

**President's College-Wide Advisory Committee on Academic Planning
Meeting Minutes
4.5.10**

Present: J. Cullen, W. Cunningham, N. DeChillo, N. Dennis, M. Fregeau,
A. Greenstein, E. Haran, K. Kuehnle, L. Little, P. Sablock, M. Sweeney,
L. Swiniarski.

Chair Mark Fregeau called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. in MH 405.

Approval of Minutes

It was reported that the Minutes of the March 22, 2010 meeting were approved online.

Chair's Report

Feedback on draft of criteria

Chair Mark Fregeau reported that the minutes and draft of criteria had been circulated to chairs and posted on the Academic Affairs and Governance web sites.

He had received numerous responses, which were forwarded to committee members.

Process for chairs' collection of indicator data

Following the March 22 meeting, Fregeau met with the Provost to express the committee's concerns about being included in the data collection process.

The Provost agreed that the committee should play an integral role in the collection of data. In a departure from the procedure outlined in the minutes of the March 22, 2010 meeting, the new procedure will be as follows:

Mark Fregeau (on behalf of the Advisory Committee) will issue the call for the collection of indicator data by chairs. Data will be sent to him, where it will be retained over the summer. After the criteria are finalized, the data will be submitted with departmental reports.

Fregeau reported that the Provost thought that the Advisory Committee might gain useful insights for the development of rubrics by seeing types of data collected.

Cover letter for approved criteria

Fregeau also reported that the Provost agreed with the Advisory Committee's desire to write a cover letter to accompany the criteria when it is forwarded to, and passes through, governance. This letter would convey the Provost's remarks at the March 22, 2010 meeting, in which she explained that the departmental reviews would not lead to forced mergers/closings of academic departments, or layoffs.

The letter will be jointly signed by Provost Esterberg and Advisory Committee Chair Mark Fregeau.

Work load for chairs

Fregeau reported that the Provost is considering helping chairs with the extra workload imposed by the collection of indicator data. It is possible that she will be able to provide clerical help, released time, and assistance with digging out data.

Responses to Chair's Report

Question: How will new chairs be able to handle the May 31, 2010 deadline for the submission of indicator data? Even though many incoming chairs have had experience as past chairs, they still face tight deadlines. What penalty is there if they cannot submit data by May 31?

Fregeau: We will discuss getting new chairs involved at some point. My main concern about the meeting with the Provost was being able to take the purview of the data collection back under the committee's control. By our asking for the data, we achieve this.

Fregeau: The Provost wants chairs to begin data collection this spring.

Comment: With the new process of data collection, the Provost will have the numbers [relating to the indicators], but not department chairs' interpretations.

New Business

[Recorder's note: Though most of the following comments occurred in the order they were made, the order of some items has been shifted for continuity in reading.]

Responses to criteria

Chair Fregeau referred to the following attachments to his email of March 31, 2010:

Comments-2.docx
Academic Planning Criteria Edit.doc
Academic Planning Criteria 3-8-10-edit2.doc

[Recorder's note: all three documents are attached to these minutes].

Motion: It was moved and seconded to discuss responses to the draft of the criteria. The motion carried, 12-0.

Discussion on the motion

Comment: Could the language of the first bullet of Criterion 1: Support of the Mission be modified to say: "To what degree is the program consistent with the mission, vision, values, and goals of Salem State College"?

Action: Change accepted.

Question: Do we need bullet #2 under Criterion 1: "How does the program advance the mission of Salem State College?" It seems redundant with bullet #1.

Comment: The criteria are intended as jumping off points for chairs' elaborations. The criteria are the most essential. The bullets provide clarification. I don't have a problem with redundancy.

Action: Deletion of bullet #2 under Criterion 1 accepted.

Comment: It would make sense if data on external demand could be gathered and cumulated in a central location.

Response: Would this be good? Departments know better than anyone the demand for their majors.

Question: Another area of concern about the criteria involves recruiting students to program. We presently do some recruitment, but do not have the resources to go all out. Could we get institutional support for this?

Comment: Some departments, like criminal justice, have linkages with community colleges.

Question: Can departments with a small number of faculty, such as geology, do a lot of recruiting? The faculty's time is primarily devoted to teaching and advising.

Comment: It is important for departments to research labor market data. Many professional organizations provide data on future needs for graduates in certain majors. This information can be used by departments in marketing and recruitment as they advise students on what they could do with a major.

Comment: Only those people within a field are fully aware of the potential applications of degrees in a major.

Comment: The departmental reports provide the opportunity to level the playing field between different academic areas of the college.

Comment: It is especially important for departments to note how well their programs prepare students for graduate programs, in addition to vocational considerations.

Question: Why don't we broaden the criteria to include the question "What can students do with this degree?"

Response: It seems that criteria #3 supports career preparation, but is broad enough to include the development of critical thinking, writing, and quantitative skills. The criteria and the reports should be about more than getting a job.

Comment: Perhaps Mark Fregeau's cover letter could explain that the criteria are designed to elicit information on the development of academic skills, in addition to vocational preparation.

Question: How will we guide chairs to all ways of interpreting the criteria? We have this committee to bounce ideas around, but chairs will be completing the criteria on their own. We need to develop the rubrics to provide clarification for chairs.

Mark Fregeau: We can't develop the rubrics before the criteria are approved by governance. The rubrics will be the next task for our committee.

Question: Do they [the criteria and the rubrics] have to be a matched set? Answer: Yes.

Mark Fregeau: The committee can at least begin work on the rubrics.

Comment: Faculty comments on the criteria will help us design the rubrics. For example, the comment "As of now, this question focuses solely on faculty being active and engaged in scholarship, what about the other aspects of the College mission supported by faculty activity and engagement" will help us design the rubrics for Criterion 4: Indicate the degree to which faculty are active and engaged.

Comment: We could write scope notes for each criterion's bullets as a first step toward developing rubrics. This might prompt people to think of additional information.

Question: Should we add an "other" category for the criteria?

Comments: Is it fair to leave responses open-ended? Won't we use data from chairs to develop matrices?

Mark Fregeau: Perhaps we could make a guide to doing your program review.

Comment: Yes. Faculty can see that this is the first iteration. Their responses can be modified.

Comment: We should keep the criteria, rubrics, and guidelines simple, while inviting chairs to add what they want. Chairs know how to describe what they do, and how to add stuff.

Comment: And, chairs may revise what they submit.

Comment: We have to be careful in the interpretation of data. Small departments, for instance, do not have people to serve on all committees and do extra tasks, as large departments do.

Comment: One way to equalize comparisons of large and small departments is to assign quantitative values.

Question: But, do we want to do quantitative analyses? The best part of the review process is our interpretation.

Comment: These are legitimate issues for concern. Chairs don't know what readers are looking for.

Mark Fregeau: This is what we do know at this point about the criteria:

- We have received some comments.
- It seems that the best way to include them is in the rubrics.
- Do we want to modify the criteria to answer concerns that were expressed?

Motion: It was moved and seconded to approve the criteria, as amended. The motion carried, 12-0.

Mark Fregeau: I see two next steps. First, we have approved the criteria. They need to be amended. Second, I will draft a cover letter and circulate it to the committee for approval.

Comment: We need to add to the cover letter an explanation of the governance process. The criteria will be submitted to All College, and sent to all governance committees for approval. Minutes of each governance committee indicating this will be sent to All College Committee. Once All College approves the minutes of the governance committees, it sends its minutes indicating this to President Meservey for approval. Only after the President approves these minutes of All College will the criteria be considered "approved."

If any of the governance committees along the way (Curriculum, Academic Policies, Library Media, and Student Life) do not approve the criteria, the criteria will be sent back to us [the Advisory Committee for re-working].

What all of this means is that it is highly unlikely that chairs will receive the final, approved criteria by May 31. The Chair of All College will urge governance committees to act quickly upon the criteria.

Motion: It was moved and seconded that Mark Fregeau draft a letter to accompany the criteria, asking for input within 48 hours.

After discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

Motion: It was moved and seconded that Mark Fregeau draft a letter to accompany the criteria, asking for input within 24 hours. The motion carried, 12-0.

It was noted that the minutes of today's meeting have to be approved quickly, since they include the approval of the criteria.

The minutes will be sent out Wednesday, April 7 for approval by email. The cover letter and corrected criteria will accompany the minutes.

Rubrics Subcommittee

The following committee members volunteered to serve on the Subcommittee to Develop Rubrics for Departmental Review Criteria: Lillian Little, William Cunningham, Michelle Sweeney, and Neal DeChillo. Elizabeth Haran indicated that she will try to join the group if at all possible.

The subcommittee will draft rubrics and sent it to the committee by email.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be on April 26, 2010, place to be announced. There will not be a meeting on Monday, April 12.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

**Nancy Dennis
Recorder**

