APPROVED

ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL
Minutes of October 14, 2013
3 p.m., Holmes Student Center – 505

Present: Abdel-Motaleb, Boutin, Clark, Dawson, Douglass, Freeman, Gordon, House, Kolb (for Birberick), Li, Molnar, Shortridge, Than

Guests: Derryl Block, Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences; Susan Bowers, Faculty Director, Child Development Laboratory; Barbara Cuppett, Director, Family Center; Sherry Fang, Family and Child Studies Area Coordinator, School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences; Beverly Henry, Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences; Tom Pavkov, Chair, School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences; Chris Parker, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Outcomes Assessment, Office of Assessment Services; Joan Quinn, Food System Lab Coordinator, Chandelier Dining Room and Ellington’s; Emily Reilly, Associate Director, Child Development Laboratory; and Josephine Umoren, Associate Professor, School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

There was no quorum present, so the minutes of September 23, 2013, were not approved. The minutes will be approved electronically.

Susan Bowers, faculty director of the Child Development Laboratory; Emily Reilly, associate director of the Child Development Laboratory; Barbara Cuppett, director of the Family Center; Joan Quinn, food system lab coordinator for the Chandelier Dining Room and Ellington’s; Tom Pavkov, chair of the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences; Sherry Fang, family and child studies area coordinator in the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences; Josephine Umoren, associate professor in the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences; Derryl Block, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences; and Beverly Henry, associate dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences were introduced.

Block said she was very pleased with these programs. They have done what they could with limited resources. Pavkov echoed Dean Block’s comments, and he thanked the subcommittee for the review of the programs. He has taken the information from the preliminary meeting, and in some areas we are already making changes.

The meeting was turned over to Geoff Gordon for the presentation of the subcommittee reports. All three centers are well run, and these are well written reports. You will find under the discussion points suggestions for improvement. We will not get to all of them today. We will go through some strengths, raise two to three questions, and briefly mention the major recommendations. The answers you provided at the subcommittee meeting were well thought out.

The Family Therapy Clinic has many strengths. There is a very good description of the objectives and how you carry them out. The report was well presented, and easy to read. Thank you for that. The subcommittee was impressed by the way the clinic integrates teaching and research into
practice. The specialized expertise developed is great. The center offers a great service to the university and the community.

One of the discussion points is capacity. The question regarding capacity is a re-occurring theme. Is there room to grow? There are only 12 students admitted to the program each year. We are at capacity. The family and childhood studies area is down two faculty positions at this point. It is not feasible to grow without additional positions. We are currently searching for one faculty position, but there is a freeze on right now.

Could you talk about developing marketing materials? Are you at capacity regarding clients? If you are at or near capacity, have you thought about raising the fees? We did make some adjustments to the fees we charge. We now require a minimum of $10 for each visit. We used to only charge $5 per visit. We started tracking client referrals last spring and summer, and we estimate a 60 percent growth trajectory. We are trying to be more visible in the community. We have increased marketing substantially, and we now have a number of referrals from outside the university. There are a number of presentations done each month in the community, and we attend community meetings. There will be a big meeting in December with probation in DeKalb County. The marketing efforts are very new, and part of the marketing effort is client based. In terms of how referrals are handled from the time they attend an event and want to refer a case, what is the lag time between then and when an appointment is set up? We do phone intakes. The intake takes about 10-15 minutes, and then we schedule an appointment within that week or early the next week.

The major recommendations for the future are: expanding the program into medical counseling, providing information regarding where students work and seek further education, and broadening your marketing efforts. The expansion of the program into medical counseling seems like a tremendous opportunity. One caution is to ensure staffing and support for this program. In the report, provide examples of where students go to work or go on for further education. If capacity allows, broaden your marketing efforts to attract a larger number of external community clients.

The Child Development Laboratory (CDL) review was well written and enjoyable to read. The CDL provides a mechanism for engaged learning and the integration of teaching, service, and research into practice. The CDL allows students from diverse majors to acquire needed career skills. Combining reading, class discussions, and hands-on learning is a great example of forward-looking education at NIU. The CDL appears to motivate students to do well, as evidenced by the practicum’s pass rate. The laboratory’s high program quality rating and accreditation speaks to the strength of the program.

One item for discussion is capacity. Can you talk about capacity both for students and for clients? Is there a wait list for the CDL? There is not enough capacity in the CDL. We are working with the Campus Child Care to work out a temporary solution to make sure our students graduate in a timely manner. The CDL occupies space where Campus Child Care used to be. This is old space that would cost a lot to retrofit. There is some space in the Gabel Hall we would like to occupy that is under-utilized, but we haven’t had an opportunity to talk about this yet. We could grow, but we are constrained. There has been a waiting list for the last couple of years. Can you partner with Campus Child Care? These two centers have separate missions. The CDL is a laboratory setting, the curriculum is highly integrated, and this doesn’t exist in Campus Child Care. Campus Child Care is subsidized through student fees. The CDL doesn’t have that. We would need to have discussions about this.
How do you choose which children to take? There is a target of 25 percent from low-income. We try to have balance in the children we serve. Children with special needs get priority, so our students have the opportunity to work with these children. How are students trained to deal with children who have special needs? We use a developmental perspective approach; all our courses focus on children as individuals.

Have there been any discussions about space? The problems are accessibility and space. The CDL is in a very public area in an old school building. There are always questions about what could happen, and we struggle with this. We are exploring putting forward a capital request around security issues. We are looking at opportunities to secure off some of the exits. Currently children can be in contact with individuals who haven’t had a background check.

Recommendations for the future relate to the last question we asked. Ensuring the accessibility of guests and the safety of children utilizing the facility should be a top priority. Continue efforts to gain financial support from the university and community. Keep this as a priority. Begin efforts to fundraise for the CDL from both alumni of the program and from families who have utilized the laboratory in the past. There is so much marketing potential. What are we doing? We are trying to lessen the turnover rate. The university and college can do more. It was over 15 years since the salary for positions at the CDL had been changed, and we made a case that these salaries should be increased. The salaries have recently been increased.

The Chandelier Dining Room (CDR) and Ellington’s have many strengths. They provide an incredible training ground for students where they have hands-on experiences. You have good information in the review about where students land jobs. The customer comments regarding Ellington’s are great, and the numerous assessment activities are noteworthy. The practice of workers evaluating management, management evaluating workers, and the management team evaluating each other is strong.

One discussion point is enrollment in FCNS 320. Talk about enrollment again and talk about capacity. Students in nutrition and dietetics and in hospitality enroll in FCNS 320. Enrollment in 320 has been pretty stable over the last couple of years. This allows us to provide service at Ellington’s two days a week. There are some constraints on how we can grow. If we added another day for Ellington’s, we would need another course section and we are limited in how much we can grow that particular class. This is not to say that we couldn’t grow. We would need to have more conversations with the HSC staff, but it all comes back to how you staff it and the resources to do this. We are hoping that by growing the hospitality program (one additional faculty line), we can look at this. Do students who complete 320 apply the knowledge that they obtained in the course and their co-curricular activities before they graduate? I think so. Students obtain substantive knowledge to do food services and learn from the team work experiences. We have strong feedback from students in terms of the value they have taken from the class. I think that students work very hard in that class. It is a developmental experience for them in the application of knowledge that is pretty common. One prerequisite for the course is that students have 100 hours of work experiences in food production. Would students who complete 320 be more likely to participate in co-curricular activities in food service? Nutrition and dietetics students sometimes switch over to hospitality. Some businesses recruit students who are in the 320 class. The Kane County Cougars recruit students to work in the summer. I am not aware that we survey for co-curricular activities.
These students are likely to participate in the Feed them Soup and/or Empty Bowls projects. Some students also work for the student center dining and HSC dining.

Can you speak about your relationship with the HSC? We have a terrific relationship with them. We share the kitchen with them, and they provide information that is helpful to our students. The students enjoy working with the HSC staff. The HLC staff helps our management team in ordering, and they keep things on hand that we are going to need. This is a very positive relationship. The director of the HSC is who I go to in terms of pricing. He makes the final decision about pricing. The money generated by Ellington’s goes back to the HSC because they pay for all the operational costs. I have had requests to do activities in Ellington’s that aren’t related to the class. One suggestion was for family weekend we show off our program and have a family meal outside of the usual Ellington’s hours. We would need to look at our catering group to offer something outside the hours of Ellington’s operations, and the HSC does catering, so I don’t use my catering group in Ellington’s. This is a hard thing for people to grasp. We do not want to step on the toes of the HSC staff.

How do you go about publicizing the CDR? Are you at full capacity, so you don’t need to publicize the CDR? The main method is the website. If you Google catering, the CDR will come up. We also have a list serve that has 1,000 names on it. When people make a reservation at Ellington’s, they can be added to our list serve. Using the list serve we tell individuals about specials, when our menus are up, and other things that we do. The list serve is a good way to get to people. In semesters where I am concerned about not having enough catering business, I go back to clients who have used our services in the past. Truthfully, we turn away business. Catering is a class and there are a limited number of hours that students can work. I am the only salaried person that works at the CDR. This is not an entrepreneurial operation because we don’t have the ability to staff it that way.

In the report you mention that students are trained on “vintage” equipment. Could you speak about the sanitation issues? The CDR has a vintage building, some of the equipment is quite old (like the dishwasher). The roof leaks. Are there any thoughts about moving?

Does the CDR do enough business to sustain itself? Should the CDR consider moving to Ellington’s? We turn away clients. We don’t pay labor, so this helps us keep our prices down. Do you utilize the sales program to help you sell this? This would help other students find out about it. We are at capacity most days. We would like to be entrepreneurial and grow it. We are going to actively pursue other ways of doing this if it is feasible. There are certain constraints when you move off campus you have logistic issues, and this limits us in our entrepreneurial opportunities. Are there additional experiences that our students could be part of? I am a business student, but I am thinking about opening a business and I didn’t know about this course. How can we let other students know about this opportunity? Do you have ideas of how you might do this? Get students that work on Facebook all day long. If you look at service and retail, there are a lot more opportunities to partner.

There are a couple of recommendations for the future. Work with college and university representatives to either gain funding to bring the CDR facility up to modern standards, move the CDR operation to Ellington’s, or consider shutting down the CDR. If this doesn’t change over time, I would shut down the CDR. Add a question to the exit interview as to how work experiences
at the CDR and Ellington’s help prepare students for their future career(s). If you are at capacity, raise prices associated with the menu offerings and ensure FCNS gets the extra monies.

All in all, these are three wonderful programs that provide great experiences for our students.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Cradduck