

ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL

April 23, 2018

3:00 p.m. Altgeld 315

Minutes

Present: Abdel-Motaleb, Blazey, Chitwood, Cripe, Daniel, Douglass, Gordon, Isabel, McCord, Mini, Mogren, Reynolds, Siblik, Torres, Wilkins, and Winkler

Meeting called to order at 3:02 p.m.

1. Announcements

- Leslie Matuszewich will not be returning next fall to the committee
 - She was a subcommittee chair in training and we will need someone to step into that role for 2018-2019
 - There will be about 12 departments/schools up for review in 2018-2019
 - Geoff Gordon is proposing that each individual member “chairs” one review but still have two subcommittees
 - Motion made by Geoff Gordon
 - Second motion made by Elizabeth Wilkins
 - Motion approved
- EBC dialogue announcement from Chris McCord
 - Actively seek input from the APC towards the budget process
 - APC specifically offers input on academic priorities
 - Chris McCord proposed that next week his colleagues come to the beginning of the meeting (April 30, 2018) and listen to APC member’s input. What are your concerns? What are your priorities? What are your priorities with the resources you have?

2. Approval of minutes from April 2, 2018

- Motion made by Ibrahim Abdel-Motaleb
- Seconded by Judy Chitwood
- Motion approved

3. Review of External Review

Jeff Reynolds gave an overview on the Geology and Environmental Geosciences External Review Report

- External review in November of 2017
- There are pervasive and persistent infrastructure problems with Davis Hall

- Many of the current issues were raised in the 2010 external review
 - Same issues this time around; almost like time passed but no changes were made with the same issues
- External Reviewers said that Davis Hall needs to be gutted and renovated wholesale; it is woefully inadequate to house a modern science program, of any kind
- Administrative structure of department would be adequate were it not for the pervasive infrastructure problems that require constant work around and daily problem solving by the technician and research associate
- The teaching workload of three courses is appropriate for the vibrant graduate research program that now exists
- Heard a little concern with faculty workload
 - To maintain the curriculum in the immediate (short-term) future there is a great need to hire one or two non-tenure track teaching faculty in the next two-to-three-year period
- The department's focus on encouraging and assisting graduate students, in part through formal coursework, to write and submit their own research proposals has really paid off and has enhanced graduate education
- Some funding has been provided by individual donors for research equipment and scholarships and corporate funding is coming for research equipment
- The B.S. degree, with its three emphases (Geology, Environmental Geosciences, and Earth Science Education) all share a common core of courses, and makes the undergraduate curriculum both distinctive and current
- The graduate student recruitment efforts are on par with those of relatively small to mid-size graduate programs at public institutions
- In the past, larger introductory courses did not have TA's involved and now they do
- The stipend and tuition support provided to M.S. and Ph.D. students in the program are certainly reasonable and somewhat competitive
 - M.S. students are paid \$1600/month, and Ph.D. students are paid \$1800/month
- The cost of "fees" required to be paid each semester, which the students must pay out of their own pocket is approximately \$1255
 - Strongly recommended reduction of University-imposed fees of this magnitude on its graduate students

4. Discussion of subcommittee report:

Jeanne Isabel gave an overview of the Subcommittee B report

- **B.S. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences**
 - Has the number of applicants (faculty) to fill in the tenure track but NIU lacks startup funding
 - Possible joint hires with other environmental studies

- Consider implementation of an Alumni or Advisory Board to assist with marketing of the program and continuing company support
- Future discussions with other environmental studies may benefit all and may allow for cluster hires for climate science
- Good retention rate
- Field schools provide experiential learning
- Discussed efforts to develop modules for field schools to make them more accessible for non-traditional students
- **M.S. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences**
 - About 30% of enrollment are from NIU undergraduate programs
 - Students have unique opportunities for research with faculty
 - Curriculum planning for graduate courses in lieu of loss of faculty
- **Ph.D. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences**
 - Small but consistent enrollments
 - Average time to degree from M.S. is about 4 years
 - Depending on the experience of the student, may be able to assist with teaching
- After reviewing programs, APC would like to recommend and encourage discourse related to interdisciplinary curricula with faculty leadership across departments
 - Motion made by Jeanne Isabel
 - Seconded by John Siblik
 - Motion approved

5. Other business

- Succession Planning
 - How do we advise the university to replace faculty that will be retiring? Or how do we deal with that crisis?
 - Identify internal and external trends for each department and their response for 5 years
 - Should have a conversation on these topics
 - Add to next meeting's agenda (April 30, 2018)

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mickey Rodriguez and Crystal Doyle