

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

11/04/08 MEETING SUMMARY

Attendance: Marc Johnson (Provost)
Manos Maragakis (Engineering)
Heather Hardy (Liberal Arts)
John McDonald (Health Sciences)
Greg Mosier (Business Administration)
Karen Hinton (Cooperative Extension)
Jeff Thompson (Science)
Jerry Ceppos (Journalism)
Bill Sparkman (Education)
Dave Thawley (CABNR)
Dave Lupan (Medicine)
Steve Zink (Library/IT)
Steve Rock (Faculty Senate)
Fred Holman (Extended Studies)
Mike Collopy (Academy for the Environment)
Bill Cathey (Vice Provost)
Jannet Vreeland (Vice Provost)
Paul Neill (Core Curriculum)

Discussion Topics:

Budget

It was announced that the budget news from Carson City continues to worsen. The latest budget cut figures being reported by the Governor's office were shared. There was a discussion on what might be the point at which conservative legislators would be willing to take action. The provost reported on the estimated savings to be generated from teaching resource management and center and institute reviews. Since this amount is still below what will likely be needed, he noted that the university's leadership will need to start thinking about larger budget cutting measures and will need to be more strategic. An upcoming institutional strategic planning process with comprehensive input from university constituencies will provide an opportunity to understand what our priorities should be so that we can plan for reductions in the future without losing sight of a path for growth. The members of the ALC were asked to think about other ways of maximizing state fund budget cuts.

There was a lengthy discussion on the need to understand the rules that will apply should budget cuts require employee separations. The need to honor the many commitments made to students, residents, faculty on grants, etc. were acknowledged. The pros and cons of various budget cutting mechanisms like reduced FTE, unpaid furloughs and waived merit were discussed as well. The members were reminded of the principles developed by the Faculty Senate in September to guide the university as it faced certain budget cutting. Other ideas for dealing with the upcoming budget challenges were shared.

Sabbaticals

The provost reported that the Professional Development Leave Committee will hold a final meeting this week to come up with its recommendations. He noted that the committee has been given additional instructions in light of the possibility that the Board of Regents will decide at its December meeting to instruct institutions to limit or cancel leaves in the next academic year. Because of this, the provost stated he was inclined to delay notice letters until after the board meeting. However, the deans noted that this delay would place department chairs in a difficult position because of the deadline for submitting the Fall 2009 class schedule. The provost agreed to see if this deadline could be pushed out by a week or so. Other topics related to this year's professional development leave process were discussed.

Teaching Resource Management

The provost asked the deans to share any processes they used as the departments worked on teaching resource management. One dean noted that one of his departments compared its teaching loads to that of peer institutions to inform their process. Another dean noted that they had been talking to their regular LOA's to make sure they were aware of what was happening with future teaching assignments and why.

Bill Cathey reminded the deans that there was still a need to examine the proliferation of introductory statistics courses to see if efficiencies can be made. One idea being suggested would be to have a large class section devoted to basic statistical concepts, with smaller breakout sections to explore applications of those concepts to the various disciplines. Deans recommended that department chairs be involved in this.

Space Distribution

The provost noted that there will likely be space available for reassignment as new campus buildings are completed. The members were warned that there may be a belief that any vacated space becomes the property of a unit or department or even nearby units or departments. He reminded the members that any space that is vacated reverts to the administration for reassignment through the Facilities Resource Committee. Jannet Vreeland reported that the FRC will first inventory the space that will become available and then take a look at high priorities for reassignment. The deans will be able to see the inventory when it is prepared. Marsha Read has been working on a document on research space needs for the future. The remodel of one lab at a time will need to stop as it is much more expensive. Instead, the more cost effective approach of remodeling a section of a building for research space will be employed in the future. It was agreed that one dean should not be put in charge of assigning space for a building. It was also recommended that existing space utilization on campus be examined since there is likely space that is historically assigned but underutilized.

Recruitment/Retention Meetings

The provost announced that the meetings with deans and others from the college who work on recruitment and retention have been set and shared the attendees and purposes of these meetings. In addition to looking at the most effective recruitment activities for various programs and colleges, there will be a discussion of retention activities going on in colleges or that might be used in the future.

Center/Institute Reviews

Marc reported on the progress of the center and institute reviews and outlined what will be occurring in the next few weeks. Some of these units which receive no state dollars will simply get letters thanking them for their report. Others are working on solutions to replace state funding and will receive a letter confirming the agreements on the steps to be taken.

Announcement

Jerry Ceppos announced that students in the Reynolds School of Journalism will be covering the election that evening. There will be video and audio reports of their coverage posted on the website. He will provide the URL to Audrey for dissemination to the members.