

# MINUTES

October 9, 2024

## University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

**Members Present:** Ankerson, Bloom, Boehm, Button, Clarke, Cressler, Davis, Gay, Herbin, Heng-Moss, Jemkur, Kopocis, Mueller, Thomas, Tschetter

**Members Absent:** Combs, Ourada, Russo

**Guests:**

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

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### 1.0 Call

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

### 2.0 Approval of September 25, 2024 Minutes

Clarke asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Jones noted that she had some minor edits just clarifying events that will occur during Research Week. Clarke then asked if there was unanimous approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved by the APC.

### 3.0 Proposal to Rename the Undergraduate Major Graphic Design to Graphic Arts

Ankerson reported that in 2016 the Nebraska Coordinating Commission of Postsecondary Education approved a proposal to establish a new major in Graphic Design with two different degree options, a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts. However, during the specialized program reaccreditation process, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the accrediting body, recommended that the program reconsider the name of the Bachelor of Arts program to better align with their accreditation standards for a Bachelor of Arts program. She stated that the change would differentiate the BA graphic arts degree from the Bachelor of Fine Arts and pointed out that there are no changes with the curriculum.

The APC then approved the proposal.

### 4.0 Review of Proposal to create the Internet of Things Graduate Certificate

Gay reported that the initial proposal did not provide a definition of Internet of Things but that has since been added. In addition, he reported that the grammatical revisions were addressed.

Gay stated that he and Bloom felt it was a good proposal and well-motivated and included strong support letters. He noted that the demographics for the program are external IT professionals and students with a BS who want a specified certificate. He reported that 12-credit hours are required and elected courses are offered on a regular basis, as is now specified in the proposal. He stated that the certificate could be obtained in two years. He stated that the proposers

addressed the questions that he and Bloom raised, and they recommend approval of the proposal. Jones pointed out that the graduate certificate plays to some of our real strengths that we have here at UNL.

Clarke noted that the proposal indicated that there were two other remote programs available and asked if these programs were identified. Gay reported that one program was at Stanford and the other at the University of New Mexico, but these programs are totally online. Clarke asked if the program was offered in Computer Science and whether it took a more software networking approach rather than a hardware-oriented approach. Gay stated that it would be more software oriented.

Gay moved for approval of the proposal. Motion seconded by Ankerson and approved by the APC.

## **5.0 Update on the Budget**

Clarke noted that she is getting many questions from faculty members about the budget situation and asked Davis to comment. Davis noted, as the Chancellor reported to the Faculty Senate and the Senate Executive Committee, that there will be a budget deficit which will probably require the invoking of the procedures to deal with the budget reductions. However, the Chancellor continues to work with President Gold to see if UNL can get some relief, so the final amount of the budget deficit is still unknown at this time.

Button asked if there will be a public accounting of what constitutes the budget deficit. Davis pointed out that there is a level of complexity around the budget that is difficult to convey. He stated that we need a conversation about how we break out of this cycle we are in and how we can approach things differently. Gay asked what happened to the incentive-based budget model. Davis stated that we have learned some things from the process to develop the IBBM and he thinks it will be key to getting us out of our current budget cycle. Ankerson pointed out that crucial to any budget model is having accurate data and ensuring that accuracy and the resulting transparency in data is a positive result of the process for the IBB.

Clarke stated that faculty and staff are frustrated. She pointed out that there are many faculty members and staff who care very much about the University and who are not only doing their own job but have taken on additional responsibilities. She noted that it is difficult to hear the President's positive comments and then to hear that we are facing more budget reductions. She stated that there is the continual message that we need to recruit more students, but then there is the question of whether they will actually bring in more tuition revenue or will they be receiving tuition remission which does not help our budget. Davis stated that the Chancellor and President are aware that there is a real morale issue and they both acknowledge it.

## **6.0 Reports from EVC Ankerson, VC Boehm, Interim VC Jones**

### Ankerson

Ankerson reported that the Husker Student POWER survey response rate was 66.4% (3,522) and noted that this survey is a key component of the university's strategy to support and retain current students. She stated that outreach teams are continuing to contact students in need of support and resources based on their responses. This response rate was the second highest since

the survey began in 2019 and she wanted to give shout outs to the colleges of Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Fine and Performing Arts, and Journalism and Mass Communications which exceeded 70% for their response rates.

Ankerson stated that the 2025 US News & World Report college rankings showed improved rankings for the College of Engineering which jumped 11 spots to number 71 nationally; the College of Business undergraduate business programs advanced nine spots to number 53; and Nebraska Business was the only program in the state of Nebraska to crack the top 90, we are in the top 55, and UNLs undergraduate business program is ranked number 30 among public universities.

Ankerson reported that leadership development is important to us, and she wanted to highlight faculty who have been selected to participate in two leadership programs through the Big Ten Academic Alliance. The faculty for the Academic Leadership Program are Richard Bischoff, professor and associate vice chancellor in IANR; Anne Duncan, associate professor, Classics and Religious Studies; Jennifer Nelson, assistant vice chancellor for research, research integrity officer; Rajib Saha, Richard L. and Carol S. McNeel Associate Professor, graduate chair of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering; Jennifer Wood, professor of animal science, associate dean in the Office of Graduate Studies. She noted that they will participate in conversations on campus throughout the academic year learning about leadership and a broad range of topics including community engagement, freedom of expression, challenging conversations, mental health, student success, and the social value of higher education. The BTAA has a grant from the Mellon Foundation that will provide an enhanced two-year experience to select ALP Fellows within humanities disciplines. Anne Duncan has been selected as the Nebraska ALP-Mellon Fellow for 2024-25 and will participate in additional programming focused on academic leadership in the humanities.

Ankerson stated that the faculty members selected for the Department Executive Officers Program are Felix Olschofka, professor of violin, director of the Glenn Korff School of Music; Petronela Radu, Leland J. and Dorothy H. Olson Professor, department chair of Mathematics; Amit Saini, W. W. Marshall College Professor, department chair of Marketing; Hank Stratton, professor, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, executive director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, Deb VanOverbeke, professor, department head of Animal Science. She stated that these leaders will attend a hybrid program of online sessions and an in-person event; topics cover conflict resolution, mentoring, faculty development, performance reviews, and group problem-solving.

### Jones

Jones noted that there have been questions about student posters being available during Research Week and pointed out that the student posters are presented during the Spring Research Fair, but students are certainly welcome to come of the November fair.

Jones reported that it has been a year since she became Interim VC for Research. She stated that accomplishments that the team in the Office of Research and Innovation (ORI) made during this time include the initiation of an apprenticeship program to rebuild the pipeline to jobs in research administration noting that currently 20 students are going through the training and will take positions throughout the research administration next semester. She stated that the Conflict of Commitment Policy has been realigned with the new federal requirements. She reported that we

sustained AAALAC accreditation that recognizes our excellence in lab animal care. Additionally, a number of renovations were made to the State Museum, there was some organizational restructuring at the University Press to enhance their workflow and sustainability, NU Tech and Nebraska Innovation Campus have done strategic planning to design their future, and they now have great plans in place.

Jones stated that she is very proud of her team in the ORI but noted that she has informed the team that she is stepping away from the Vice Chancellor role next month to plan for her retirement from the University. She noted that the APC is an important committee, and she wanted to let the members know about her plans. She stated that the ORI is working on transition plans, and she is very confident that there will be tremendous leadership in place in the office.

Gay asked if there are plans to fill the VC of Research and Innovation with a permanent person rather than an interim. Jones reported that President Gold is taking this opportunity to think holistically about the structure of the university but noted that she has strongly advocated that a national search be conducted to find a new Vice Chancellor. Gay asked whether President Gold may be thinking of hiring someone to oversee both UNL and UNMC's research. Jones pointed out that the size and scope of research for both of these campuses is large enough that there should be two Vice Chancellors of research.

#### Boehm

Boehm reported that IANR held an annual event with members of the Unicameral and about 15 Legislators attended. He stated that the Elite 11 program was highlighted, and an overview was presented by Heng-Moss and some of our amazing students also spoke. He stated that after dinner a tour was given of the Veterinary & Diagnostic Center and Animal Science unit.

Boehm noted that he recently met Matt Blomstedt, our new Associate Vice President for Government Relations. He pointed out that AVP Blomstedt is a three-time graduate from the University and was the Director of the Commission of Education. He stated that AVP Blomstedt seems to be extremely collaborative and believes he is going to empower our state and federal advocacy efforts.

Boehm stated that he will be heading to Washington DC next week as a member of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities group that oversees the core charts for appropriate annual appropriation requests. He noted that he will be meeting with the staff of the ranking members and the chairs of the House and the Senate agricultural appropriation subcommittees.

Boehm pointed out that our involvement with national security is focused on food, agricultural and environmental security and we partner with the College of Engineering to think about cyber and physical security and how critical these are. However, there are other platforms as well such as UNMC's global center for health security, and UNO's National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center and each of the four campuses joined together to submit a grant for federal funds to support a research and development center which would focus on national security issues.

## **7.0 Other Business**

Gay stated that after thinking about strategic planning, he thinks the Faculty Senate would be a better avenue to address the issues with Athletics. He noted that at the October 1 Faculty Senate meeting he asked Chancellor Bennett about the decision to have an instructional continuity day, and the Chancellor pointed out that we are a member of the Big Ten conference which has many benefits but also some negatives aspects. He reported that the Chancellor sent a letter along with Athletics Director Dannen informing the Big Ten Commission that UNL did not want another mid-week evening game due to the disruption it causes for academics.

Gay stated that it is unclear what the niche will be for the recently approved Faculty Budget Committee (FBC). Kopocis noted that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is trying to determine the membership and charge for the FBC and what would be the results of the committee's work. She stated that the Executive Committee is trying to figure out how the committee would operate pointing out that the idea of the committee is good, but it has not been fully developed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, October 23, 2024. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.