

Academic Affairs Advisory Group

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Sam Karas Room 12:15 – 2:15p.m.

Present: John Anderson, Elizabeth Bishop, Leandro Castillo, Roseann Erwin, Heather Faust, Laura Franklin, Joshua Gess, LaRon Johnson, Tom Logan, Celine Pinet, Leslie Procive, Kathleen Rozman, Rosaleen Ryan, Lyndon Schutzler, Stephanie Tetter

Absent: Diane Boynton, Sharon Colton, Michael Gilmartin, Cheryl Jacobson

Others Present: Steve Ma, Alfred Hochstaedter, Denise Moss, Carla Robinson

Opening Business

- Approval of notes from April 25, 2012 meeting: The minutes were approved.

Motion: Stephanie made the motion to approve the notes; Elizabeth seconded. All in favor; none opposed, no abstentions.

Action Items

- None

Informational Items

- Technology and Budget Update:

Budget: Steve explained the process behind the development of the Very Tentative Budget document that was distributed at College Council. The budget is a framework, outlining the known vs. unknown factors. He also wanted to show the history of the college's reduction in funds – the cuts over the last several years with no restoration. Many of the one-time fixes still need to be fixed.

A concern shared by the Division Chairs was the unknown status of the replacement faculty positions: the five that were approved in fall 2011 and the two new retirements that will affect the classes offered in fall 2012 if they are not replaced. There also has not been a proposal forthcoming from the negotiating team, which leaves many unanswered questions. Steve said that he and Dr. Garrison feel that it is not in the best interest of the college to erode the full-time faculty. The question is if the college should wait on hiring the replacements until a clearer picture of the budget is received and that may not occur until the fall semester, or possibly later as the tax initiatives are not voted on until November. In response to the question what is the plan to close the deficit, Steve indicated it could be accomplished through agreements with the two bargaining units, use of District one-time funds and a "catch-all". The "catch-all" may mean none of the five faculty positions are filled or maybe some are filled.

It was pointed out that each year there are fewer hires and considering 85% of the budget is staff salaries and benefits, it was still unclear to AAAG how the budget deficit will be closed.

The May revise is scheduled to come out next week, but Steve surmises that it will not change from what is currently proposed. Steve added that the deficit of \$3.5 million for next year does not include the \$1.7 million that was added to this year's shortfall. This amount still needs to be addressed.

Technology: The technology vision and strategic initiative will be a part of the education master plan. The goal is to define the framework and the future of technology for the college. Steve also wants to better define the initiative. There were several topics to address, beginning with the wireless issue.

Wireless – there is a need to increase IP addresses, which IT has started to do. Increasing IP addresses to the extent that the college needs also means a need to increase resources (hardware). Steve brought up the fact that users may someday start to bring in their own laptops and devices, in the LTC for example, and this will need to be considered as future directions for wireless access are explored.

Tech Refreshment Funds – these were funds traditionally used to replace old computers. Though it was pointed out to Steve that many of the classrooms have computers that are old and dying and making it difficult to teach students, funds have not been allocated due to the large deficit. No final decisions on hardware are being made at this time.

Thin Clients – Steve said this option might not be appropriate for every department or area. The Thin Clients need to be tested with the software products that will be used for a particular area. It is currently being tested in the Administration building and so far it is working with no problems. It appears that for administrative and clerical functions the Thin Clients perform well. For classrooms use and student services, it has to be evaluated.

Website – Steve asked what AAAG would suggest that IT do to improve the college website, lacking a webmaster. He is already aware that the website is not the easiest or friendliest to use. The discussion also covered using Share Point, a cost and investment already incurred. The issue is the lack of support for Share Point. Other universities might be using it with no problems because they can provide the support that is required to maintain the program. MPC cannot offer the support needed. It was added that as a student it is very frustrating to have to login twice just to check your email.

Entities that rely on IT? – the answer is that everyone on campus relies on the IT department and communication is supposed to be disseminated through the Technology Committee. Steve acknowledged that the Technology Committee is not functioning correctly. The process to restructure the committee was started by implementing new by-laws and a new composition of committee members. The request was made to have Sharon report back to AAAG on the final by-laws and the composition of the committee. Steve agreed to have Sharon distribute the information.

HR Aspect – Steve stated that there is unequal support provided across campus. Some areas have good support while others have none. The goal is to utilize human resources in an efficient manner. For example, we need to rethink how Audio Visual area needs are addressed.

Whatever changes occur have to be a zero sum game, so how do we make do with what we have?

Steve was informed that at previous AAAG meetings the question was posed to Sharon to provide the overtime costs in IT and if those costs could offset hiring a full-time person for IT. Steve said that he considers the overtime incurred as one-time project driven. When asked how he can justify the expense, he said he justifies it because we need to get new buildings up and running.

Steve announced that he is looking to make a change with the IT organizational structure. There is a campus-wide infrastructure, emergency systems, media systems, etc. so his idea is to have a position that focuses on instructional technology, which is separate from IT functions, yet the two would be intertwined.

In response to a restructuring, Fred said the current IT organizational structure is not necessarily problematic and that the problem seems to be more personnel related. He said the topic of replacing the Dean of Information Technology and Media Services was discussed at length in the Academic Senate. The final outcome and recommendation from the Academic Senate was that we need strong leadership, clear communication, that the technology needs to work and most importantly, he stressed the fact that we need someone from the outside.

- Program Review Annual Update Summary Presentations: (for more detail, reference the full documents posted on the AAAG webpage.)

Physical Education:

Annual Update – the discretionary funds are an issue as they do not keep pace with current costs. The theme of having to try and make do is recurring from last year. There is a need to replace old and failing equipment. In addition, the division has to respond appropriately to whatever is mandated by the state.

Reflections – reflections are done with all faculty in the division, not by department. The main area of focus was the Fitness Center. It is a large student use venue. The challenge is getting the information to the students. The discussion focused on how to deliver the information and make it accessible online. The second area was the course outline and content in relation to SLOs. The division has a lot of adjunct faculty and turnover, so it is important to make sure the faculty is educated in what we are doing.

Counseling:

Annual Update – there has been a high demand and counseling is under-staffed, though adjunct counselors have been used to help cover the volume. It was discovered there are a lot of students self-counseling and then come to see a counselor a year later. The counselors discussed ways to catch these students in advance. This will be important with the Student Success Taskforce recommendation for all students to have an education plan. The Counseling department is trying ways to increase the number of drop-in students seen in a day, offering Saturday and evening events, and offering a PERS 200 orientation for high school students.

Life Sciences:

Annual Update – the main issues have been with technology and staffing, some areas require it more than others.

Reflections – the main discussion was on changes observed in the students in their learning needs. The division has started using iLearn to a greater extent; an example is to record lectures and post it to iLearn along with slides of the lecture. They have been doing more assessments of students to identify how and what they are learning. There have been conversations about active learning; the outcome is that the departments are meeting more often.

Creative Arts:

Annual Update – the division is down two positions and would like to have those replaced. The Arts require a lot of equipment and they go through items that the discretionary budget is not able to sustain. There are technology concerns, partially due to technology issues and partially due to the buildings.

Reflections – a philosophical approach was taken. The division has accepted the concept of student learning outcomes (not objectives). They have agreed on a set of SLOs that are arcane enough that Creative Arts would be willing to be evaluated on. It was also decided on to make M1 a “smart” classroom so Art History can be taught in there.

Library:

Annual Update – the usage of e-books has skyrocketed.

Reflections – two areas were identified that need to be addressed. The first is staffing and the second challenge is technology as there is no budget for training. The technology itself has an impact on student learning so the staff is finding ways for the library to improve and function on its own. There are two projects being worked on, the first is the library website overhaul to incorporate library guides and the second is students accessing more information through searches.

Business & Technology:

Annual Update – the division is having technology issues with the labs having PC’s that are 6+ years or older. All of the instructors in the division are using iLearn and also using Wiki’s for assigned projects. As part of the division program review they are considering changing the Business Skills Center to include an online element.

Reflections – what the time entails for them to come together to discuss issues.

Social Sciences:

Annual Update – staffing needs.

Reflections – the division meets as one group. The discussion outcome was realizing that most students are not able to demonstrate the critical thinking required by the

instructors. The division came up with five conclusions as to how to accomplish their goals:

#1 Assignments that require students to read and critically examine key issues in our disciplines

#2 Students have the basic knowledge and vocabulary to understand what we are asking them to critically examine

#3 Instructors will model for students how to read and critically examine articles

#4 Instructors will give examples of written work that successfully analyze a text

#5 Take the word 'comprehend' out of GEOs and replace it with "critically examine the complexities of..."

Physical Sciences:

Annual Update – staffing needs in Physics and the MLC, maintaining field trip budgets, technology needs and focus on MESA program. We are the only community college that does not have one.

Reflections – the division is reviewing the preparedness of students. There is a special assessment for Chemistry students; using Smart Pens in Math classes to help the students with their studies. The Smart Pens allow the Instructor to post the lecture on their website for students to access after class. The Math department is planning to offer a Beginning Algebra and Intermediate Algebra class in the same semester. Both classes are shortened, so a student is able to take both and receive credit. Earth Sciences is working on how to support field work back in the classroom.

Humanities:

Annual Update – Add and/or revise curriculum in Philosophy, Speech, Linguistics and Humanities. Improve connections between ESL, English, ESSC and Reading Center. Add faculty (especially in English) and staff. Improve advertising and refresh computers in the ESSC, Reading Center and ESL Lab.

Reflections – revision of curriculum in ESL, Philosophy, Speech and Linguistics. Recommendation to require placement testing of all incoming students agreed to by Student Services; need new ESL placement test. Further emphasis on helping students become more fully acclimated to college expectations and regulations.

Reports – not enough time available for reports.

- Academic Affairs:
- Academic Senate:
- College Council:
- Curriculum Advisory Committee:
- Facilities Committee:
- Technology Committee:
- Division Updates:

Calendar

- Next AAAG meeting: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 12:15 p.m., Humanities Conference Room