

Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean Meeting

Friday, September 26, 2008, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Room 118 ASI Bldg.

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: FACD members: Paul Heinemann, Wakar Uddin, Eric Zenner, Troy Ott, Ramesh Ramachandran, Margot Kaye, Matt Kaplan, Bill Curran.

Unable to attend: Robert Beelman, Liwang Cui, Martin McGann, Jeff Hyde, John Vanden Heuvel.

Paul Heinemann called the meeting to order. Introductions were made as this is the first meeting of the 2008-09 Committee of the new academic year. Paul asked if the group had any questions for discussion to ask the Dean. Also to be discussed is the role and effectiveness of the FACD – which was the question brought up by the Dean at the last meeting (May 22, 2008).

Paul Heinemann said that perhaps the FAC has perceptions that are not quite correct. The FAC role is to bring questions forward to the Dean from their department faculty, but the FACD is not necessarily advising the Dean. Questions brought forward to the Dean are generally driven by what is going on in the College at the time (name change, website, strategic plan, parking/space, etc.). Perhaps with a new dean coming, the new dean would use this group more as an advisory group. The wording about the function of this committee was changed by this committee in the Faculty Organization and Operating Guidelines just a few years ago. The Dean is asking for feedback about how this committee currently functions.

The College sustainability report had been distributed to the group prior to the meeting.

Additional questions/topics brought up by the group to discuss with the Dean today:

Graduate programs – tuition/stipend – post docs.

Issue with tech staff positions that are left vacant – are they low priority?

Sustainability Report: Super Department idea – comes up frequently, from an economic perspective it sounds reasonable, but has it ever improved the colleges where it has been implemented?

It was mentioned that this approach does not work for A B E depts.– they disappear – very few left in the Northeast

Dean Steele and Ann Dodd arrived. Paul Heinemann said the group would like to respond to the Dean about the role and effectiveness of this committee and any recommendations to recreate it. The wording in the charge was changed previously. This is for the faculty to decide and change. The FACD feels that the opportunity to meet with the Dean is important.

Dean Steele then gave his updates. Over the past year, they have worked together to develop the College's Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 and they are now ready to begin the next phase of implementation. There are seven recommendations, one of which has to do with this committee. The committee was asked to weigh in on each of these important pieces in the strategic plan. Ann Dodd leads the way on planning and the next steps for strategic planning implementation, requesting that units revisit their current strategic plans using the "Guidelines for Unit Planning Updates" document she drafted.

The Monday before APD, the unit leaders had their unit plans at their retreat. There are seven groups involved, five have to do with program priority and two are operational. What does this group think? Implementation teams are to be created for some or all of the College's five strategic initiatives. Identify areas where we can shine and lead in. Units are to identify action plans that are aligned with the strategies and performance indicators in the 2008-2013 plan and should be identified in the context of the five strategic initiatives. So as not to recreate new documents, what is the minimum structure needed to move forward with our mission and what role will this group play in this? The College's only mandate was to come up with a plan and now that the plan

is done, implementation is needed. This has been presented to the Unit Leaders but not officially released yet. Unit Plans are to be initiated from the bottom up.

Comment was made that it seems that the Units should be doing some of this and in the eyes of some, this is not happening. Not being brought back to the faculty. Communication is often a problem.

Sustainability Report was discussed. The report suggested that an appointed Executive Advisory Board (item #5) replace the FACD. But the committee opinion is that this executive advisory board would have a unique role and one that would be different than the role of the FACD. A question was asked about the efficiency savings (mentioned in item #6) – where does it go? What incentive is in place for faculty to look for developing inter-disciplinary courses? Biggest incentive would be in P&T.

The Dean provided information on the new Farm Bill. New moneys can be found there. Big increases in new specialty crops initiative funding.

The question was asked about enhancement to the annual review process. The process is required but it is up to the unit in how they accomplish it. Dean Steele does not micro manage that. As an example, one department added Recruitment as a category in their annual review.

Middle States Accreditation may become more complex, with more detailed assessments of programs required. Some departments already deal with this, such as ABET accreditation in the A B E department.

Dean Steele also mentioned the “hot button” item of IT Security, recent agenda items at Faculty Senate and Unit Leader meetings. Are we taking this seriously? There will be increase scrutiny by IT services on faculty/staff computers. We must be maintaining data security in our College. The University systems are very vulnerable. Social Security numbers are still being found on hard drives. There are 3 ways to check your system 1) Jump Drive – scans for pattern recognition to try and clean up your data; 2) Neal Vines could give to your IT person to scan and 3) EIS – can happen overnight. Personal ID information is OK to have on your hard drive

Paul Heinemann, Chair, FACD
Kathy Pletcher, Administrative Assistant