University Planning and Policy Council  
2015-16  
Joette Stefl-Mabry, Chair

MEETING MINUTES  
November 24, 2015


GUESTS: Caitlin Ianiszewski (GSA), Istvan Kecskes, Christy Smith

The meeting convened at 4:15 pm.

There was a motion to approve the minutes from October 21st.

The Chair noted that there was an error in the date in the minutes and requested that it be changed from 2014 to 2015.

A vote was taken to accept the minutes. 8 votes in favor. 0 opposed.

The Chair did not provide a report because of the full agenda and to leave enough time for all of the items.

Revision of Campus Impact Form

The committee has been working on clarifying the Impact Form and discussing the consultation and impact on service and academic units stemming from new programs. The Chair incorporated changes to the form based on suggestions made at the last UPPC meeting. She added a new statement asking whether the applicant consulted with the service units and whether they provided written verification and she separated the service units from the academic programs.

Then there was a discussion regarding the revised form:

Sridar Chittur requested that other service units include Core Facilities, and to add another box and call it “Core Facilities.”

Mitch Leventhal objected to one statement and said it should read that there will or will not be an impact, not and/or.

Cathy Parker suggested that the form should read “the proposer has consulted with the service units listed above and has provided written verification (letters of collaboration/support) of such consultation.” She brought up the fact that the old form had other resources besides people under academic unit impact and that there used to be an opportunity to list those. The
Chair said that it will remain the same as on the old form. Also, that Gainful Employment Program should have a check box next to it.

The committee raised an objection that there is a lot of redundancy on the form. Only if there is an impact, should you have to provide a letter stating impact and that there was a consult. The applicant should not have to provide a letter if there is no impact. This is putting a greater burden on the service units to say there is not impact. Only if yes, should they have to provide a letter.

The Chair asked which part on the form should be omitted. The committee said to omit the last section - the latter half of the page.

Cynthia Fox raised the point that this form assumes that the impact is only fiscal. What if there are other impacts, for example, on space? Dean Wulfert pointed out that this is for impact on resources and space is a resource. Dean Wulfert asked if the committee is creating a tremendous bureaucracy. When there is an impact, only then should there be a letter. Because it needs to be specified in dollars and cents.

The question was raised whether it is ok to accept the investigators signature alone attesting that there is no impact. The chair argued that “we leave ourselves open to a level of ambiguity” and may lead to confusion. She said that, “if we have it, then the expectation is that they will consult. If not, we get into a gray area – we can leave it up to the proposer.” Cathy Parker countered that the committee should have some level of trust in the applicant. “When they have consulted and it is clear that there is no impact we have to trust them,” she said, and “we may raise the issue – did you consult with such and such department?” The Chair believes it is still good if they put down that they have or they have not. Cathy raised the point that on the previous form, the questions were in the reverse order – who did they consult with and what did they determine the impacts were. Now the forms says: What are the impacts and did you consult? Cathy argued that they should be switched back round.

It was agreed that the committee liked the list of service units provided on the new form and they thought the list was helpful. This part of the conversation ended with the idea that the form should ask the applicant first if they consulted and then ask them if there was an impact. If there was an impact, to provide a letter. Ask them who they consulted with, provide the list, and if there is an impact, provide a letter.

The conversation then turned to whether consultation with any service units might be required. Are there any units a proposer must consult with? Dean Wulfert stated that she did not think it was necessary when it is obvious there would be no impact. She thought that, at the committee level, the committee can say, “No, wait a moment...what about x? Then they can go back.” The Chair agreed.

Discussion moved on to the ETAP proposal for an online course in an additional classroom teaching certificate in TESOL and the guests from TESOL arrived.
Presentation by Istvan Kecskes on an online course for advanced certificate in TESOL

The advanced certificate fulfills a need of in-service teachers in the community. The state is requiring a certification in TESOL and the TESOL department wants to provide a secondary certificate. They developed an online program and want to have some parallel courses for their master’s degree students. The primary purpose is for in-service teachers who would like this certificate. Another issue is that there is a need for teachers to know what goes on in the mind of English language learners regardless of the subject the teacher is teaching. At least 30-40% of their students will be some kind of English language learner. Teachers are not prepared to deal with this issue properly. This helps prepare them. This give them courses tailored to explaining how English language learners acquire another language. There is also the hope that the TESOL program at the university might grow. This will help support hiring additional faculty and staff.

Questions from Committee

Dean Wulfert asked if this was a secondary certificate. Dr. Kecskes said that yes, it is, in addition to the teacher’s primary field and that this is a methodology class to help them teach English language learners.

She asked a follow-up question regarding the introduction of a new linguistics course outside the Linguistics Program offerings within the Department of Anthropology. She wanted to know if there was a need for a new class and why. And whether this would affect enrollment in the existing class. Dr. Kecskes explained that he has received support from the Linguistics Department in the past but “not too much.” He said that the department had not taken into consideration the needs of TESOL students who commonly work days as teachers and who cannot take the existing linguistics course during the work day when it is typically offered. Dean Wulfert asked if there was any communication between the Director and Dr. Kecskes and Dr. Kecskes stated that he had met with him several times and the Director was not able to accommodate his needs. The Dean asked if they offered the course online and he stated that, no, they do not.

Vice President Van Voorst asked if Dr. Kecskes if he expected this online course offering to increase student enrollment and Kecskes said yes.

Austin Ostro asked what kinds of career benefits would come out of this secondary certification. Dr. Kecskes stated there is a need because it is required by the NYSED that teachers get this training and that it offers them additional options if they want to go ahead and teach TESOL classes.

Sridar Chittur asked for the projected enrollment numbers in the program. Dr. Kecskes said that he did not know but he hoped it would be between ten and twenty and more in the
coming years. The Chair brought up the point that his application talked about drawing students from the local population but that if the program is online, geographics do not matter. Dr. Kecskes said that it was his impression that it is people from the immediate environment who take online courses from a specific school. The Chair said that it seems to be a contradiction in the proposal where there is a point made about broadening the enrollment through online recruitment and then emphasizing the local environment. Dr. Kecskes retorted that it was “just wishful thinking.”

The Chair asked Dr. Kecskes if it would be possible to put in enrollment numbers from other schools in his application. Dr. Kecskes said he did not have them and could not find them. He wanted to know if it would help his application and the committee said that it would help.

The Chair asked if Dr. Kecskes would be willing to assess this program after one year instead of two years given the timetable of accreditation. Dr. Kecskes said that if it was necessary, then yes. Christy Smith explained that accreditation takes place in 2021, but this assessment would be included with their annual reports. They have the admission information, but not graduation yet.

**Discussion of application after guests left the room**

Cynthia Fix asked if the new certificate would increase enrollment either in face to face course offerings or online. Provost Stellar said that there was no barrier, that there was no logical reason a student could not sign up if they are not in the Capital Region. He raised the point that there might be a shift in courses and a drop in enrollment and that might be a problem, but, it is an experiment. Dean Wulfert raised the point that money should be budgeted for marketing of this new program. The Provost said that his office will make this part of their effort to promote online learning and that they are trying to make sure all online programs are promoted. The chair raised the point that this new program needs to go after the NYC population, that it is the largest teaching population in the country.

Austin Ostro asked whether it is better to take this offering online or in person and if that choice could affect hiring of teachers by districts. The chair explained that, no, as long as it is an accredited institution and that usually these teachers are already employed by a district.

**Voting on application**

The Chair asked: What should be amended? The committee agreed that the tables with the missing data should be fixed. The tables should state that the data is not available. If it doesn’t apply, put NA and they need to proofread the application again. The Chair offered to make the these suggestions.

Dean Wulfert re-opened the question of the other linguistics course. She was not happy with the answer. If it does exist and it is online, it is a duplication. The Provost asked the committee to take a vote and then find out the answer. The Chair pointed out that this application has not
gone through GAC yet and that GAC will pick up on cross-over or conflicts with the Linguistics Department that and Dean Wulfert will look into the issue in the meantime.

**VOTE**
7 Favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention

**Provost’s Report**

The Provost kept his remarks brief. He told the committee that the Contingent Faculty Report came out and the Graduate Stipend Report was released. These were the outcomes of the Blue Ribbon Commissions. He stated that the compact planning process did support both and money was associated with each one. He said that though there are more to those reports than money, it was a statement regarding their importance. He said that one of the recommendations was to form a small committee to carry on the work of the larger group and to hold the Provost’s Office accountable, to make sure contingent faculty were listed on the website, for example, or hiring someone to teach two courses a term because that gets them eligible for health insurance benefits. He said that there is no such stipulation in the Graduate Stipend Report.

He said that the next thing coming is the Strategic Planning Report. This will be a consensual process starting from President Jones’s four stakes and that they will try to do the process with alacrity and pick up on some of the momentum already underway. These reports can take two years and they would like to avoid that. He would like to incorporate many good ideas he has heard amongst faculty and students and to get faculty and students involved to create buy-in for these ideas.

He is getting continuing progress in all the departments that report to the Provost’s Office. The new deans are reporting in and are very enthusiastic about their roles, especially Harvey Charles and Darrell Wheeler. He said Global Strategies and Public Engagement are poised to take off. And they are both part of the President’s stakes. One new development with Public Engagement is that there is a growing interest in the Downtown Campus and that it is a good site to produce public engagement. The proximity of the downtown campus to at-need Albany neighborhoods makes it a likely place to start and they will be moving Public Engagement downtown.

There is more progress with the Albany Law affiliation. There has been a lot of feedback, mostly positive.

There is a diversity hiring program in the fall. Four active searches. The idea is that if you can find a diverse faculty member, a new line will be added to the search, so there will be an incentive to find and vet diverse faculty. Instead of search committees, they are calling them recruitment committees. The Provost’s Office in general is interested in diversity and Provost Stellar will talk to anyone with ideas or questions.
Q&A

Sridar Chittur asked if there was any news about the East Campus. The Provost answered that Laura Schweitzer is now working on developing a plan. They are looking into more utilization of Wadsworth Labs and new partnerships with Regeneron. They are looking at experiential education benefits and benefits to companies in terms of new opportunities. They are looking at more partnerships and more in applied learning. This is part of UAlbany’s status as an engine of opportunity and part of a trend towards looking at how the university benefits students in the long run (graduation, careers, grad school) – not just in terms of retention.

Mei Chen asked about new collaboration agreements with Albany Medical College. The Provost said that there is already an existing relationship with Downstate Medical Center. But AMC is private and the university has to be careful of how it spends state money. But there is a lot of potential for relationships. He is also looking at collaboration with Albany’s School of pharmacy and getting students on a track to attend our engineering college for a master’s.

Mei Chen asked about the steps for starting these collaborations, for example accessing and utilizing data for research. The Provost told her to speak with Jim Dias and to discuss what barriers exist and how to utilize these relationships.

Final topics

The Chair declared that she would be forming the two subcommittees under the UPPC charter: The Facilities Committee and The Resource Analysis and Planning Committee. Jim Van Voorst asked the Chair about her reason for reestablishing these subcommittees. He spoke about the past history of these subcommittees and explained that over time those committees went away, and the UPPC felt it needed the information directly. There was not open communication; but now, the council has the ability to get the information.

Cynthia Fox stated that these subcommittees are constituted like no other subcommittee. They have been given some status but the reason for that has been lost.

Dean Wulfert said that she did not remember these groups meeting in a long time. Mitch Leventhal asked if there were enough on-going issues to constitute them now. Cynthia Fox asked if it is a good thing that no one has noticed or bad that these subcommittees do not exist, and that there certainly is enough going on to maybe justify them.

Jim Van Voorst offered any information that is needed, since both of these areas report to him, that he would be happy to bring it to this council.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.