UNIVERSITY POLICY AND PLANNING COUNCIL
2011-12 CHAIR: ERIC LIFSHIN

MARCH 23, 2012
MEETING MINUTES


GUESTS:  Teresa Harrison, Professor, Department of Communication and Faculty Athletics Representative
Lee McElroy, Vice President for Athletics Administration
Bob Andrea, Associate Vice Provost for Admissions and Enrollment Services
Karen Chico Hurst, University Registrar

MINUTES:  Minutes of February 17, 2012 approved as written

CHAIR’S REPORT

UPPC members attended a report on the 2013-2023 Facilities Master Plan on March 7th.

NEW BUSINESS

FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS REPORT – GUESTS: TERESA HARRISON AND LEE MCELOY

Dr. Harrison explained her role as Faculty Athletics Representative to the council and presented data about the academic standing of the 437 students on some kind of athletic scholarship, including the average GPA and SAT scores of incoming freshman student athletes and the majors that all student athletes enroll in. She noted that we have a significant number of student athletes enrolled in restricted majors. Additional information presented to the council included the GPAs of student athletes divided by sport, and the student athlete graduation success rate (GSR). The NCAA tracks the Academic Progress Rate (APR) by each sport and closely monitors academic eligibility. The university takes corrective action if the APR falls below 925 (max. score of 1,000).

Dr. Harrison went on to explain the composition and charge of the Intercollegiate Athletics Advisory Board. Dr. McElroy commented on the Breakfast of Champions program – student athletes invite one of their professors to see what a day in the life of a student athlete is like. Dr. Lifshin asked about the rationale for the NCAA imposing academic standards – Dr. McElroy responded that the metrics are established to protect academic integrity and to make sure that the institutions do not allow at risk students to participate in athletic programs to the detriment of their academic experience. Mr. Birge commented that we seem to be attracting students who are academically talented and who often take their 4th year of eligibility to take a graduate degree. Dr. McElroy concurred that we are attracting this type of student and they are doing very well, and that our student athletes reflect the academic profile of the institution, which is not so common in NCAA Division 1 schools. Dr. Lifshin thanked Drs. McElroy and Harrison for their attendance.
SPRING BREAK SCHEDULING – GUESTS: KAREN CHICO HURST AND BOB ANDREA

Ms. Chico Hurst explained how the academic calendar is built. There are some 23 factors that are addressed in the construction of the academic calendar, listed below:

1. Federal, State, and SUNY requirements regarding a traditional 15-week semester.
2. Accreditation standards.
3. Consideration for the “University at Albany Calendar Guidelines”.
4. Start and end dates.
5. Time between Fall and Spring to allow for Winter session.
6. Time between Spring and Fall to allow for Summer Session.
7. Suggested minimum meeting patterns based on Federal, State, and SUNY requirements:
   • The suggested minimum number of class meeting times for TTH/MW courses is 27.
   • The suggested minimum number of class meeting times for MWF courses is 39.
   • The suggested minimum number of class meeting times for classes meeting once a week is 13.
8. Academics
9. Observance of Religious holidays
10. Break schedules
11. Faculty preferences
12. Inclement Weather
13. Emergency Situations
14. Faculty and/or faculty family illness – need to cancel classes.
15. Recruitment/Enrollment efforts
16. Advisement Efforts
17. Residence Halls Staffing
18. Food Service Contracts
19. Financial Aid – work study funding
20. Efforts of the Plant – Ability to have facilities ready, perform construction, exercise winter shutdown and energy savings initiatives.
21. Final Exams
22. Grading
23. Commencement

The main goal of the academic calendar is to make sure that we are compliant with the required number of meeting dates. She explained the difficulties with planning the schedules with all the different factors in play, and requested the Council’s assistance in ranking the importance of the various planning criteria. Dr. Fessler brought one of the issues that came up in SEC was that we have been operating at the minimum for several years, and this semester we have three extra days. The faculty would like consistency in order to plan their syllabi. Ms. Chico Hurst would like to see us start with 14 or 15 meetings to allow for cancellations. Dr. Fessler also requested a preference for symmetry between the semesters.

Ms. Chico Hurst would like to know how many people are interested in our breaks coinciding with the school breaks. She has polled other SUNY campuses and most do not do that. Dean Bangert-Drowns brought up the different values (academic quality, religious accommodation, family friendliness, etc.) and how we might weigh them. If there is a conflict between values, how do we rank what is most important. Dr. Lifshin suggested if different calendars could be created based on those values, the council might provide input as to what works best.

The St. Patrick’s spring break issue was raised – the preference from the Provost and President is to try it for a couple of years. Dr. Fessler suggested a survey to prioritize preferences across
the university. Ms. Khan noted that the Student Association passed a resolution that the breaks should coincide with religious holidays as opposed to wanting students off campus for St. Patrick’s Day. Dean Bangert-Drowns asked about religious observation protections for faculty – Mr. Beditz responded that labor laws protect faculty who wish to observe religious holidays.

Ms. Chico Hurst has vetted three years’ worth of calendars with critical university services and can provide calendars for review by mid-April. She asked how the council feels about the potential for a ‘bonus’ day if no cancellations are used. Faculty members of the council felt that it would be disruptive to the faculty.

OLD BUSINESS

CAMPUS IMPACT STATEMENT FORM DESIGN

The revised Campus Impact form was circulated to the council for any final comments. SEC has seen the form and not responded with comments. Dr. Lifshin called a motion to adopt this form for use in future program submissions to SEC. The motion was unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Fessler will circulate the approved form to SEC.

Next meeting will be Friday, April 20, 2012

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy Stern