

ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL

August 26, 2019
3:00-5:00 p.m. Altgeld 315

Minutes

Present: Campbell, Chitwood, Cripe, Douglass, Gordon, Falkoff, McEvoy, Mini, Nesterov, Peters, Reynolds, Subramony, Thurmaier, Vaezi, and Zinger.

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Carolinda Douglass welcomed everyone and spoke on a few items
 - i. Everyone introduced themselves by stating their name, department, how long they have served on the APC, and what subcommittee they will be serving on.

2. Overview of Program Review

- a. Carolinda Douglass spoke about the purpose of Program Review
 - i. Inherent value of Program Review is an opportunity for Northern Illinois University (NIU) to look at the quality and viability of programs offered.
 - ii. Ensures that NIU's academic programs are aligned with the university's mission, vision, and values.
 - iii. Allows programs to take reflection time.
 - iv. Strengthen institutional program portfolio.
- b. Douglass spoke about the purpose of the APC
 - i. Responsibilities and duties that are specifically related to program review
 1. Develop and implement procedures for periodic review of academic programs in terms of their quality, achievement of student learning outcomes, and their consistency with the institution's academic mission.
 2. Advise the executive vice president and provost on academic priorities and strategies for the achievement of those priorities, including the establishment of priorities in budgeting.
 3. Make recommendations to colleges and departments on the implementation, development, and follow-up of future plans for programs and research/service units.
- c. External compliance requirement
 - i. Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) requires universities to look at each of their academic programs on an eight year cycle
 1. NIU sought permission and received it from the IBHE to allow variation in this cycle to align some programs with accreditation cycles.
 - ii. Higher Learning Commission (HLC) require alignment with state requirements.
- d. APC Historical Documents

- i. Video clip of VP Anne Kaplan explaining Program Review and APC history at NIU as a response to intrusion from the state in the 1990s to eliminate programs within the state institution is available on Blackboard.
- ii. 2013 Program Review Process Task Force
 - 1. Created a set of recommendations to make Program Review more effective, efficient, and better aligned with the university's mission and accreditation.
 - a. Accomplish through quality improvement and asking committee questions about functionality to continuously improve process.
 - b. Goal is to have meaningful conversations about the programs.

3. Role of APC Members

- a. Marc Falkoff reiterated Douglass's remarks about APC and discussed responsibilities as members on the committee
 - i. Read and annotate reports prior to meetings to gain understanding of programs.
 - ii. Rewarding experience to participate in.
- b. Geoffrey Gordon
 - i. Read the reports and be involved in the conversations.
 - ii. Be actively involved is a lot of work, but it is a great learning experience.
- c. Brad Cripe
 - i. Try to help others improve their programs.
 - ii. Great opportunity to make new friends and contacts from other departments.
- d. Judy Chitwood
 - i. Rely on committee members.
 - ii. All members discuss their interpretations and the chair brings it all together.
 - iii. Dedicate the time necessary for this committee because it can be time consuming to read through all the reports and interpret them.
 - iv. Great learning experience about other programs.
- e. Marc Falkoff
 - i. Discussed progress made through reports now compared to the past.
 - ii. Previously had lengthy reports with a lot of information to get through, but the reports are much shorter now.
- f. Chad McEvoy
 - i. Reminded everyone to be engaged during the meetings
 - ii. The meetings are important to programs since they spend a lot of time preparing and assembling the reports.
 - 1. Chair and faculty sometimes bring guests, such as the Dean. This is important to them to hear about their programs.
 - 2. Members being unprepared for the meeting is a letdown.
- g. Douglass
 - i. Reiterated responsibilities and expectations of members.
 - 1. Read materials, submit your thoughts or questions to the subcommittee chair.

2. Subcommittee chair for that week writes and submits report to Crystal Doyle a week before the full committee meeting.

4. Review of Materials in Blackboard

- a. Douglass walked through several items on Blackboard
 - i. How to access APC Notebook and Program Review materials
 1. First handout distributed at explained how to access the Notebook on Blackboard.
 2. Path to access: Tools\Content Collection\Institution Content\VP AcadPlan\APC 2019-2020\Notebook.
 - ii. APC 2019-2020 on Blackboard
 1. Notebook
 - a. In depth information with everything needed to know regarding the APC.
 - b. Members list includes two members from each college with the exception of CLAW having one and CLAS having three.
 2. Minutes
 - a. Minutes from meetings will be published here.
 3. Meeting materials
 - a. Agenda and links to materials that will be covered.
 - iii. Stand-alone documents that are part of the Notebook
 1. Subcommittee Meetings and Assignments
 - a. Expectations and responsibilities were previously discussed by returning APC members.
 2. APC Schedule
 - a. Schedule for Review of APC cycles.
 - b. Schedule of Academic Planning Council.
 3. 2019-2020 Program Review Materials
 - a. Blank template.
 - i. Completed by each department and part B filled out for each program
 - b. Program Review Time Table: Academic Programs
 - i. Give us feedback on how to make this process better.
 - ii. About a year and a half process now, but it was previously two years.
 - c. Subcommittee Meeting Agenda Template
 - i. Second handout distributed is designed to give people guidance on how to format a meeting agenda.
 - d. Subcommittee Reports
 - i. No strong example of what to include, since every department can be very different in terms of accomplishing this.
 1. Main components of what to include: the findings, strengths, area(s) of improvement, and recommendations.
 - iv. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
 1. Douglass asked Jeff Reynolds to speak further on this
 - a. Benchmarking is important

- b. Forty peer institutions that calibrate to NIU in similar size and scope.
 - c. Cost reporting.
 - d. Determine what other institutions relative to NIU are doing.
 - v. All programs listed in alphabetical order.
 - vi. Example of Program Review Materials.
 - 1. Opened Department of English for walkthrough
 - 2. Douglass discussed word limit as a guideline.
 - 3. IBHE questions can mostly be answered with the information gathered throughout the process.
 - 4. One question that must be addressed at the end to the Program Representative – what are you going to do now that you have been through Program Review?
 - 5. This is submitted afterwards to add to Program Review’s findings.
- b. Reynolds walked through dashboards
 - i. Reynolds discussed dashboards in regards to the abundance of information available and how to make it logical and useful.
 - ii. Walked through dashboards for the Department of English students and faculty to illustrate relevance.
- c. Ritu Subramony walked through a few items on Blackboard
 - i. Alumni dashboard
 - 1. Purpose of dashboard is to see outcomes of the alumni after graduation.
 - ii. Assessment folder
 - 1. Used Department of English as an example.
 - 2. Mid-status Review is halfway to Program Review.
 - 3. Read Me First document.
 - a. Indicates what we are looking at to quickly review.
 - b. Source files all located here if one wants to do a further deep dive then on Blackboard.

5. Ongoing Evaluations and Process Improvement

- a. Douglass discussed evaluations and program improvements
 - i. Elimination of Program Prioritization documents since conclusion last year was that these were dated.
 - ii. A summary “Read Me First” document for assessment information discussed earlier by Ritu Subramony.
 - iii. Subcommittee agenda template for subcommittee meetings created since people wanted more standardization and comprehensive questioning.
 - 1. This is not an indication of what exact questions you need to ask since this committee is shared governance. Rather, these are guidelines for how the meetings could proceed.
 - iv. Linkage between APC and resource allocation
 - 1. Survey indicated people wanted to see this.
 - 2. Common theme for many years.
 - 3. Provost Ingram has indicated that she would be happy to discuss this further with committee.

4. Funding discussion is difficult when all the programs are not looked at simultaneously.
- b. Questions
- i. Chitwood asked about the feedback Douglass submitted on reports for Administrative Review on Blackboard. Where is this located now?
 1. Douglass responded that the Administrative Review is eliminated, but it might be restructured for next year.
 - ii. Evgueni Nesterov asked: what is typically the outcome of these reviews? How do the programs respond to the reviews?
 1. Douglass responded by stating after the first one goes through, then we send that report to the departments involved. We then ask them if there is anything they are going to do as a result of this year. Typically, this has been the end of the line for them. However, Douglass reemphasized that the APC has expressed an interest in seeing a stronger linkage between APC and resource allocation.
 - iii. Mahdi Vaezi asked: how often are the program reviews?
 1. Douglass stated that the default review is every eight years.
 - iv. Vaezi followed this question up by asking: every eight years then, do you go back to the departments and ask them what they have done since the previous review?
 1. Douglass referred to one of the questions included in the template – what have you done since the previous review? Douglass clarified that the default is eight years, but some of them are aligned with the accreditation or if it's a new program they come sooner.

6. Election for Assistant Chair

- a. Douglass explained the Assistant Chair's responsibility
 - i. One year term presiding under the Provost and serving as the liaison between chair and council members. Additional responsibilities are assigned, such as having conversations with the Executive Budget Committee.
- b. Veteran APC Assistant Chair Marc Falkoff
 - i. Falkoff discussed the responsibilities and the weight of the position
- c. Assistant Chair Election
 - i. Nomination: Marc Falkoff nominated himself
 1. First motion made by Judy Chitwood
 - a. Carolinda Douglas took vote
 - i. Unanimous vote taken for Marc Falkoff
 2. Motion passed

7. Questions?

- a. Kurt Thurmaier said there are other things this committee is supposed to do. Do these ever get done?
 - i. Douglass responded that there are six responsibilities. She read these responsibilities from the Notebook. She also discussed how Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) address looking at and approving new programs before they move on to the Board of Trustees. Douglass added that Provost Ingram asked her if this is something that needs to continue if it is redundant with the graduate and baccalaureate councils.

- b. Falkoff asked since the Program Prioritization reports are gone, and there was a lot of good information in there, are these going to be replaced?
 - i. Douglass responded that the dashboards themselves replace this at this time.
- c. Thurmaier asked: if we do not have Program Prioritization, how do we know what our priorities are?
 - i. Douglass explained that her understanding was the President and Provost discussed more strategic planning. Where these six themes are related to academic programs – which many of them are – there would be an opportunity for this body to advise on that.
- d. Thurmaier asked a follow up question: are we going to have a new strategic planning process?
 - i. Douglass confirmed the President said we were going to cover the six themes.
 - ii. Thurmaier responded that it was vague when the President covered it.
 - 1. Douglass said she believes it will be called the Strategic Planning Framework, and she believes the President wants it to be streamlined.
- e. Thurmaier followed this question up by responding: based on Marc's commentary, if these are the priorities identified, what else would be replacing it?
 - i. Douglass referenced the Notebook's content
 - 1. New mission and values; FY 2020 President Goals; a lot of strategic planning will be coming from these strategic goals.
- f. Falkoff said, but given the amount of time we spent on this campus going through Program Prioritization, can we at least have the conclusions available to us as we go through the programs?
 - i. Douglass clarified if Falkoff wanted the Task Force Recommendations included on Blackboard.
 - ii. McEvoy commented that he was able to get info about Program Prioritization from quick search on the NIU website.
- g. Thurmaier asked if we are supposed to advise on the strategies and those priorities, are those things we are supposed to come up with? Are we supposed to advise on the priorities the campus already approved?
 - i. Douglass thinks, and she said she would bring it to the Provost's attention, she agreed it was an excellent topic to discuss at the next meeting. What are the priorities you are advising on? What does she view them as, as the Provost?
- h. Thurmaier asked: what do you need to make a program successful? Is there something specific for evaluating resource requests and areas?
 - i. Douglass reiterated again that this is a linkage people said in the survey. In the past, the committee has not provided specific amounts in the past, or what areas should get higher or lower amounts of resources.
- i. Thurmaier asked: how actually do you move the program forward? What do we do with this information? Otherwise, are we wasting a lot of peoples' time here if it does not align with the priorities?
 - i. Douglass explained that this is not a new question to this committee. This is why people want a stronger linkage here between the two.
- j. Subramony asked: is this something also discussed with the Deans when they are brought back?

- i. Douglass responded this is a good consideration that we discuss this when the Deans are brought back. She also stated we are in a time of change with new leadership. She is not sure yet what direction Program Review will take in coming years.
- k. Thurmaier stated there is no funding for interdisciplinary, but the form currently used is inadequate. How is interdisciplinary different, and how is the university moving ahead? We are behind in terms of other universities.
 - i. Douglass said that maybe it is a good thing we are starting with the B.S. in Public Administration first and maybe it is a good thing we will have a conversation about this.
 - ii. Chad McEvoy said we can ask the Provost's vision in this regard.

8. Brief Team Meetings

Meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Crystal Doyle and Paige Cosgrove

Planning\APC\2019-2020\Agendas\APC Orientation August 26, 2019