
Members Present

A.Lutz, C. Frost, D. Belcher, H.W. Means, J. Dooley, L. Warise, P. Fischer, S. Taylor, W. Cribb, R. Heinrich, M. Arndt

Members Absent

L. Burriss, T. Greer

Members Excused

S. Seipel, B.Haskew, K. Rushlow

Additional Attendees

D. Miller, R. Moffett

Call to Order

Deborah Belcher, 2009-2010 Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Faculty Senate Chambers.

Greeting and Welcome

Introduction: D. Miller

D. Miller discussed that she had reviewed a variety of documents and spoke with several groups throughout the university regarding the *Proposed Restructuring of Colleges* as related to *Positioning the University for the Future*. In addition, from the Dean's retreat, she received several ideas and proposals concerning restructuring from the Deans. This proposed restructuring is no one idea from any one group, but a compilation of ideas and proposals. This proposal is also a point of discussion from which she is taking additional considerations and developing a final proposal to be submitted to Dr. McPhee by December 1.

She also stated that a variety of ideas, concerns and issues have been shared and noted since the document was emailed on Monday morning. For example, the Dr. Carl Adams Chair in Health Care Services is to report to the Provost per the original contract. Since the EVP&P Office didn't have a copy of the contract, she was not aware of the original requirements. Also, the National Healthcare Chair in Nursing is to report to the School of Nursing. Based on these discoveries, the proposal will be revised.

The new College of Education was not intended to be just two departments. The focus of the new college is on the preparation of teachers and those supporting professions.

In looking at all of the colleges, the goal was to put together things that made sense functionally. Dr. Miller stated that what made sense to her might not make

sense to others and that she is willing to listen to people regarding whether the proposed schools, departments, etc. are in fact, good functional matches. Her goal was to make sure the outcome was consistent with the Academic Master Plan, i.e. remaining student centered and placing programs in places where it made sense to the university and the community we are serving.

She also stated that the cost benefit was 2nd to last on the list of priorities. In the first model, there were 36 academic units. She took this model to a sounding board for feedback, and the first point brought out was that there were no cost savings. The proposed consolidation of departments into schools resulted in consolidation and in the end, cost savings. She also began counting the number of faculty members in each school and some decisions were based on how many faculty members were in a given school and how to create balance within each college, school, or department.

Dr. Moore in the College of Mass Communications was consulted regarding how to structure the School of Journalism and Mass Media. This is one example of how she consulted experts before making decisions.

The result was 29 academic units and some cost savings. She emphasized, as the President stated long ago, cost savings was never the driving factor for looking at college reorganization.

The one concept that every participant in the Dean's retreat agreed on was a University College because this would bring an organizational structure to entering students. The resulting proposal was a name change from College of Distance Education to University College. This proposed model is supported by D. Boyle and D. Sells.

Increasing the number of colleges was also not a deciding factor in this process. However, it was noted, if we increase by even one college, this change would have to be approved by THEC. But, if we don't increase the number of colleges, we only need board approval. If necessary, the President was willing to bring the issue to THEC. The current proposal does not change the number of colleges, so TBR approval is only needed.

The current model does not eliminate any faculty positions or any programs.

D. Miller does not have answers yet about the administrative structure, i.e. how chair positions will be handled or how administrative duties will be structured within schools. She has appointed a committee to make suggestions to help set up the new administrative structure. In the proposal, Schools will have Directors to accomplish a majority of administrative tasks. Each discipline group would retain as much autonomy as possible, but have designated faculty with reassigned time for specific scheduling needs, unit accreditations and other discipline unique administrative duties. For example, Chemistry has 30 faculty, specific lab needs, etc. They would need a designated faculty member to assume that responsibility for coordinating schedules.

D. Miller stated that most savings will come from not filling vacant lines.

Discussion/Q&A:

- **Concern over equity of pay/release time for administrative duties. Some departments make greater sacrifice than others.**
 - May have to reevaluate the equity of our chair stipend strategy and the reassigned time if faculty members take on those roles.

- **If two departments are merged, does that mean the smaller department is eliminated?**
 - This is a technical, hypothetical question, and there is not a clear answer for this.
- **How does merging departments or changing colleges affect tenure?**
 - Policy II.01.05A states that transfer of tenure – faculty tenured in an academic unit i.e. school, may be transferred to another academic unit. So, tenure will not be taken away. Faculty interests and concerns were at the forefront of creating this proposal.
- **Can tenured faculty be eliminated?**
 - Unless financial exigency is declared, tenured faculty members are protected.
- **If a unit is “eliminated,” would that technically create an opportunity to terminate a position?**
 - D. Miller understands that termination is only allowed if:
 - Deletion of an academic program allows elimination.
 - There is substantial and continued reduction in student enrollment in a discipline.
 - A. Lutz noted that faculty members are tenured in a department not in a college. He received feedback from TBR counsel that lead him to believe that tenure is not fully protected when there is a merger.
 - D. Miller emphasized that the policy allows for transfer of tenure and that there is no intent to eliminate tenured faculty positions.
 - She also stated that no one knows what future demands will need to be met. We all recognize that programs may need to be cut in the future. At that point, there will be protection given to tenured faculty to the extent possible based on our policy and guidelines.
 - There is precedent for transfer of tenure. When Chemistry and Physics split, there were protected positions.
- **Can there be a transition period for those going up for tenure or promotion where they can still be reviewed based on the criteria of previous department and original peer group?**
 - D. Miller hopes that none of us lose our respect for each other as faculty and the accomplishments we have achieved. T & P Committees should review based on policy. Philosophically, it should not matter about the change of committee members if a portfolio is good based on policy.
 - D. Miller believes that there is a policy to suspend a person’s tenure clock, i.e. personal reasons. So, the question is whether this situation would allow suspension of the tenure period in order to allow for an individual to decide to take more time to develop their portfolio.
 - If the Senate wants an amendment to the policy, we should bring a grass roots movement to make this change.

- **How does changing from one college to another affect pay structure?**
 - No one will lose salary in the transfer. As an example, those people in Business Education would need to be compared with others in their field. If there ever is an across the board increase/market adjustment in the future, they might be affected because they are at the top level while others haven't reached the average market pay. But again, we need to determine whether market adjustments are college specific or discipline specific.
- **College of Education??? Structure? TQI?**
 - There have been emails from Educational Leadership with good points, and D. Miller is forming discussion groups regarding these issues. The groups will bring their solutions and suggestions to D. Miller.
 - Teacher Quality Initiative – concern is that we are required to hire clinical professors, where will those funds come from in light of the budget reductions. D. Miller stated that we will find the money to make that happen because it is mandated.
- **How does the move of General education courses from specific areas to the University College affect FTEs and academic control/curriculum content?**
 - Conceptually, University College is focused on entry level students, freshman and transfer, looking at a nontraditional path for a degree program. B. Badley has done a great job directing general education and continues to serve as director of general education. In the future, if he were to step down from his current position, the proposal would allow for future reporting to the University College rather than the EVP&P Office. So, the proposal is just defining a reporting structure and has nothing to do with FTEs.
 - Concern was also noted that credit for teaching general education courses would accrue to University College rather than the discipline area. D. Miller stated that is not the case.
- **Due to the diverse nature of the colleges, would there be a higher demand for Associate Deans, thereby eliminating cost savings?**
 - D. Miller stated that the proposal doesn't require Associate Deans. Schools would have Directors and academic units within those schools might have a faculty member with release time to complete specific scheduling or accreditation tasks specific to that discipline. For example, the School of Fine Arts has 3 academic units. There would be a director for the School of Fine Arts and a faculty member in each unit to complete specific tasks relating to that discipline.
- **Are these schools places where the University expects growth?**
 - Perhaps, but when growth occurs, the financial resources would have to be allocated.
 - W. Cribb: What is the message, for example, to Chemistry about the Science building when their "department" status is taken away. What message does this send to THEC?
 - Expectation is growth/collaboration etc.

- **Accreditation:**
 - D. Miller requested that some areas check whether there would be an impact on accreditation based on the proposal. It was found that the “test” units would not have a negative impact. D. Miller also requested that each academic unit check into their discipline specific accreditations and make suggestions based on those findings. She also stated that R. Moore looked into accreditation for his academic units and determined that some needed independent budgets that were not imbedded with other disciplines. So, how budgets are handled needs to be worked out to meet accreditation requirements. Adjustments will be made to protect accreditation.
- **What was the rationale for the changes, specific details?**
 - Answered above.
- **Could there be a series of meetings where the proposed college schools/departments/units could meet and discuss opportunities? Could we structure meetings for merging entities to get together?**
 - D. Miller stated that this is already occurring and that she has encouraged Deans to engage in these conversations.
 - D. Miller challenged the Deans and the Academic Affairs Liaison Committee to ask yourself, “How can we make this work?” It’s easy to identify the flaws, but it is better to ask how to make this work. She realizes the answer may be, “we can’t.” But if we listen and come up with a rationale and can come to her and explain it, she will listen.
- **Chuck Higgins’s comments from Physics and Astronomy were discussed and shared with D. Miller.**
 - The proposed School of Physical Sciences, we think, will have SERIOUS, negative consequences on the new Ph.D. programs in the sciences – especially in the areas of faculty recruitment, and external funding.
 - The proposed School of Physical Sciences will have a Negative effect on our efforts to attract more science and math majors who will be highly qualified to teach high school
 - The Department of Physics & Astronomy strongly wishes to continue to serve the University as a separate department to continue our efforts of high quality teaching, research, and service
 - The Department of Physics & Astronomy sees the proposed top-level College structure as reasonable and viable.

Adjournment

D. Belcher adjourned the meeting with D. Miller at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Taylor
2009-2010 Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Edited: D. Belcher