

ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL
Minutes of October 31, 2016
3:00PM, Altgeld 315

Present: Blazey, Chitwood, Douglass, Falkoff, Freeman, Gordon, Hunt, Isabel, Mini,
Mogren, Olson, Slotsve, M. Subramony, R. Subramony, Wilkens and Winkler

Guests:

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM.

There were no announcements.

It was moved by Hunt and seconded by Wilkens to approve the minutes from October 17, 2016. The motion passed unanimously pending minor revisions from Blazey and M. Subramony.

Overview of the Program Review Summary Report, including changes to the Program Review schedule with the alignment of Program Review and Accreditation and follow-up reports.

Subcommittee A: with Gordon presented their review findings for the following program:

Regional History Center:

Discussed strengths, discussion points/areas for improvement, and recommendations for the future.

Additional input:

Mogren:

Archive within the Regional History Center is actually 3 archives with university documents to meet state guidelines, and other various collections.

Approximately a dozen students each year utilize parts of these collections for their senior projects.

Many of the newer collections are being saved electronically, but this does not allow for easy access and can be costly to digitize them. Digital archiving can be challenging.

Storage of paper collections has challenges as well in finding storage room with appropriate environment.

Lack of funding for the center makes increasing storage space and adequately trained staff more difficult.

Cons of potentially charging for use of archives as a means to create additional revenue.

Olson:

The collections are used a lot by students. All three collections are primary sources of information to students and others. Additionally, the Center works with different units in terms of processing and collaborate on projects together. University Libraries were involved with assessment last year and worked more on the academic side in terms of the information that is collected.

During Program Prioritization, there was a concern that the Center's usefulness was not presented adequately. The charts provided were not as clear as they could have been resulting in a categorization of reduced. Further justification was provided as to why the Center is important and needed.

Space to properly maintain records is largely lacking and current collections are not stored as they should be to avoid deterioration. Currently provided space is many years old and even with changes in storage protocol, issues still remain. Past administrators have requested additional resources in an attempt to try to solve some of these issues with no success.

Agreed with Mogren that charging for use of the collection is not a viable option. Occasionally, the Center does get donations, but these are typically smaller.

Working on a succession plan as more people retire, including the possibility of a new position that would focus on digital archives.

Freeman: Let me ask a couple of questions. I want to start out by saying that no unit is happy about being put in a reduced resources quintile. And being put into a reduced resources grouping does not always mean that they are non-essential, it means in the overall prioritization, based on what they saw, the Task Force felt that that was less core to mission or capable of continuing. There is a process to argue back and ask for more resources, rather than asking to be sustained in their action plan. This is in the process of being considered. With the different functions of the Center, the first two, not the historical collection in the unique archives, but the university documents and the municipal records, which we are saying are mandated by the state, would we consider that an unfunded mandate from the state, that we would be reasonably positioned to ask for relief from?

Olson: They give us a graduate student, a funded graduate student.

Freeman: If you had to estimate how much maintaining those units cost, versus what the state invested specifically for those units... would you say that they are putting work on the back of a university that they are barely supporting? Is that a reasonable statement? Or a political argument that can be made?

Olson: I think it can be made, yes.

Freeman: That might be a tactic to take. If we are going to economize on something, I would rather economize on making these digital and less usable and accessible that we are required to do and are less interesting to scholars than things that are on the other end of the spectrum. Couple other questions about leveraging the unit in terms of strengthening relationships. Knowing that relationships can be resources. I don't mean to suggest that relationships can always substitute for dollars because they can't always, but when you don't have dollars than you try to think as creatively as possible about what you might do. Along those lines, I just have two questions. The first one is, in terms of digital archivists who are trained, is there any opportunity for us to make a liaison with a university that already has that kind of program for us to become a clinical rotation site or an internship or externship site? I don't know if other public universities have those programs and if there is an opportunity for us to partner with other Illinois publics to become part of a program, but maybe that is a possibility. Right now we have library faculty and none of them have an academic home per se, with their librarianship the focus. However creating a digital archive expertise that could be leveraged through a partnership with another university seems like something that we might be able to do or might not be. My second question is, I know some museums studies programs have public history tracks and we have museum studies certificates, not a minor or a

degree program. I know Western Illinois has a degree program and then we have a couple of deans in conversation about, are there better opportunities to communicate across institutions about museums studies. I don't if there is a public history opportunity in museum studies or if that could possible help in some way. It seems like that might be another thing that could be explored in terms of leveraging relationships as resources. I'm kind of interested in the reactions from anyone here, and from Ete and Eric, who seem to have the most specific knowledge.

Mogren: I think there is some archive work within this broad parameter of what we call Public History. I think they are geared more towards museum work. Museum work, in my experience, is a very analytic culture. If you look at, for example, the Anthropology Museum, they have new hall and storage space and things like that. It is however my understanding that they also have some space issues. I don't know what kind of connection could be fostered between the center and a museum studies program. I think if there were a more comprehensive Public History program here, that this could generate some internships. It is complicated work, archival management. And just as you get someone in, you train them for six months, and then they are gone. That's hard. You do have a graduate student, for the other collections. That is done a little differently. You get graduate students from the History department. We have then had our own History graduate students go on to be archivists in other places. I think one of my past students a few years ago went on to work for the State of Illinois. If you are going to have a graduate level student, they need to be paid, at least what the going rate is for History. There may be some inefficiencies. I'm not familiar enough with the inner workings to know if there can improvements with efficiency. Maybe we can split digital archivists.

Freeman: It's also moving things more central to the university mission. When resource decisions are made, part of it is, yes, we don't have enough money to do everything. And if you accept that everything that we have always done is essential, then you will underfund everything. The whole purpose is to try not to do that. One strategy is to ask for more money and justify that, and everyone should try that, I'm not trying to say that they shouldn't. The other strategy is to say that we have an opportunity to become much more central to the university's mission that we are. We have the opportunity to host programs that involve more students that increase our reputation in a more substantial way, engage more faculty. Those may take money too, but that is money that is then positioning the unit so that it is more central to the university mission, which then positions the unit better, to argue for more money. And some level that is circular, but at some level it is not.

Mogren: I'm fairly confident that they are working hard to get rid of inefficiencies. The history of art students are a good example. Engaging broader area residents to... it's my understanding, it's not just interviews, but also materials. It's incoming material that will be suitable and fit within the scope of the collections. Generally speaking, archives don't keep everything. National archives keep less than two percent. The other key part of this is with outreach. It has to do with putting the packages together and making them accessible to students. I don't know about others, but I use those archives a lot and there's hardly a day that I don't see someone in there. Often they are committee members or our students, students from other institutions, general public.

Olson: Even in the area of genealogy, they have plenty of information that they can come and use. Lawyers come too, to get information from the 20 counties, for their court work. It is not just about History. We also have a lot of information about corporations and how they work. There are a lot of things that you could use in business or in law. I think it is one of the more valuable parts.

Wilkens: I think there is trepidation across the university at this time because after the Program Prioritization reports came out, all the groups were tasked with writing a response. They were sent to the various colleges. I don't know, to what extent there is transparency, or if those reports were ever shared with faculty and staff. The message that we received in our college is that they have gone to the Provost's Office.

Freeman: I'm happy to provide an update on that. Right now, the president has gone through... all of the action plans are still considered draft form. And there has been a fair amount of going back and forth. There was a decision not to release everything widely until we feel like the drafts are a bit more formal. That is because each piece is taking a little more time to go through. I can tell you exactly where we are in academic affairs. I wrote a unified action plan for all of the academic units and all of the decanal units, meaning all of the colleges in Academic Affairs. That was in its initial draft form in July. I spent an all-day retreat with all of the other Vice Presidents which wrote action plans for their divisions, talking to the President and to each other about where the opportunities were. Some of the things crossed divisional lines, or even within decanal lines, were referred for cross divisional or complex conversations. Those groups have been meeting and trying to work things out. Most of the things that required no resources, are being managed at the unit level, with their curricular process issues going forward without much further discussion. The hiring plan for authorizing searches this year, for hiring in 2018, was heavily influenced by Program Prioritization and that is probably the tangible outcome to date of the Academic Task Force requirements. On the Administrative side, for Administrative units, each Vice President has met with the President with the conversation facilitated on project management; Matt Streb and Chris McCord, who have provided them, to talk about what the decisions were going to be one what the programs in either review, reduce or transform where the suggestion for transform was really a message about reducing resources, and transformation. The President has written letters to all of us indicating what he would like to see happen with those. Tomorrow morning we are discussing all of that at a prolonged cabinet meeting. We intend to have those pieces out in the President's progress report on Program Prioritization, which is due out in November. I think the decision was made to try to coordinate release of the larger action plans with the President's report because things get rewritten. I am really eager to release the Academic Action Plan and I see no benefit to not releasing it soon... every time I think I have rewritten it and it is ready for release, something else happens and I have to rewrite it again. The longer the time that we release it, the more revisions I have to make to the living document. I would rather release that as of this date, and then we will go back and change, but that is not my decision. There is a desire to coordinate the release across divisions. I understand that at some level too. Tomorrow, I will take the comment that you made, Beth, and say that I think the Academic plan should be released, regardless of whether the other plans are being released, because that would certainly be my preference. No big decisions are being made in the dark. The President's letter doesn't say, a program will be closed starting on January 1. Most of the recommendations are, I accept the task force recommendations and I accept the action plan response which refutes the Task Force recommendation. I believe this is the right direction, and then it says, please give me a plan with timelines by... sometimes it says December and sometimes it says March. That is what is in our letters, and that is what will be released. The question now is how quickly can we get everyone's materials together and released?

Wilkens: Some of the programs that are in reduce but have great arguments as to why they are valuable. At the same time, you are managing mandates from the state, some of which are unfunded.

Freeman: This is very helpful. This is a program where there has been absolutely no final decision made. So hearing this is absolutely helpful as we go forward. I suspect that what will happen is that this program will be asked for a plan, and then avenues will be explored. I can tell you that I would find it very surprising if the response to the action plan is, yes, we reject the reduced recommendation and we are suddenly going to move it to enhanced. I doubt this would happen. I can say that with a lot of certainty because I can't think of a single instance where that is going to happen.

Wilkens: I don't mean to be hostile, but I think as faculty who every week or every month we have these cases and you feel for them. Especially if they were in categories three, four or five. It's great if you are in one or two, but not in the rest.

Freeman: The truth is, if you are in one or two, unless we reallocate resources from three, four or five, we are probably not going to be able to enhance. This is not fun. We have a lot of excellent programs and we don't have enough money to support all of them. My advocacy, first and foremost is for the Academic core of the university to be held to a different standard than the rest of the university because you have a university without almost any other of the divisions, but you cannot have a university without Academic Affairs. That is my line of advocacy. And within Academic Affairs, I have to think about what's in the long-term best interest, what the value proposition is and pray a lot, along with the rest of you that we will have a little more money flowing from the state.

Mogren: I appreciate your candor. I think the notion that we can sustain is wrong. If you are not reprogramming, then you are falling behind. I think this unit is a prime example of that. To sustain them and avoid having to cut them completely, but what it really means is a consistent erosion of quality in the unit. There is no sustaining it. It is difficult for them to continue. I suppose they can close portions or fire someone that only works four or five hours per day. This however, is a fundamental erosion of service which could hurt the reputation of the university and the scholars here. I think it's good, and I am relieved to hear that no one is in the crosshairs at the moment. In the case of this center though, they are already starting to suffer from lack of resources.

Freeman: I think part of a plan that is developed coming out of Program Prioritization, not this particular unit because I don't know that, but a unit where treading water is a fair description and sustaining a level of funding is an erosion of resources, that is the time for a conversation about, what do we, as a unit, value most in our key areas? And what can we stop doing that we have always considered essential? Those are painful conversations. Managed decline is probably not where we want, either the university or any of its units to be. And that means really making choices.

Winkler: Maybe this is a related thought... making choices. In a way, I'm happy to say that in this room we have someone like Eric who can bring a lot of deep insight into this particular center. At the same time, it appears that we are a bit lucky that we just happen to have someone like that in APC that can talk about these issues. Had it been someone else from another department without this experience, we would not have your additional insight here. In that sense, I am a little bit worried that the next time something equally as important comes up, it might slip through, simply because we are not able to appreciate it appropriately.

Freeman: The APC is not making the Program Prioritization decisions.

Winkler: Sure.

Freeman: People with more knowledge are making those decisions.

Douglass: I have a couple of thoughts that I would like to add. One is to what Roland just said about the composition of who is in the room when we have these APC meetings. And when we are going to talk about Program Review improvements in a few minutes. One of the things that I have wondered about is, now that we have reduced the number of meetings that we have department representatives come to, they don't come to this meeting, they come to the subcommittee meetings only. They used to come to three meetings, one with the Office of the Provost, one with the subcommittee and one with the full APC. One of the things that I am curious about is if you feel like there is a detriment in that, not having them in the room to talk about their program with the full group? Or if you feel like it is okay and the subcommittee chairs and their members can support the perceptions and represent those groups well? Or is that too much to put on the chairs and the subcommittees? This is something that I am hoping to get some feedback on from you.

Gordon: I guess I see that department representation is more candid at subcommittee meetings than at these meetings. Previously, it seemed like you were just asking the same questions and hearing back from the unit. To me it was great, it was spirited and that was something that I had never heard in previous years.

Falkoff: What if instead of having the old system where you would have the subcommittee meeting and then they would be here for the full committee meeting, what if we just had them here for the full APC meeting instead? The candor back and forth might be a little.....

Gordon: You would really have to spread out the time if you did that. We were so short of time if you didn't divide up the units more.

Falkoff: This would mean that we need more full meetings, but that would eliminate the meetings for all of the subcommittee meetings. One of the benefits in repeating the questions, is that if you weren't on the subcommittee, or you were not at your subcommittee meeting, you really do get a much better sense of the program.

Douglass: It's not like we have to have the answer today. I just wanted to do an update on where we are at and think about how it is going. Ultimately, we will talk about this again more fully beginning in January. One thing that I think is important is are the right people in the room at the right time?

M. Subramony: I don't want to speak for Jeanne or the other subcommittee, but for the specific case of Physics, I think we were able to capture their perceptions and their feedback.

Falkoff: We had a Physics representative here too.

M. Subramony: We did. That day we had, I think Jerry spoke some that day as well. The way that I see it is that the subcommittee findings are one piece of the puzzle. In the program review, attainables and all of the other information that is accessible. We can take that information and it helps to provide a holistic picture, which should be sufficient without requiring representation from the unit to come before the full APC. Having said that, I think it does make sense to have good representation from every college, who can speak for their colleges. I think having someone with

that knowledge from every college really makes sense. I understand that for someone like the College of Liberal Arts and Science, this is more challenging than a smaller college like the College of Business.

Douglass: I think that is an extremely important perspective. At times, we have a hard time getting the proper number of representatives from a college. Right now, for instance, we are down in the College of Visual and Performing Arts and we cannot find a second representative.

Winkler: Is it typical to have two representatives from each college?

Douglass: Two per college with some exceptions. College of Law gets one representative and College of Arts and Liberal Science (CLAS) gets three. CLAS is further divided. Eric is here to represent CLAS, Humanities. George is here on behalf of Social Sciences and you are here on behalf of Physical Sciences. There is that sense, that you have an understanding of that area, but CLAS has three, Law has one, and all other colleges have two. However, to what extent have we asked people to check out what's happening in the other departments so that when a situation like this comes up, you can be that representative? I don't know that that's been a strong focus of this group. If I am hearing what you are saying correctly, then people really do need to be responsible for what is happening when programs from their colleges are coming up.

Further discussion on the importance of selection of individuals within a college to ensure quality representation of units from within that college. Possible need to invite representation from the college to the full APC meeting in certain cases.

Douglass: I would like to bring up something that I think you mentioned earlier Geoff, and this is that everyone needs money.

Gordon: I think it's reality.

Douglass: You were voicing that opinion or that reality. I think it's been pretty clear that the group is not here to second guess the Task Forces. However, the group will be working iteratively with the Executive Budget Committee, primarily through Marc. I think also, that the group has the right at any point, to create a motion or a recommendation based on a particular program, as you see fit. I just wanted to put it out there, that this is your option.

Gordon: The Center is doing a great job. As Eric said, they are underfunded and understaffed. However, many units are. I think the reality is that the APC probably doesn't have the expertise to say, ok, out of these ten units, in order for seven to survive, and maybe five to thrive, you have to get rid of three.

Douglass: Right, we are not looking at the two hundred plus that the task force looked at. We are only looking at a small subset.

Further discussion on archives and general availability due to funding. Limitations to the Regional History Center due to resource restrictions.

Douglass: The last item on the agenda is to review some of the Program Review Improvement thus far. As a reminder of what we are trying to achieve.

- A streamlined process that provides quality feedback to the programs.
- We are using 2016-2017 as a pilot year for making improvement to process, template and alignment with accreditation.
- Surveys

Steps taken by APC

- Alignment of Program Review and Accreditation and External Review
- Using existing materials with succinct supplemental questions to replace the previous Program Review template
- Dashboard
- Reduction in number of meetings.

Coming steps

- Provide feedback to programs on an annual basis and request plans to address gaps
- Provide feedback recommendation to EVPP and CFO (and EBC) regarding program resources per annual reviews and full program reviews.

APC Subcommittee Meetings

- Single point of contact for the program representatives
- Expansion of subcommittee role in
 - Incorporating Office of the Provost staff feedback
 - Incorporating additional data and information, including assessment information from Blackboard.
 - Representing responses by program representatives at the full APC meeting
- Further discussion:
 - Having chair or director attend full APC meeting
 - Minutes from subcommittee meetings
 - Favorable to the reduction of redundancy in the meetings

Results from subcommittee feedback

- Provided support materials on Blackboard were helpful, but Program Prioritization narratives will be another year older for the next round of reviews.
- Dashboard
 - Not being leveraged as it could be.
 - More instruction on use
- Further discussion: Need for more information about the data and explanation of the data. Dashboard 101
 - Instruction for using data on dashboard

Office of the Provost Feedback

- Inconsistent feedback from providers

Other suggestions

- Increase face to face discussion time with program representatives
- Training or an interview guide to subcommittee to facilitate discussions

APC Dashboard tool

- Accessibility
- Training

Further discussion

- Suggestions for possible questions that could be asked during subcommittee meetings.

Leverage Existing/Emerging Tools

External Reviews

Role of APC in connection with the EBC
Need for discussion of the 2017-2018 Program Review template

Meeting adjourned at 4:32 PM
Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Essex