

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

August 11, 2009 MEETING/RETREAT SUMMARY

Attendance: Marc Johnson (Provost)
Heather Hardy (Liberal Arts)
Greg Mosier (Business Administration)
Karen Hinton (Cooperative Extension)
John McDonald (Health Sciences)
Jerry Ceppos (Journalism)
Ole Thienhaus (UNSOM)
Manos Maragakis (Engineering)
Jeff Thompson (Science)
Bill Sparkman (Education)
Ron Pardini (CABNR)
Eric Herzik (Faculty Senate)
Steve Zink (Library/IT)
Marsha Read (VPR)
Fred Holman (Extended Studies)
Eric Herzik (Faculty Senate)
Bill Cathey (Vice Provost)
Paul Neill (Core Curriculum)
Bruce Shively (PBA)

Discussion Topics:

Introduction

Marc Johnson provided an introduction on the purpose of the discussions scheduled for the retreat. He announced that the Institutional Strategic Plan was to be submitted to the Board of Regents for placement on the September meeting agenda. He noted that this plan would be a turning point for the university as it moves forward to implement the goals and objectives, particularly in connection with revenue enhancement.

Institutional Strategic Plan Discussion

The plan was reviewed in detail. The following core missions of the university as contained in the plan were highlighted:

- Growing the tenure-track faculty with full responsibility to the university and holding them to high standards of performance.
- Emphasizing national standards of quality.
- Growing from the existing university strengths.
- Magnifying productivity with internal cooperation and external entrepreneurship.

There was a discussion on the need to align faculty expectations to these core missions through personnel documents and policies. It was agreed that policies and procedures that slow us down

should be brought to light. The effects of building a university on soft funds and the needed culture and policy changes were explored.

Metrics Related to the Strategic Plan

Paul Neill shared the three sources used for developing the metrics. Those were—SIS data, research/grant (OSPA) data, and Digital Measures data. There was a discussion on the need to train faculty on how to most effectively use Digital Measures to track their productivity. It was agreed that the timing of when things count creates the most difficulty. The issue of department and colleges counting things differently than the University does was identified. There was also the problem of differing definitions of what “peer reviewed” means. It was agreed that chairs would use Digital Measures in their evaluation processes, so that faculty are encouraged to use it correctly. Paul, Steve Zink, and Marc will handle the global issues, and the deans were asked to let them know of any additional issues. The deans will get across to their faculty how important it is to get their data entered correctly. Paul will also explore creating templates for how to enter certain standard categories of data.

Future Resources

The provost reported that as the University sees new revenue for additional positions, these revenues will first be used to renew those core positions in UNCE, AES, Student Services, Library/IT and VPAF that have been cut. The need to provide some start up funding for faculty was also acknowledged, but the provost stated that we need to study other models.

Conditional Enrollment Policy

A proposed policy was distributed. Bruce Shively provided some background on the need for this policy. Figures on the number of freshmen students who were only marginally prepared to begin their college work, and data on the success of students taking Extended Studies’ Freshmen Start program were shared. The benefits of this policy were discussed. The deans were generally in favor of the policy and provided some recommendations.

Recruiting Update

The provost shared that Digital Initiatives is in the process of developing its priorities for the work it will undertake in the fall and spring. Meetings of the provost, dean, college recruitment personnel, OPS personnel, vice president for student services, and Digital Initiatives representatives are being scheduled to discuss how to best customize and coordinate recruiting activities. The colleges are encouraged to bring college specific marketing and recruiting materials to this meeting. Separate meetings regarding web pages are also being scheduled.

Retention Activities

Bill Cathey provided an update on the various activities being planned to focus on student retention. First, he shared the plans for a seminar series on retention related topics. Possible topics include:

Implementation of MAP Works

Faculty Role in Student Retention

Student Panel on Retention Related Issues

Data Associated with Retention & How to Use it for Student Success

Math Issues & Retention

Student Support for Retention (What is available and how to use it.)

Financial Aid for Retention

Debriefs from Conferences Attended by UNR Professionals on Retention

The following recruiting topics were also suggested:

Using Social Networking for Recruiting

Finding Recruiting Opportunities

The provost noted the disconnect between Student Services and Academic personnel. He stated that this was a friction that uses energy that we cannot afford. He stated that he hopes the activities of the next year will generate a camaraderie and professional colleague relationship between the two groups. This will require an open dialogue about what works and doesn't work and identification of any issues that seem to drive a wedge between the two. There was a discussion.

Early Warnings

The early warning program was reviewed. It was announced that this program will continue to be used.

High Achiever Students

The various activities being planned for 26+ ACT students, National Merits, and Presidential Scholars were described. The provost encouraged the deans of the colleges to also plan activities and recommended that the deans make sure they know these students in their colleges and have regular conversations with them about their experiences. Bruce shared that the incoming class shows an increase of 7.4% in 26+ ACT students. One dean shared that grants are now requiring some work with students in the grant activities, which would be of benefit to all students.

Graduate Education Discussion

It was agreed that a regular schedule for reviewing TA distributions was needed, and every 3 years was suggested. The provost shared that there is an expectation that TAs will be contributing to the teaching mission (not research). It was felt that the stipend level was not competitive in several disciplines. The issue of 12 month vs. 10 month stipends was also discussed.

Research & Graduate Education Discussion

Marsha Read noted areas that her office is working on. This included human research protection protocol, IRB, core facilities inventory, and additional manpower at the grants preparation and submission side. She reported that Jannet Vreeland was working on electronic signature approval for campus.

Marsha announced that letters of recommendation now come in through the Grad. School application process. Additionally, she described the work of the programs in biological sciences and environmental sciences to get a broader visibility for the various programs.

A discussion was had on how graduate faculty are appointed and the lack of any processes for review of graduate faculty status. Possible procedures for regular review of graduate faculty were explored.

Regarding startup packages, Marsha and Marc described the issues with the startup packages that they are seeing. Those issues include (1) packages that are for personnel with no information on the commitment for that hire after the startup period and (2) packages that are silent on any possible renovations needed. Marsha noted that of necessity the startup packages she will be looking at are lower and will utilize existing resources as much as possible.

The need for some sort of three-year review process of centers, institutes, and academies was also explored. Eric Herzik reported that Faculty Senate will be looking at the process. It was agreed that a review after 3 years was necessary.

Another issue to be reviewed will be the variation in department chair and other salaries, contract lengths, and stipends, as well as course off-loads.

Engagement/Outreach

The provost announced there will be an Outreach Council. The council membership will include Fred Holman, Karen Hinton, Ron Pardini, Jerry Ceppos, Heather Hardy (or Larry Engstrom), John McDonald, Greg Mosier (or Sam Males), Ole Thienhaus (or Carolyn Ford), a representative from NBMG, Steve Rock, a representative from Engineering, a representative from the TTO, a representative from Residential Life, a representative from Athletics, and a representative from ROTC. This group will begin by looking at the outreach section of the recent accreditation self-study to see what we have got.

State, National, International Recognition

Bruce Shively noted that since one of the strategic goals was to improve our state, national and international recognition, they will be looking at the bottom 20 institutions in Tier II to see what we should aspire to.

Serving Nevada, Its Industries and Citizens

The provost noted that the plan contains several objectives for serving the state and its citizens. One step being taken is the formation of a leadership group working with the mining industry, and another group working on renewable energy initiatives for the benefit of the state. In addition, to improve our receptivity to industry partners, Greg Mosier and Fred Holman are on a group working on a central portal for industries seeking university partners.

Another group has also been formed (Steve Zink, Jerry Ceppos, Greg Mosier, Manos Maragakis) that will look at ways the university can prepare Nevada and Nevadans for the diversified knowledge economy. They will be looking at opportunities from the faculty for what we have. The goal of the group is to coordinate what we have for faculty knowledge to add value to teaching, research and outreach for the current diversified knowledge economy. Additionally, they will explore possible initiatives that we should have at the university such as “media in the curriculum,” or “information competency.”

Bill Sparkman is leading a K-12 group to determine how we can work with schools to improve outcomes, particularly related to science and math. This group is considering issues such as the many points of intervention and where we might intervene best to help the chances of success, the many levels of governance that affect this work, the lack of good data and access to it, and how to engage the three regional professional development centers. The need to build the relationship of the University's faculty with teachers and other groups was noted. The need for a well-defined set of 2 or 3 challenges to be worked on and for a sustained, long-term relationship was identified. Jeff Thompson, Manos Maragakis, Karen Hinton and Ron Pardini are also in this group.

In the area of improving the physical and mental health of Nevadans, John McDonald is leading a group looking at such issues as education of health professionals, research and outreach, and aging programs. Ole Thienhaus, Heather Hardy, and Ron Pardini are also in this group.

Finally, there is a group led by Ron Pardini looking at ways the University can enhance sustainable environmental quality in Nevada. The work of this group thus far was described.

President Glick joined the retreat and spoke on the recruitment and retention goals for the coming year and issues he was working on at the system level.

Impact of Furloughs, Unpaid Leaves, Etc.

There was a discussion on the issues related to the impact of furloughs and unpaid leaves on morale of employees. It was agreed that sensitivity to the issues and situations would be important as the year progressed.