

Educational Policy and Governance (EPAG) Committee Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2011

Kendrick Brown, Terri Fishel, Janet Folina, Gerbrand Hoogvliet, Taren Kingser, Terry Krier, Ann Minnick, Kathy Murray, Jayne Niemi, Sonita Sarker, Patrick Schmidt, Chad Topaz, Tom Varberg (Chair), Harry Waters Jr

1. Approval of minutes of February 10 - Approve as circulated.

New or continuing business

2. Town hall meeting – we discussed who was attending and how to arrange seating. It was agreed attending EPAG faculty members would be seated in the front row. Tom will open with brief comments and then open the floor for feedback. The Moodle group forum is always open for any faculty member who is unable to attend. Kathy will be present to address questions. Terri agreed to take minutes. All EPAG members in attendance next Tuesday were encouraged to respond to questions.

3. Discussion/ confirmation of final exam policy regarding individual faculty moving exam dates – we discussed two situations that occurred with faculty taking votes in class in order to change final exam dates. The registrar prior to the start of the semester sends the final exam schedule. The policy states that students may negotiate changes to the scheduled final exam when circumstances warrant it, but it was agreed by the group that this meant individual students, not entire classes. If a student needs to change his/her final exam schedule this only impacts that student, but changes for entire classes impacts space as well as interfering with the set schedule for other exams. Exams are never to be scheduled for Study Day. It was agreed that Ann, Kathy, and Jayne would work on appropriate language in order to send a message to faculty regarding existing policy and procedures related to faculty making changes to final exam schedules.

4. Discussion of the Sustainable Operations Task Force Report – there are three essential pieces that affect the overall budget assumptions presented in the document:

- Net tuition revenue
- Financial aid
- Endowment performance

The document presents a scenario in which the endowment would grow at 6% and we spend at 5%, but there isn't consensus that the endowment will only grow at 6%. The real concern is a 2% growth rate for revenues with a 4% annual growth rate in expenditures. RPC will be developing a response to the report, but EPAG should be reviewing more to inform our conversation next week in terms of how to stop doing certain things. If EPAG wants to think about new curricular initiatives, we need to be more agile. It also affects how we think about allocations, although Kathy reiterated her commitment to hiring one new faculty

member every other year. We reviewed specific pages of the report considered relevant to our deliberations:

- P.13 – cap on student headcount levels off – how does this relate to the manner in which admissions presents our profile?
- P.25 – new programming can add incremental income or it can add increased costs
- P.29 – all the scenarios have a bearing on programs with mostly no increase or nominal increase
- P.31 & 32, third L, first four Ns and first three Ss on chart are relevant
- Last paragraph about salaries

Discussion focused on how EPAG could work with Admissions and have a dialogue on issues related to what programs students are most interested in as well as factors related to where students are coming from. It was suggested that Jeff Allen might be the person to contact with specific questions and invite him to come and have a conversation with EPAG. The bottom line is the fact that we need students who can afford to pay to come here, but the past two years we saw a decline in the number of student applications from those who could afford to pay. We are not talking a large number, but rather 10-12. Although 60-70% of applications express interest in international studies, expressed academic interest plays no role in the admissions process.

4. Program and Concentration proposal – approval by faculty is required. It was noted that three changes to the handbook have not yet been made, but will be addressed. Discussion included questions on cost for existing programs, what staff additions had been requested, the possibility of a centralized budget for all concentrations after the Mellon Grant ends, space needs, and the overall merits of this proposal. The criteria for determining the merit of a proposal exist in the 7 points outlined [in Section 7](#) Proposals for New Programs. It was suggested that students would be less “siloeed” with this concentration, and that concentrations provide opportunities for creating more connections among the faculty.

No conclusion reached on the proposal, but time ran out. Discussion will continue.

We adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Terri Fishel, Library Director