

COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT (CAA)

MINUTES, APRIL 22, 2010

UNH 300 10:00 – 11:30

Members present: Heidi Andrade (Chair), Henryk Baran, Daryl Bullis, Brian Gabriel, Aaron Major, Richard Matyi

Members absent: Brea Barthel, Zak Berkovich, Jason Cotugno, Sue Faerman, Kristen Hessler, Dana Peterson, Marjorie Pryse, Bruce Szelest

Guests: Ruth Scipione, Virginia Goatley, School of Education

The meeting began with a discussion of the Graduate Education committee's draft strategic goals. Ginny Goatley, a member of the Graduate Education Strategic Planning committee, attended to address questions and take comments from the Council back to the committee. Council members expressed appreciation for the clarity of the document, its attention to the accuracy of criteria in the vision statement, and its consideration of the needs of non-traditional students. They raised concerns about the lack of provisions for identifying areas of growth, noted that the document appears to advocate for strengthening existing programs at the expense of creating a supportive structure for developing new ones, and that the goal of the committee was not expressed as an outcome, per Middle States. The Council members' suggestions were that program comparisons should not only be norm referenced, but also discipline referenced, that the document include a statement about closing the loop, and that there be a statement about how UAlbany prepares its graduate students for academic careers and measures that preparation.

The minutes of April 14, 2010 were approved.

The Council Chair updated the members on the priorities identified from the "3 year recommendations summary" that still required action. They are 1) restart a conversation about making improvement to the Program Review process, 2) present Senate Charter revisions to the Senate Executive Committee, 3) explore technological resources such as i) repository for faculty syllabi, ii) online information packet/module for faculty teaching General Education courses, iii) syllabi template.

The Chair inquired about Interim Director of Program Review and Assessment's visit to the Graduate Academic Council meeting on April 7. Bendikas reported that she showed the Council the relevant documents on the WIKI page. It had decided to use the Sociology documents as its test case, but had not determined its process yet.

Bendikas also read an update provided by Bruce Szelest on the status of the Middle States report. At this time President Philip is preparing the campus response, which is due to MSCHE the week of April 19. The final decision is expected sometime in June at

which time the report will be made available to the campus community on the Middle States WIKI.

The Chair asked for updates from the GEAC Chair, Daryl Bullis. He reported that the next meeting of the committee will be on April 29 at which time it will consider a proposal regarding the General Education assessment process for next year.

The Chair asked for updates from the PRC Chair, Henryk Baran. He reported that the committee met and concluded its review of History and Computer Science. Andrade asked for Baran to brief the Council members on the Senate Executive's objections to the proposed Senate Charter changes that he had brought to them last year in his capacity as CAA Chair. Baran did so and discussion ensued. Baran also reported that the committee had discussed a revised template for its report, which it would present at the May 12 meeting of the Council.

The Council members then turned to a review of the PRC reports for History and Computer Science. After minor changes were incorporated, both reports were accepted by the Council.

The Chair then asked members to comment on the Undergraduate Education committee's draft strategic goals. Members thought that the ideas were worthy and forward looking, particularly with regard to part-time faculty issues. However, they expressed concerns about the viability of several proposals that would require substantial resources, and others that could present hardships, especially to small departments, if implemented. Questions were also raised about the appropriateness of a governance committee headed by an administrator, the lack of attention to UHS courses as part of the General Education program, how international courses and programs will be assessed, and finally, whether some of the strategic goals written by different task forces may be in conflict. Several suggestions were made by members that were recorded by the Chair to put into a memo to the committee's Co- Chairs.

Action steps

1. Andrade will send a memo to the Undergraduate Education committee summarizing the Council members' comments.
2. Bendikas will draft the template for PRC reports to be presented at the May 12 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.
Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristina Bendikas