

# MINUTES

## University of Nebraska – Lincoln Academic Planning Committee

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

**Members Absent:** Herbin

**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 3:03 p.m.

### **2.1 Introduction of New APC Member**

Clarke introduced Professor Mueller, Classics and Religious Studies, who is a new APC member representing the Arts and Humanities.

### **3.0 Approval of September 11, 2024 Minutes**

Clarke asked if there were any revisions to the September 11 minutes. Bloom asked for a correction in the comment he made about other universities having challenges in hiring enrollment manager. Clarke then asked for unanimous approval. The APC approved the minutes.

### **4.0 Review of the Proposal to Create the Internet of Things Graduate Certificate (Bloom and Gay)**

Gay reported that he and Bloom read the proposal and found numerous grammatical problems which they recommended to the proposers needed to be fixed. He noted that the hands-on experience component of the proposal needed further detail, and there was concern that the courses may not be offered in a timely fashion creating doubt that the certificate could be completed on time. He stated that a letter was sent to Professor Vuran, School of Computing, to address the concerns and they are now waiting for a response.

### **5.0 Review of Proposal to Create an Undergraduate Certificate in Irrigation and Agricultural Water Management (Clarke and Jemkur)**

Clarke reported that she and Jemkur had some questions about the pathways through the certificate for both the degree seeking students and the professional development students. She stated that the proposers have been notified of the concerns and she and Jemkur are waiting for a response.

### **6.0 Proposal to Delete the Civic Engagement Undergraduate Certificate**

Clarke noted that the certificate program did not appear to have any students enrolled. Ankerson reported that since the time the certificate program was started, undergraduate students now have a requirement for experiential learning and there is a new social entrepreneurship course path that they can follow, and students are no longer interested in the program. She stated that she discussed the proposal to delete the program at the Deans' Leadership Council and there were no objections.

Bloom noted that this is the second meeting where the APC is being asked to delete an undergraduate certificate program and asked if we are tracking to see if these certificate programs are successful in getting the needed enrollments. Heng-Moss pointed out that some certificates were created well before their time, and we are in a much better position now to think about micro-credentials and where things are heading. Button noted that the requirement for a market analysis be conducted for proposed programs provides a better sense of enrollment aspects. He stated that there is considerable funding from private sources for these kinds of courses and it is changing the dynamics for these micro-credentials.

Bloom moved to approve the deletion of the undergraduate certificate. Gay seconded the motion which was then approved by the APC.

## **7.0 APC and Strategic Planning**

Clark noted that in the previous APC meeting there was discussion about metrics for units and how units could be evaluated. She stated that if the APC is going to tackle metrics or strategies, the Long-Range Planning Committee could be used to do this work.

Davis stated that strategic planning is a great focus for the APC considering that it is one of the responsibilities of the Committee. He pointed out that UNL's strategic plan needs to be a good fit in the larger context of the University. He stated that we are nearing the end of the N2025 strategic plan, and the timeline needs to be considered but we also must be sensitive to having a new President who is working on strategic priorities for the University. He suggested that it would be helpful for the APC to first look at the N2025 strategic plan and perhaps the N150 plan.

Clarke stated that there should be discussions of where the campus is heading and what is still relevant to the N2025 and N150 plans. She noted that consideration needs to be given to what things we need to be thinking about and the process for developing a new strategic plan.

Bloom pointed out that there were six aims in the N2025 plan, and the APC could look at each aim to see if we reached the targets as outlined in the plan. He noted that this would be a good way to brainstorm and to think about the framework for developing a new plan.

Davis pointed out that we approached the previous plans in a traditional way and asked if we are now in a space to create a five or ten-year plan. He questioned what a more dynamic strategic plan could look like and whether it could have more flexibility to it. Bloom stated that if you don't have specific targets, you can't plan accordingly.

Clarke noted that Cressler will begin setting up meetings for the Long-Range Planning committee.

### **8.0 UNL Campus and Athletics**

Gay stated that there is concern about the interface between athletics and academics at UNL and pointed out that the Big Ten network told us that we had to hold classes remotely due to a Friday night football game. He pointed out that this is a huge concern when athletics interferes with academics. He noted that the concept of a student-athlete is changing because they will now be considered an employee and questioned whether they would be able to start unionizing and dictating the academic schedule. He stated that many of his colleagues felt demoralized by the decision that having a Friday night game was more important than holding in-person classes.

Ankerson pointed out that the decision to have an Instructional Continuity Day was made by the Executive Leadership of UNL after considerable discussions. She stated that the pros and cons of having in-person classes was discussed but, in the end, there were concerns about whether students would have difficulty getting to classes and safety issues with having an additional 80,000 people on campus. She reported that AD Dannen sent a letter to make a case to the Big Ten conference to not have any additional games during the week on campus due to the disruption it causes for us. Bloom questioned whether this is an issue for the Faculty Senate rather than the APC. Clarke noted that the APC could support the Faculty Senate and express the concerns raised today. She stated that the nature of athletics at universities is changing, and the change is creating challenges and impacting academics.

Clarke asked if there has been any word from President Gold about athletics. Davis stated that he believes the current structure with athletics will be in place for a while. He noted that this is a big issue, but he does not think the APC is the right group to address the issue because it is not in the purview of the APC. He stated that it should be the Faculty Senate and perhaps the Faculty Athletics Representative Professor Fuess. Clarke suggested that the APC could share its thoughts and concerns with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

Kopocis pointed out that the Senate Executive Committee discussed some of these concerns with President Gold when they met with him on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. She stated that there is a delicate balance with UNL Athletics being the face of the University, and after the Executive Committee spoke with President Gold, it was clear that the reporting line would not change anytime soon.

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

Ankerson reported that the Title II Act requires all state/local public education institutions to comply with ADA standards and 1 ½ years from now all of our websites and courses on Canvas must be accessible to those who are visually impaired. She stated that a taskforce at the University has been formed, but she noted that this act will put a lot of pressure on faculty and staff to make sure their websites are in compliance.

Ankerson reported that the Career Fair occurred last week, over four days on both the City and East campus. She stated that 414 employers were at the Fair and 3,958 students participated in the event. She pointed out that the Fair was a success for both the employers and the students.

Bloom noted that in the Chancellor's message he targeted the EVC's office for creating a welcoming and supportive environment for faculty, staff, and students. He asked if the EVC has received any additional resources to help with the work that will be required. Ankerson stated that there are many people working on this and noted that we want an environment where people thrive and flourish.

### Boehm

Boehm reported that the Legacy Meadows between the East Campus Union and the Dinsdale Learning Commons will be opening soon. He noted that the area has been redesigned with new lighting installed and trees planted. He stated that there have been inquiries on whether the statutes of the four Nebraskan U.S. Agricultural Secretaries will be reinstalled, and he reported that they will be, but in slightly different locations. Gay asked what happened to the fifth statute, the George Beadle statute. Boehm stated that the statute will be placed by the south entrance of the Union.

Boehm stated that the Dead Man's run renovation project, which called for the widening and evening of the run, has been in development for 10-12 years. He pointed out that Dead Man's run sits on the northern and eastern tier of East Campus and noted that both the East Campus and the neighborhood between Leighton and Adams Streets which contains approximately 470 homes or households, are in the 100-year floodplain. He stated that the City of Lincoln and the South Natural Resource District came up with an alternative plan that would put a series of detention cells that would handle storm water, rather than the widening of Dead Man's run which would have taken 22 acres of East Campus land. With the alternative plan the University's commitment would be 7 or 8 acres and in exchange for not having to build a new bridge, the project is going to build for the University an experiential lab which would be for our students working in storm water runoff. This will enhance our teaching and learning, research, discovery, outreach and engagement efforts.

Boehm wanted to remind people living or driving in Nebraska to watch out for combines because this is harvesting season, and it will continue through November.

Boehm reported that we recently had a great announcement about a grant for an NSF global center project of \$14 million. The grant was given to a multi-dimensional team that includes partnership with 19 universities and 40 industry partners here in the U.S. and in Japan and the U.K.

Boehm stated that in Washington DC there is a bipartisan, continuing resolution that will be approved to avoid the government shutdown. He noted that this is important to the University because the entire NU system receives about \$75 million of special appropriations. He stated that \$16 million in federal funds is for the USDA National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture that will be built on Innovation Campus.

Boehm reported that the Daugherty Water for Global Food Institute, the National Drought Mitigation Center and the Yeutter Institute Executive Directors were in Washington, DC to attend a focused international conference on drought, water and food insecurity as well as international trade and domestic trade policies related to agriculture. He pointed out that when

very high levels of tariffs are put into place, the pushback is always on agricultural exports. He noted that when disruptions to agriculture from drought or from war, such as in Ukraine, they have really deep impacts on the global agricultural supplies. He reported that the Executive Directors also gave a briefing on Capitol Hill and visited with some key agencies.

Jones

Jones reported that November 11-15 will be Research Week and events for the week are being solidified. She noted that there will be a celebration breakfast where all our successes will be celebrated and pointed out that we had 9 NSF career awards this year which is a record for us and puts us into second place in the Big Ten. She stated that there will be a book writing workshop, AWIS luncheon with presentations by President Espy of Wayne State University. She also noted that there will be program officers and representatives from several funding agencies who will speak about how to be successful with grant writing.

Clarke asked if there will be activities for graduate and undergraduates that week. Jones stated that she believes there will be and said she would have more information in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next meeting of the APC will be on Wednesday, October 9, 2024. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator.