ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL
Minutes of September 20, 2010
3 p.m., Holmes Student Center – 505

Present: Alden, Baumgartner, Cassidy, Dawson, Falkoff, Gordon, Gorman, Jung, Koren, Marcellus, Matuszewich, Mini, Novak, Otieno, Prawitz, Simpson, Ye

Guests: Donna Askins, Research Associate, Office of the Provost; Brad Bond, Acting Dean, Graduate School; Dave Changnon, Acting Associate Vice Provost, Office of the Provost; Carolinda Douglass, Director, Office of Assessment Services; Teresa Fisher, Associate Professor, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; Connie Fox, Associate Dean, College of Education; Laurel Jeris, Professor, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; Barbara Johnson, Chair, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; La Vonne Neal, Dean, College of Education

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. It was announced that The First Steps Toward Identifying Student Learning and Baccalaureate Reform: Strategies to Move Forward workshops will be held on October 15, 2010. Both workshops will be presented by Dr. Marilee J. Bresciani, professor of Postsecondary Education Leadership at San Diego State University. The Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center will be sending out information regarding these workshops.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of August 23, 2010, and the motion passed unanimously.

Barbara Johnson, chair, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; Laurel Jeris, professor, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; Teresa Fisher, associate professor, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; and Connie Fox, associate dean, College of Education were introduced.

The associate dean and the chair provided an overview of the Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education. The programs in this department have a large number of students and have a huge impact regionally and on campus. The adult and higher education programs serve a lot of employees, especially student services employees. The department has four programs: M.S.Ed. and Ed.D. in Adult and Higher Education and M.S.Ed. and Ed.D. in Counseling. There is great demand for the doctoral program in adult and higher education, but we have a small faculty and it is difficult to serve all the demand. The school counseling program is a very popular program; there has been growth in the mental health area. We hope to transition the Ed.D. in Counseling program to a Ph.D. in Counseling program to attract students nationally. Our Ed.D. program in counseling is one of only four Ed.D. programs nationally.

David Gorman will present the APC subcommittee report. The members of the subcommittee were thanked for their hard work on the review. The report was well written.
The departmental strengths are fairly straightforward. The department has done a lot to develop partnerships and collaborations; the counseling programs are exemplary in this respect. The integration of the students is also a strength of this department. In CAHC 211, undergraduates explore the possibility of pursuing a master’s or doctoral degree and this helps with recruitment and attracting clients. The doctoral students teach in the program too.

The department was asked to explain the annual student retreat for students in the adult and higher education programs. The annual student retreat has been done as long as the program has been in existence. It is a one-day retreat in the fall that provides an opportunity for students and faculty to get together. There are sessions about moving through the program, and students share their research. This is an informal retreat for students. The retreat focus changes every year, and students plan the event. This retreat is separate from the faculty retreat.

The main discussion point is the concern about faculty staffing issues. In the last review, technology was an issue, and the subcommittee was wondering if the department has enough computers. It was reported that the department has sufficient computers, and that the College of Education purchased Apple computers last year for individuals who wanted to use them. Another concern is the current economic conditions and the impact on students’ ability to enroll and complete the program in a timely manner. The adult and higher education programs have a long history of serving a number of regional sites, including Chicago. These sites have changed, and it is difficult for some students to finish the program. The program quit serving Great Lakes two years ago because of the difficulty with non-military personnel being allowed on base. It was discovered that the students believe that tuition is due when they register for courses, so the department instituted some measures that let the students know that tuition is not due when they register. Also, external programming has to decide a couple of months prior to courses starting if a course has a high enough enrollment to be offered. The department has started sending emails to students asking them to register, and this seems to be helping.

La Vonne Neal, dean of the College of Education, joined the meeting and was introduced. She noted that this review process will help with the future CACREP accreditation visit.

The main recommendation for the future, which was mentioned several times in the review, is the balancing act between the large and growing demand that the department wants to serve and the availability of resources to serve the demand. The APC already discussed better communication with students. Are there other things similar to this that the program could address? Day-to-day decision making is happening now. An example of this is students switching from community counseling to school counseling to retool their skills; this helps the unit and NIU.

In all of the reviews, the FY09 data is missing for enrollment and cost figures. The costs are satisfactory for the FY05-FY08. Will the Office of Institutional Research provide these data at some point in the future, or will these data not be available? These data will probably not be available. We will have a year of missing data, and this has happened before. If you look at university wide data for FY09, you will notice that there was a shift in accounting for upper-division and lower-division hours. This was due to the switch from Legacy to MyNIU and this misclassification occurred university wide. The following year, things readjusted to what you would think would be the trend lines. Trying to fix this for four programs would be very difficult. Given this information I would add under recommendations for the future that the programs look at whether the programs are cost effective.
The program learning outcomes are problematic. According to feedback from your annual updates, everything is fine. The programs use the same language from the annual updates in the review, but we say that this is problematic in the program review report. Some programs have specific outcomes that are required by accrediting bodies, and they look for specific language. It was clarified that the issue is about stating all of the learning outcomes in a measurable way. The programs have already responded to this item by noting that they will work on their learning outcomes, and that’s fine.

The M.S.Ed. in Adult and Higher Education program has many strengths. The growth prospects are good, the program is guided by national standards, and there is strong alumni involvement. The program also has an exemplary partnership with the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

One discussion point is the internships. Some of the students have work experience, and some do not. The program now has more students who do not have work experience. Internships are not required, and it seems like quite a few students opt not to participate in internships. Should the internship be required? The department has been back and forth on this issue. We do not want to make the internship required for students who have work experience. Currently the internship is required for students who do not have work experience, and this is handled through the advising process. Our interns are in high demand; we have more placements than we have students available.

Another discussion point is certificates; there are four certificates in adult and higher education. What are the advantages and disadvantages involved in offering these certificates? When the certificates were developed the thought was that on-campus students and possibly off-campus students would pursue the certificates. The off-campus students would take courses at community colleges, and the cohort model would be used to offer these certificates. The certificates serve people from different disciplines. One thing that is problematic is that these students are enrolled as students-at-large. Generally, students who are enrolled as SALs are not eligible to receive the Stafford Loan. Since 2006, when this federal requirement was properly enforced at NIU, we have seen a steady decline in SALs. Another problem with SALs is that they create hidden work for the department because it is serving students who are not majors, and the work of the faculty with SALs does not get acknowledged. This is also a communication issue; we need to have the students tell us that they are pursuing a certificate. The program is moving in this direction, and using a contract cohort will help with this issue too.

The Ed.D. in Adult and Higher Education is a good program, and it has good growth prospects. The program has a strong internship aspect, and the subcommittee was impressed by the program’s efforts at professionalizing the students in research and scholarship, participation in conferences, and publications. The program requires students to pass two exams. One is a qualifying examination and another candidacy examination is required toward the end of the program. The program has good student diversity, and the alumni involvement is strong.

Discussion points include time-to-degree and faculty workload in regard to dissertations. The time-to-degree is a concern, and it is getting longer because of the increase in part-time students. The department is considering two additional measures to address this issue, and these are not in the report. With the new MyNIU program it is possible to give a “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” for dissertation hours, and the program is thinking about using this option. Another option is to have an annual staffing where we talk about students’ progress toward completing the dissertation. The faculty is discussing both of these options. Students are required to enroll in at least three
dissertation credit hours each semester. The one exception to this rule is when students defend in December and they can’t graduate until May, the requirement drops to one credit hour for the spring semester. What are the implications for the students who get unsatisfactory or an IP? If a student receives six hours or more of unsatisfactory grades, they are dismissed. The unsatisfactory would appear on the student’s transcript unless the faculty submit a grade change. Several of the faculty are at the maximum number for chairing dissertations (12 students). It is important to keep in mind that our students are part time. The program does not have more than 100 students at the dissertation stage at any one time, but we have cohorts and this makes it difficult when all the students are at the dissertation stage at the same time. Dissertation hours are campus based even for the students who are enrolled in off-campus programs. There are some faculty who live in Naperville, so they sometimes meet with students at NIU Naperville, but all of the committee meetings occur on campus.

The M.S.Ed. program in counseling strengths are the growth potential, the regional internship placements, the strong alumni involvement, and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) program accreditation. The program is guided by the national CACREP standards, but there are also pressures on the program due to the accreditation requirements. The practica have limited enrollment, and the accrediting body stipulates FTE ratios. Is the CACREP FTE ratio problematic for the program? CACREP would look at the student/faculty ratio more than the FTE requirement. There is a balancing act between regional demand and your capacity. We are hiring a clinical internship coordinator to help with the internship process by planning and coordinating them.

One discussion point is enrollment; in your benchmarking section you say enrollment will grow to approximately 60 students. Do you want to enlarge capacity, or do you think it will enlarge naturally? The program believes that the community track will grow, and increasing to 60 students should be manageable with the new clinical position. Another discussion point is that the CACREP report says that the program has been housed in three different departments. This was prior to the last program review.

A recommendation for the future is to improve student diversity. In the accreditation review CACREP also noted a weakness in the program in multicultural issues, but it is clear that you are trying to address this. A course was started this fall dealing with multicultural issues.

The Ed.D. in Counseling program has many strengths including diversity and CACREP accreditation. The program wants to transition from an Ed.D. to a Ph.D. Would the program hope to maintain the strengths that it currently has? Yes, constituencies are asking for a Ph.D. program and there are many reasons to pursue a Ph.D. program. There is a different pay structure for individuals who have a Ph.D. What resource implications are there for creating a Ph.D. program? The modifications in resources will be forthcoming. Transitioning to a Ph.D. does have implications for faculty engagement in research. More faculty will be doing grant writing to support doctoral students. Will this take time from teaching, or will it be added to the faculty workload? In the counseling area there are not many opportunities for grants, but we are retooling to go after contracts instead of grants. One contract area is working with community colleges in Chicago related to school counseling. The college is also looking at the same thing for literacy. The contracts would build in support for students as well as cost recovery. Is there going to be a cap on the number of doctoral students in the Ph.D. program? The college is working on this as well. Is the program prepared to discuss this with the external reviewers? The external reviewers will be here in two weeks.
How does the program manage other professional development requirements (e.g., join a professional organization, present at a conference, research team involvement, and computer technology competencies)? How do students fulfill all of these requirements? Involvement with the research team includes 12 hours of research, co-teaching, counseling, and internships. Technology is built in through all of the different components.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Cradduck