

## COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT (CAA)

MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

UNH 107, 3:00 – 4:30

Members present: Kristina Bendikas, Irina Birman, Seth Chaiken, Mike Christakis, Sue Faerman, Bill Lanford, Claribel Martinez (student guest) Marjorie Pryse, Bill Roberson, Joette Stefl-Mabry, Bruce Szelest, ManKit Tse, Rose-Marie Weber

Members absent: Peter Duchessi, David Wills

Bill Lanford began by welcoming everyone present and asking for introductions around the table. He then reviewed the charge of the Council and the composition of its committees. There was discussion regarding whether there was a difference on paper versus practice regarding the committees or the Council. Discussion clarified that the chairs of each of the two committees of the Council must be members of the council, but that the members could be solicited from outside the council. Discussion ensued regarding the staffing of the committees particularly with regard to the position of chairs of the committees.

Lanford asked where the assessment of programs other than academic programs fit into either committee. They are assessments but perhaps not defined as fitting into the scope of the GEAC or the Program Review Committee even though they are programs. Faerman asked for clarification about whether the GEAC is being asked to take on other responsibilities. Lanford said no, but left the question on the table. Discussion on staffing resumed with Pryse noting that the staffing of all Senate committees is difficult. Lanford suggested that the Council move forward and nominate possible chairs of the committees. Several faculty were discussed as possible committee chairs, and how they might be better suited to either committee. It was noted that the chair of the GEAC needs to know that he or she must also serve as a member on the General Education Committee of the UAC.

**Motion** made and seconded to nominate Peter Duchessi for Chair of the Program Review Committee and Seth Chaiken as Chair of the GEAC. The motion carried with a friendly amendment to include the offer of Irina Birman to co-chair or assist either of the nominees if they accept the position of Chair.

The next item discussed was a draft of General Guiding Procedures and Protocol of the Council on Academic Assessment that Szelest prepared at Lanford's request. Lanford began by describing his role in releasing information used by the Times Union in an article that cited material from the Project Renaissance external reviewer report, which had not been released by the University. Discussion ensued regarding the content of the draft and a revision proposed by Lanford.

**Motion** made to adopt the General Guiding Procedures and Protocol with friendly amendments made by the Council which are reflected in the attached document.

Discussion continued about the extent to which a Chair or other persons in authority should participate in the discussion and vote regarding a self-study or report of the Council pertaining to their own departments or programs. One member advocated keeping a significant distance. Faerman and Pryse noted that they are affected most broadly by the suggestion that they should not participate in discussions about the assessment of programs within their domains, and their domains are very sweeping (e.g. all undergraduate or graduate programs in overall scope). Through the course of discussion, it was generally agreed that it would be unwise to draw lines that might encumber the council or its members. It was suggested that the participation of all members, regardless of their “professional relationship” to a program would only serve to make the discussion of assessments richer. Szelest noted that the intention of the draft wording was not to exclude anyone from the discussion. The Council eventually settled on an alternate wording which would allow everyone to participate in the discussion of assessments and programs, but which would recommend that anyone with a close tie to a program should refrain from actually voting on the assessment. Further discussion ensued regarding the dissemination of electronic copies of the self-studies and external reviewer reports. It was agreed that Council members would be provided with hard copies only.

The motion passed.

Program Review status was discussed next. Bendikas listed the programs whose self-studies and reports are ready to be examined by the Program Review Committee. A question arose regarding Business and Accounting which goes through an accreditation process. Pryse noted that currently she does not automatically receive copies of these studies. It was agreed that copies of these documents should be given to Pryse and Faerman, but that at this time, the Program Review Committee did not need to review that process.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristina Bendikas