

Educational Policy and Governance (EPAG) Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2009

Present: Kendrick Brown, Pete Ferderer, Terri Fishel, Terry Krier, Carelton Macy, David Martyn (chair), Ann Minnick, Kathy Murray, Jayne Niemi, Michael Orr, Patrick Schmidt, Robert Strickling, Tom Varberg, Eric Wiertelak

1. Approval of Minutes – minutes approved with two comments by David – remove “preamble,” add “curricular opportunities.”

2. Physics Self-Study – we discussed additional questions to add to the three shared by Kendrick. It was noted that on page 11 non-physics majors make up 85% of Principles of Physics I and II which has curriculum design implications. We would like to know if this is typical at other small liberal arts colleges. It was noted that “non-majors” could include other science majors. However, because the course is both for the major and yet taken by non-majors and the report cites a weakness in the curriculum related to not being able to offer a course in thermo-dynamics, there was a question as to how to address both the need for offering a course so heavily used by non-majors, while improving the curriculum with a course not currently offered.

Additional questions included:

- Student-faculty ratio. Is this the norm for physics programs among our peer institutions and what have been the forces most affecting their ability to build the size of the program? Is it possible for reviewers to comment on what the difference in four or five faculty members would mean for their ability to mount their curriculum?
- Budget - what are the future 10 years of equipment needs and potential changes in funding environment?
- Service to the GEC – with the pending retirement, what will the change mean for the future and what likely changes will occur when they move to a team-taught physics course? Will there be redistribution across the division to cover the 5 sections of non-majors course?
- What would reviewers recommend for a field of focus for this department as the faculty change? The department anticipates a retirement in the next few years, what would the new position fulfill, and what would be the major consequences if the fifth position was not retained?

Tom Varberg volunteered as EPAG liaison to the review. Nov. 16th and 17th are the dates the reviewers will be on campus and he should contact James Heyman.

3. CDP: Call to Faculty for Input – it was discussed that EPAG should acknowledge that this call is similar to the joint committee exercise. And include the following:

- explain overlaps and differences – curricular opportunities
- explain what happens to old proposals – what is the life of a proposal? 3 years
- we’re starting over

- state “curricular goals” not “allocations in the first sentence
- looking for input from everyone
- perhaps we should proceed according to a two stage process – input, then EPAG would pick one or two of the most important in terms of curricular development – then solicit proposals for those two
- CDP should be inspirational

We’re encouraging people to look long-term development/possibilities, look beyond immediate needs, visionary. Proposals should not focus on positions. It was suggested that we should encourage resubmissions of old proposals as is or revised. EPAG members are allowed to submit proposals. We’re using the five criteria for evaluating proposals.

David was given the go-ahead to move forward.

4. Letter to President – Pete shared a report – would like EPAG to put in CDP. No discussion at this time on this item.

5. Art Dept. Name Change Request – the name change was approved effective immediately with the conditions that the name change does not come with endorsement for curricular changes or additional faculty lines, or creation of new major.

6. Use of IDEA Data in Assessment Studies – approved the use of the IDEA data because the study is coming from one of the three standing committees. RPC is asking the question of class size and impact on student experience. Although concerns were raised about using the data without the consent of faculty who used the IDEA form, there were four factors in granting the approval:

- impetus for study is coming from one of three standing committees not a single faculty member
- as long as EPAG is consulted
- as long as data set is destroyed
- results submitted to EPAG

Adjourned at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Terri Fishel