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Minutes, University Senate Academic Policies Committee

Meeting No. 8 (Vol 51): Tuesday February 9, 2015

Members Present: Lori Bica, Mike Carney, Selika Duckworth-Lawton, Ned Gannon, Jerry Hoepner, Patricia Kleine, Cheryl Lapp, Don Mowry, Bob Nowlan, Jean Pratt (Chair), and Stephanie Wical

Guests Present: Margaret Cassidy, Jennifer Fager

1. Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

2. The minutes of the November 25, 2014 meeting of the APC were approved as amended.

3. Provost Kleine reported on her meetings with department and program leaders in response to the round of periodic reviews completed during the 2013-2014 academic year.

   a. Provost Kleine indicated that this was an unusual year insofar as only four programs were reviewed; in the future it is more likely six to seven will be reviewed each year.

   b. The Provost indicated that by and large reviewers agreed on recommendations across the board, with a few notable exceptions.

   c. Provost Kleine emphasized that in meeting with department and program leaders she always aims not merely to discuss recommendations but also to make sure that she clearly indicates how much she appreciates and is impressed by the positive accomplishments of these departments and programs.

   d. In relation to Kinesiology the Provost highlighted how extensively active members of this program are in community outreach. She also focused on how she and program leadership are in agreement on recommendations, working on a change in form and direction, including, notably, addressing an especially problematic required course offering, in part by setting up a boot camp to help prepare students to succeed in that class.

   e. In relation to Mathematics Provost Kleine praised the department for adding and developing its actuarial science program, for improvements in how it responds to and engages with needs in the area of remedial mathematics, for setting up boot camps for students in need of additional assistance to prepare them to succeed in math classes, for increased diversity among the department’s faculty, and for money brought in from grants. She further commended the work of the annual Math Retreat, and achievements in the area of student-faculty collaborative research. She noted Mathematics is now one of the top five majors in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Provost indicated that concern expressed over lack of involvement of junior faculty in department governance is
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being addressed. Chair Pratt asked about lack of competitive salaries among UWEC mathematics faculty; the Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Carney indicated work is being done on finding ways to potentially compensate math faculty for participating in collaborative research by embedding it in the curriculum and making it part of teaching load.

f. In relation to Physics and Astronomy Provost Kleine commended the department for being extensively active within the community and in bringing the community to campus, for being 1 of 9 programs of its kind with the highest % of undergraduates going on to seek PhDs upon graduation, and for its considerable success in supporting the teaching of high school physics in the region. The Provost recommended that the department continue in its present form rather than it pursue a change in form or direction, as she believed that the department could pursue the specific recommendations reviewers agreed on without needing to change form or direction. Other points mentioned: the LTS chargeback issue has been resolved, the department is participating more in connection with health sciences/medical physics, and opportunities for engineering physics are being pursued in conjunction with Materials Science and Engineering while working with UW-Platteville. In addition, the Provost noted money is available to replace equipment that was cited as a need in the department’s review. Chair Pratt asked about whether department members were experiencing a teaching overload–teaching more without compensation for so doing. Provost Kleine and AVC Carney responded that this was not an issue except perhaps in relation to Physics Department Chair Ford. Chair Pratt asked about whether the technician position would be saved in the face of impending budget cuts; Provost Kleine indicated that having people in that kind of position is very important and actually saves the university money. The Provost agreed with S. Duckworth-Lawton that balancing serving majors and non-majors will continue to be a significant challenge for physics as well as many other departments.

g. In relation to Special Education Provost Kleine praised the department for its success in getting students quickly involved teaching in the community and for the overall unbelievable rate of success its graduates achieve. She also mentioned that the early childhood component of the degree is being brought back to UWEC from UW-River Falls.

4. APC and the Provost agreed that the Provost would continue to make this same kind of report each year the 2nd week in February.

5. The Provost mentioned the benefits and the complications of now involving the Deans in the periodic program review process.

6. L. Bica recommended developing a common template for the external reviewer and the internal review committee to follow. AVC Carney indicated he will take this recommendation into consideration.
7. In addition to Chair Pratt, the following APC members agreed to work on the following of this year's program reviews, as lead APC reviewers: L. Bica–Materials Science; D. Mowry–Biology; S. Ducksworth-Lawton–Psychology; B. Nowlan–Education Studies; Philosophy and Religious Studies–J. Hoepner; Broadfield Social Studies–C. Lapp; and American Indian Studies–N. Gannon and D. Dunham.

8. Jennifer Muelenkamp and Alex Smith will come to the APC meeting next week to talk about undergraduate research. J. Pratt indicated we will only meet when we need to, and meetings will not be held when we don’t need to meet.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Nowlan
Secretary for the Meeting