



Academic Affairs Committee

March 14, 2023

DRAFT Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean Priddy (Chair), Mona Edwards; Betsy Oakley; Tim Rice, Linda Sloan, Hazael Mengesha

MEMBERS ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Elizabeth Phillips

OTHERS PRESENT: Chancellor Franklin Gilliam; Debbie Storrs, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor; Terri Shelton, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement; Regina McCoy, Associate Vice Provost for Retention and Student Success; Wade Maki, UNC System Faculty Assembly Chair and Senior Lecturer, UNCG Department of Philosophy; Grace Heilmann, UNCG Student; Waiyi Tse, Chief of Staff; Kelly Harris, Assistant Secretary to the Board; and other members of the administration, faculty, staff, and general public.

PROCEEDINGS:

Chair Dean Priddy called the meeting to order at 1:45pm

The roll call was read, and a quorum was confirmed.

The minutes of the November 29, 2022 meeting were unanimously approved with no additions or corrections.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

AAC – 1 Provost's Update on Budget Reductions, Program Review and rpk Engagement

Provost Storrs provided a context to the budget reductions to help the committee understand the change fatigue and ongoing stress faculty and staff are experiencing. Among them, a 2021-22 budget reduction exercise led to a 2% overall reduction being implemented this year (22-23), and an email migration from Google to Microsoft Outlook will happen this spring. The campus will also transition from the Zoom platform to Microsoft Teams.

Student success measures have also been implemented, including Starfish, an early alert messaging system that faculty use to help communicate with students on their progress and performance in class. Midterm grades have also been submitted as another method of providing students with performance checks. .

Faculty are teaching a different group of students who, while academically capable, differ in terms of needs and behaviors that require additional faculty time and energy.

Budget reduction planning within academic affairs has been ongoing. Deans and department chairs/heads have been actively engaged in the planning process – they worked with their departments to propose reduction plans at the 4, 6, and 8% levels and had many conversations with the Provost before final decisions were made. Those decisions took into account the deans' recommendations, consideration of the results in terms of outcomes and adjustments to overall operations; and the university's strategic framework and priorities, which include student success, areas of distinction and growth, and scholarship/research/creative activity.

Strategic reductions were considered, rather than across-the-board cuts. A key focus was protecting student credit hours and student success. The resulting 4% overall reduction in academic affairs is differential, ranging from 0% to 8% across colleges, schools, and administrative units.

Academic Program Review

Provost Storrs discussed the process that will be used to determine the health of each undergraduate and graduate program and identify those that need investments or may need to be discontinued. A suggested review process has been developed by a group of faculty and refined by deans and the provost – the provost has shared the draft process with all faculty, and the goal is to have an agreed upon process by the end of this semester.

The provost will then charge a task force of faculty to develop a rubric and weighting of data variables to evaluate each program. That will then be presented to all faculty in the fall and thereafter refined based on their feedback. Once confirmed, the deans will use the rubric and weighting to evaluate their programs.

Any programs that are deemed potential for discontinuation will go through an additional review process at the college/school level, with qualitative context and faculty feedback.

Deans will make recommendations for program investment/discontinuation to the provost, who will confer with the chancellor for final decisions. Those will then be submitted to President Hans for final approval.

Policies will be followed and teach out plans will be developed for students in impacted programs. As the Provost explained, program review is a best practice. Though the budget is the impetus behind this review, program review is something campuses should engage in on a regular basis to evaluate if programs are meeting student demand and needs.

A number of academic efficiencies are also being reviewed and/or implemented. Examples include offering shorter term courses, looking at the number of electives and required courses for

each program, and coordinating the type and number of general education courses to reduce the number of small size classes.

Rpk Group

The provost also discussed rpk, a consulting firm collaborating with leadership on providing surge capacity to UNCG by creating data dashboards which will be helpful in reviewing programs in the near term and guide regular review of our academic portfolio. They are also providing support to the Chancellor's task force on financial sustainability. She noted that rpk is merely consulting – they are not making any decisions.

AAC – 2 Student Success Update (McCoy)

Associate Vice Provost Regina McCoy discussed retention efforts she is leading. As part of the Chancellor's challenge for the campus community to innovate and reinvent our way forward, proposals aimed at improving enrollment and retention were solicited from faculty and departments. Fourteen have been funded from a mix of donor and Chancellor's strategic investment funds.

One of these initiatives provides direct support for students via Peer to Peer Support- meaning academic support for students who need tutoring & skill development.

The peer coaching model embeds peer guides within low performing courses. Sophomore biology major Grace Heilmann serves as a peer coach. Heilmann discussed her college journey to UNCG and her transformative experience as a tutor and mentor. The committee then engaged in discussion on how to scale the model and the fact that fundraising is needed to support peer mentors.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

AAC – 3 Update on Research and Engagement

Vice Chancellor Terri Shelton reported that external awards are up over \$11 million or approximately 33% relative to this time last year. Submissions are down both in number as well as in amount requested which does occur after several years of increased funding, but we are reviewing with the schools/colleges as well as our Centers and Institutes to ensure that we continue a robust pipeline of high-quality submissions.

Among UNCG's many scholarly strengths is our work in addressing factors that contribute to health inequities. Whether it is the work on food insecurity led by Dr. Jigna Dharod in Nutrition or the over 15 year collaboration among UNCG faculty such as Dr. Sharon Morrison in Public Health Education and Dr. Sudha Shreeniwas from Human Development and Family Studies with the Montagnard community and the Montagnard Dega Association on immigrant health and hypertension, UNCG is leading innovative and impactful initiatives that reduce inequities while providing cutting edge opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students. Additional

examples include the work of Dr. Gabriela Stein in Psychology. Dr. Stein's CAMINOS lab has obtained more than \$5 million in funding to address mental health inequities for Latinx, Asian American, and African American communities. School of Nursing faculty led by Dr. Audrey Snyder received \$3.7 million from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration for "Nurse Led Mobile Health Units: Improving Health Outcomes with Data Science" in collaboration with Cone Health. In Public Health Education, Dr. Sandra Echeverría examines how built-in environmental, immigrant, and socioeconomic determinants influence cardiovascular health, particularly in Latinx communities. Dr. Echeverria uses evidence-based models to address social barriers to physical activity for Latinx people living with diabetes by integrating clinical and community data systems and resources. Finally, in Counseling and Educational Development, doctoral student Garland McKinney has received a CDCP two-year fellowship from the National Birth Equity Collaborative for her research into disparities in Black women's maternal health. Her research will look specifically at race-related stressors that have an impact on both the mental and physical health of these women.

The Committee was provided with informational reports on action items approved by the Chancellor pursuant to delegated authority from November 2021, through November 2022; a report on annual appointments to academic advisory boards; and a roster of candidates awarded degrees and certificates in December 2022.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Harris
Assistant Secretary to the Board