colleges. Both Button and Heng-Moss stated that the cuts will be difficult, and the short time creates an additional hardship. After some discussion, Tschetter suggested moving the date for the Chancellor to provide the APC with the specific plan for budget reductions to April 12 in order to provide the Deans with some extra time to determine their proposed cuts. The friendly amendment was approved, Clarke then moved to approve the amended timeframe. Drake seconded the motion, the motion was then approved by the APC.

3.0 Introduction of Staff Senate Representatives

Tschetter introduced Staff Senate President Terry Haverkost and Internal Vice President Haake who were joining the APC to represent the staff during the budgeting cutting process as per the Procedures. She noted that they do have voting rights only on items pertaining to the budget reductions and they are free to leave the meeting after the budget cuts are discussed.

4.0 Report on Entomology Graduate Certificate Proposal (Latta Konecky, Theiss-Morse)

Theiss-Morse stated that she and Latta Konecky reviewed the proposal which would be available both on campus and online for 15 credits, 7 of which are required. She noted that these courses are already being taught in the entomology masters' program. She reported that admissions into the program would go through a three-person certificate advisory committee.

Theiss-Morse stated that there were some questions about the proposal, but overall they thought it was a good proposal. Latta Konecky stated that the questions they had could have been addressed in the proposal if more detail had been provided. For instance, there was a question regarding whether some courses were really a prerequisite when a student could be admitted without the prerequisite but then take the course concurrently when starting the program. She stated that there was also a question about how often the required courses are available since there is a five-year limit to get the certificate. Heng-Moss stated that most of the courses are offered at least once every academic year. She stated that the proposers looked at the history of the online entomology masters' program which allows a five-year period for completion of 36 credit hours and determined that students in the graduate certificate program could easily complete the program within that same timeframe. Latta Konecky stated that there was only one letter of support but noted that it was a very supportive letter. Heng-Moss pointed out that one of the goals with the certificate is providing micro-credentials for those people in the workforce and stated that more letters could be obtained if needed. Latta Konecky stated that she and Theiss-Morse feel that the proposal is good and should be moved forward.

Heng-Moss suggested having some discussion about speeding up the approval process for micro-credential programs by requiring only campus level approval. She stated that this could encourage other departments to consider offering micro-credential programs. Tschetter noted that there have been ongoing conversations about this issue. Ankerson pointed out that we need to be strategic with the proposals and suggested that we could do some things at the campus level that could save time. Boehm stated that it would be great if we could have an accelerated process. Doll pointed out it would be good if we could find a way to accelerate the process while ensuring the quality of the program.

Clarke moved to approve the program, motion seconded by Drake and approved by the APC.

5.0 Reports from EVC Ankerson, VC Boehm, and VC Wilhelm

EVC Ankerson

Ankerson reported that last week there was a very successful PASS session for promoting at-promise student success. She noted that about 125 students participated, and many people were involved including researchers from USC. She stated that we have been involved for multiple years now in this grant-funded project across universities that looks at increasing the success of at-promise students. She reported that UNL proposed this project to the Higher Learning Commission as a quality initiative for our upcoming accreditation process. She stated that the PASS session creates an ecology of validation for at-promise students which increases retention and pointed out that retention of students is where we have the most to gain in our enrollment.

Ankerson reported that the Boyer Report is now available, and it looks at undergraduate education at research 1 universities. She stated that AVC Goodburn has a source to get the books and she will provide one for members of the APC.

Ankerson stated that at the Chief Academic Officers' meeting there was a presentation about open resources for Nebraska (at UNL it is called [STAR](#)) which is an initiative to have successful teaching with affordable resources for students. She noted that having more affordable resources for students has shown an 8% reduction rate in DFW grades and a 10% increase in students receiving an A in a course in a report focused on UNO. She reported that students who don't have enough financial resources often wait to see if a book is really going to be used in a course which puts them behind other students in the course, but when they are able to obtain the book in the beginning of the class their performance improves.

Ankerson stated that our graduate student applications are up 10%, fueled in part by international graduate students, and if students can obtain a visa in time to attend class it will help with our enrollment. She noted that we have admittances with students from China, Ghana, and Egypt and Dean Hope of Graduate Studies will be reaching out to units to encourage them to think about contacting students from these countries. Heng-Moss asked what is the percentage of graduate students that are on assistantships and questioned whether we have the capacity to provide more assistantships when we have increased applications. Ankerson stated that she did not have that figure at hand but noted that master students often pay full tuition, while Ph.D. students typically receive an assistantship.

Ankerson reported that the search for a new VC of Student Affairs will start tomorrow.

VC Boehm

Boehm noted that trying to keep a growth mindset and to develop strategies while having to deal with budget cuts is challenging, but it is important that we keep our growth mindset intact. He stated that it is the most wonderful time of the year when promotion and tenure files are being reviewed and IANR is getting close to publicly announcing the promotions and tenures at the end of the month. He stated that unit leaders in IANR are conducting annual evaluations and reviewing salaries noting that the deadline for completion is March 15.

Boehm reported that one of the big projects he has been advocating for is a \$120 million-dollar new national center of excellence for the USDA at Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC). He stated that Congress has appropriated \$31 million dollars over the last two years for the center and our advocacy efforts to get the next balance for the project are actively underway. In addition to the USDA national center, he also shared that the State Legislature appropriated \$25 million to UNL for another new innovation facility at NIC connected to the USDA National Center. More specifically, these funds, that are required to match 1:1 with private support, would be used to create UNL's new Ag-Tech Innovation Accelerator. This facility would significantly accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship efforts in Nebraska and the region related to resilient and regenerative precision/digital agriculture. Efforts are underway to secure the \$25 million in private match.

Boehm reported that the new Dean of the Agricultural Research Division, Dr. Derek McLean, started at UNL on January 1, and has hit the ground running. Dr. McLean was a professor of animal science at Washington State prior to working in the animal health industry. Dr. McLean most recently served as a Senior Science Advisor in the Office of AIDS Research at NIH. He also noted that Dr. Mark Stone, from the University of New Mexico, has been hired as the new permanent head for the Department of Biological Systems Engineering and that several additional searches for unit leaders are underway (Director of the School of Natural Resources, and head for the Department of Animal Science.) He noted that Professor Wes Peterson and Kate Brooks have agreed to serve as interim department head and associate head, respectively, for the Department of Agricultural Economics until a new permanent department head is hired, a national search will be launched later this spring.

Boehm stated that IANR has been working on the enrollment front noting that we recently celebrated the 10-year anniversary between UNL's Department of Food Science and Technology and Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWFU) in Yangling, China. It is a 3 plus 1 program where students are taught in English by NWFU faculty for the first two years, taught by UNL FS&T faculty in Yangling in year 3, before coming to Lincoln to complete their studies. Students graduate with a FS&T degree from UNL and a food engineering degree from NWFU. He reported that Dean Heng-Moss recently finalized the launching of a similar 3+1 program with NWFU focused on plant biology. He noted that these programs bring 50 students per year to CASNR and provide reciprocal pathways for UNL students interested in learning in China. He reported that IANR is working with Josh Davis and Peter McCornick, from the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute on a pathway program with Egypt. IANR is also actively looking into possible pathway programs with university partners in Jordan, UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait related to water and food security and sovereignty in the Middle East.

Lastly, Boehm shared that IANR is actively engaged with Nebraska's farmers and ranchers that belong to roughly a dozen commodity groups across the State in ways that UNL can add value to their operations including but not limited to resources for scholarships. He noted that IANR was also breaking ground next week on a \$7.5 million expansion of its Feedlot Innovation Center at Mead – a state-of-the-art platform that will significantly enhance UNL's role as the nation's leading innovator in beef cattle production, handling, and animal welfare.

6.0 Other Business

No other business was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.