

University Senate Executive Committee

Monday, November 30, 2015

2:45 PM

UNH 306

Cynthia Fox, Senate Chair

Minutes

Present: Collins, Jim; Fabris, Daniele; Fox, Cynthia; Gulatee, Yenisel; Little, Walter; Mamorella, David; Mower, James; Sly, Kat; Smith, Christy; Stefl-Mabry, Joette; Warner, Lynn

Guests: Boyer, Kim; Hedberg, Bill

The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Fox summarized communications that had transpired leading to the SEC's vote to hold the special meeting for Dean Boyer to provide an update on plans for the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Update on the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences - Kim Boyer, Dean

Dean Boyer noted that this was part 2 of his report which he was prepared to give at the last visit but timing did not allow. Since then there have been updates.

In April 2015 he was not here, and there was no Dean of the College. Provost Stellar was working to the best of his ability with the information he had at the time. When I came in July, Dean Boyer explained, I was given the tasks outlined last time, which included generating research revenue, bringing in more and very strong students, increasing prestige and bringing in substantial tuition revenue. The President's goal to get 20,000 students will depend heavily on what happens with the College of Engineering. To make a significant jump, it probably has to come from new programs.

I shared with you, he added, the blueprint that we are working from. As part of that process, I looked at what I had inherited and evaluated the programs that were there. Much of the last 5 1/2 months has been spent thinking about where programs and people are best placed so that they can be successful. There were a couple of personnel moves which were made at the request of the individuals involved, since some felt they were academically out of position. Without access to the right students it is hard to build an effective program and train graduate students. At the same time, I looked at all the programs, which include Computer Science, the Informatics bachelor's program, the Information Studies Department MSIS program, and the inter-disciplinary Information Science doctoral program. Applied Sciences are context dependent. In a College of Engineering, they typically include things like Genetic Science and applied Physics and Mathematics, but you do not ever find Information Studies or Social Science doctoral programs. Neither of those programs thrived well in the legacy CCI. My primary motivation is not to have these programs out of position, and my great concern is that those programs will in effect be lost in the College with little mutual support from other areas. It is not my decision to determine what would be a better solution, but it is necessary for me to call attention to the situation that I am not the right Dean those programs. Meanwhile, I have to build the College - a very heavy load which will require all my time.

I have tried pretty hard to assist others to find a way to make a smooth transition and soft landing. After reading Phil's report, it is my conclusion that these folks have been have been bounced around. I have no wish to add to

that; on the other hand, it is not a particularly healthy situation for them. The current thinking is that the PhD program as an interdisciplinary program need not be in a particular department or college and could be administrated out of Kevin Williams' Office. I met with faculty on the 13th and with students on the 3rd and asked if anybody has another idea. The Provost has told me he would be willing to put out some resources to buy out part of a faculty member's time to lead the program and to communicate with Kevin about it. This this would thereby eliminate two stages to get to resources, so that the Program Director would talk directly to the Dean of Graduate Studies. As for Information Studies, I floated a number of proposals to try to find the right solution which, due to resource limitations and other things, are still under discussion. I really tried to work out something else back in October. I meet with department Chairs at least once and with the Provost numerous times a month as he tries to solve this.

Dean Boyer and Senior Vice Provost Bill Hedberg, representing the Provost's Office, then opened the topic for discussion. Chair Fox and SEC members voiced concerns about procedures last year that led up to the name change as having come in bits and pieces, with pressure to move through the name change quickly, as the President wanted the change and the SUNY process is slow. It was stressed that Senate efforts to slow down the process were not meant as "road blocks" but rather to allow time for meaningful consultation. Thinking has changed since last year and is still in formation, with Dean Boyer's leadership as an Engineer and expert in the field, and with further campus and Senate consultation and dialogue. It was noted that Information Science was thriving 14 years ago when it had its own school; the culture of the time, where there was little consultation during the formation of CCI, is not the culture now. It is understandable that numbers are down without more opportunities to advertise. The I-School concept was discussed, as a lot of them are ALA accredited. It was agreed there is a need for more conversation and consultation regarding this and any new engineering programs. Senior Vice Provost Hedberg would communicate with the Provost to try to arrange a departmental meeting.

Chair Fox thanked Dean Boyer and Senior Vice Provost Hedberg for the very useful conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Elisa Lopez, Recorder