Minutes of the October 3, 2012 meeting was approved.

Chair’s Report

None given

Writing Program Proposal

Copies of the revised Writing Proposal were distributed, with the most recent edits noted in the document. Vice Provost Faerman provided copies of the most recent budget, campus impact form and FAQ page.

Vice Provost Faerman reviewed the startup costs, noting that OTPS costs in the first year are two to three times that of subsequent years. Office space has not yet been requested for the program, but the Vice Provost indicated that she would be meeting with the space committee once the proposal is approved. A question was asked regarding resource implications for libraries - nothing major is anticipated, and the ITS requirements will be normal for new hires; there are no servers or major equipment purchases required.

Discussion turned to the qualifications and salary for the director position. It is assumed that the director will be a Ph.D. who does research in the area of college level writing, and will have a 12 month obligation. This setup is comparable to other directors around the country.

A council member expressed concern regarding the Assistant Director position and how it might affect a full time faculty member being pulled out to serve in this capacity, particularly that a course buyout would not cover the time/effort that the home unit would lose. While it may be the case that one of the lecturers becomes the Assistant Director, there is no active search from within the faculty planned at this point – the position is in place to build flexibility for the future. Chair Fessler commented that course buyouts are targeted to teaching, and that they do not pull professors out of their home unit, i.e., they are still responsible for service to their home unit.
Vice Provost Faerman noted that the instructor salaries and position design (FT, non-tenure track) are comparable to peer programs. The Writing Center will be a unit within the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. The instructors will be voting faculty and members of UUP with rights and privileges, but will not be eligible for tenure. The primary role of the instructors will be teaching with no research responsibilities, but a service component is expected as with any member of the university community. A council member asked why these positions are not tenure track. She argued that a tenure track position would be more attractive to individuals with expertise who will not just use this as a stepping stone. Dean Wulfert noted that across the institution, instructors are not tenure track (there were two exceptions in English, but those were special cases). Provost Phillips confirmed that these are not tenurable titles, and that we already have two groups of academic faculty - library faculty and EOP/Academic support programs whose main focus is on program area, so the new Writing Program instructors are not a new category on campus.

Term appointments will be given to the instructors in the ‘evergreen’ contract format; they will be given 3 year contracts that are renewed every year in order to provide some stability. A question was asked about fringe benefits; VP Beditz explained that these were state lines, and thus the state absorbs fringe benefit costs. A comment was made that we will want to pay attention to turnover. Vice Provost Faerman concurred we do want to promote stability. Provost Phillips agreed that there has historically been a lack of recognition of the need to pay attention to the career development needs of non-tenure track faculty. A friendly amendment to the proposal was accepted, to add language in the assessment section about tracking turnover of instructors in the program.

A council member asked for a clarification of the roles of the Writing Center and the Writing Program on campus. Vice Provost Faerman explained that the difference between the Writing Program and the Writing Center is that the Writing Center does not teach classes. It is a location for students to go for one-to-one help in writing papers. It is housed in the English Department, and serves both undergraduate and graduate students across the university. The Writing Program will be about teaching our students to make the adjustment from high school writing to college level writing.

The Writing Program will serve 2,500 students each year. A council member asked a question about AP English exemption. Transfers who come in with a fulfilled general education requirement from another campus are exempted per SUNY mandates, but this is not the case for students with AP English. Another council member asked about the waiver for transfer students and expressed concern that this exemption will set up a two tier culture among students, as Comp 101 taken elsewhere will not be equivalent to this new course. The Vice Provost explained that SUNY policy requires us to accept Gen Ed courses taken elsewhere unless we make it a local requirement. Vice Provost Faerman will take a look at the language in the transfer requirements paragraph, and try to make that clearer (this was seen as a friendly amendment to the proposal). A council member asked whether additional instructors will need to be hired if enrollment increases. Provost Phillips responded that we have done our 2020
enrollment growth so we don't anticipate an undergraduate enrollment increase in the near term.

A council member asked about whether there is a sufficient applicant pool for this type of position; Vice Provost Faerman replied that the committee has evidence that there is a critical mass of people who would like to teach writing and who are not looking for research obligations. Class enrollments in the Writing Program are expected to be 25 students per class. The teaching load will be 4/3. This works out to 75 students per instructor per semester, or 150 per year.

Regarding assessment, Provost Faerman remarked that we need to look at this from two perspectives, the first being the SUNY General Education writing requirement. The Writing Program is not just teaching the required course but creating a program that prepares students to be better writers and thinkers. The second part is to identify whether the faculty begin to see a difference in the quality of their students' writing over time. Assessment is a dynamic process that will be developed over the short and long term. Chair Fessler noted the involvement of the Council on Academic Assessment as part of the program proposal. IRPE will be actively involved in qualifying assessment as well.

Provost Phillips offered another way of thinking about the costs of this program - if there is an interest from departments to contribute to the program, that would reduce the number of new hires, although there have been no volunteers to date.

Chair Fessler asked about search committee and recruitment costs, and suggested that such costs be added to the proposed budget. This was accepted as a friendly amendment to the proposal.

Chair Fessler called for a vote to pass on to SEC for review with the three amendments discussed today, which was unanimously approved.

**Provost’s Report (delivered to the council after the meeting, because of time constraints)**

We continue to try to untangle the issues that are leading to the lower-than-expected graduate student enrollment. Enrollment targets – set with the close participation of program directors and department chairs -- were adjusted downward from last year to this year, but were still not met in the majority of schools, colleges, and departments. Closer analysis of the application, admission, and enrollment data indicates that, overall, we have FEWER grad students enrolled in most programs than several years ago, and further that while the application numbers are steady or rising, the number of students who have received offers of admission, and who eventually enroll, has dropped.

Campus forums are being held to provide updates on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The three dates are:
o Wednesday, October 10th, from 10:30am -12:00pm, in the Standish Room (Science Library)
o Tuesday, October 23rd, from 3:00pm - 4:30pm, in the Husted Amphitheater (Downtown Campus)
o Friday, October 26th, from 3:30pm - 5:00pm, in Empire Commons (Community Building meeting room)

**Action Items:**

Calendar discussion tabled for the next meeting.

A guest from the School of Public Health will be at the next UPPC meeting to discuss the Global Health Certificate proposal.

Next meeting conflicts w/ faculty forum on diversity – we will identify another time, either on the 7th or the 21st.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05am

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy Stern