EPAG Minutes
September 26, 2013
3:00-4:30 Campus Center 214
June Ban, Terry Boychuk, Kendrick Brown, Darcy Burgund, Merita Bushi, Terri Fishel, Geoff Gorham, Ann Minnick, Jayne Niemi, Jaine Strauss, Joelle Vitiello (Chair)

1. Approval of Minutes for Sept 19th meeting - minutes approved.
2. BOT (Board of Trustees meeting) sessions review. Joelle shared times of sessions and faculty who were assigned to committees. Faculty attend primarily to be available for providing faculty perspective and to report back to EPAG if there is anything related to EPAG business. Faculty are not expected to provide a report.
3. Skype question: We had a brief discussion about the acceptable use of Skype in a classroom when a faculty member needs to be absent from class. There are no policies and the question was raised as to whether we are addressing an occasional use for special circumstances or whether this is more regularly used. It was determined that this is something Department Chairs could regulate and that Skype is not a recognized teaching device.
4. FAIR reminder - scribes. There will be 40 attendees and anyone from EPAG who could be a scribe should contact Adrienne Christiansen.
5. SLPR update - 2 documents were distributed for review. Proposed Revisions for the SLPR (Second Language Proficiency Requirement) and the Second Language Proficiency Requirement revision process. Regarding assessment, EPAG will consider it after the revision is approved. Departments already conduct assessment of the requirement, and upon approval of the revision, during the summer, there will be an assessment, just as for other GER. We discussed appropriate terms and did some editing to clarify the second goal (cultural proficiency) especially as it related to norms, customs, and cultural practices. We reviewed the language in the ACTFL guidelines which are used for teaching of foreign languages. Joelle will revise and post on Google doc. The document will be shared for the faculty meeting in October.
6. Further review of CDP - what do we really need to change in the document? It was noted that we teach fewer courses on Native Americans. Is this an issue to explore further?   We discussed the process of revising and EPAG is empowered to make changes as part of an interactive process with faculty. Revision includes cleanup to references to the employee handbook - section 7. Previously EPAG has discussed broadening Asia to EurAsia to include Afghanistan, etc. The question was raised as to whether we want to put out a call for new priorities? It was suggested that we identify what we will be looking at during allocations rather than revising the CDP. It was suggested that EPAG members attend the strategic planning conversation next Thursday at noon to get a sense of what others see as priorities. It was mentioned that the CDP is meant to provide a document that identifies where resources may be focused. This is a document that the President and Provost use when working with potential donors. The CDP is one document among many, but faculty are helping to share the priorities by contributing to conversations about changes to the CDP. Gaps are everywhere and we should be asking faculty to think creatively to come up with novel ideas and suggestions. Establishing innovation and creativity as an important criteria. Are there broad areas that we are concerned about that we are not doing well? Does the CDP provide enough direction for allocations? Can we change the structure of the document? We will continue discussion next week.

7. Discussion of Calendar Days - It was noted that there is a distinction between "contact hours" and "instructional days." There is currently some disparity in contact hours and teaching days. We are below what the federal guidelines say, but we are also below what our faculty voted for in 1992.

This is a complex issue that also affects tuition pricing. No one has found a good model . We aren't doing anything that is outside the national norm and   maybe our average is closer to 42 than we actually think. HLC says we should meet the 45 hours in theory, and we said 42 was the minimum standard for a weekly course. It was suggested that we need a designated "floor" that is the minimum that is available to every student. The question was expressed in terms of "have we really changed significantly in the way we teach?" And since 1992 was before the Internet, Moodle, and email, the answer is maybe. Is email spent on course content part of contact hours? Increasing class days could lead to increased tuition. If we are willing to increase days, when do we start the academic semester and end? And in the process, can there be a longer break at midterm?

Adjourned at 4:35
Submitted by Terri Fishel, Library Director