December 9, 2011

University Planning Council

Minutes for December 9, 2011

Present: Buffy Bagwell, Jane Fernandes, Catherine Frank, Eric Gant, Archer Gravely, Bill Haggard, Julie Heinitch, Gregg Kormanik, Erica Abrams Locklear, Ted Meigs, Patrice Mitchell, Kevin Moorhead, Dave Peifer, John Pierce, Anne Ponder, Christine Riley, Robert Straub

Absent: Keller Berry, Melissa Burchard, Katja Greeson, Gary Nallan

Guests: Jessica Dunsmore, Bruce Larson, Clayton Fogg

UPC met on December 9 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm in Highsmith Union 222.

1. Chancellor Ponder convened the meeting and asked for a moment of silence for the Virginia Tech victims of the shooting tragedy earlier this week.

She reported that the new leader of our Board of Trustees, Cissie Stevens, has obtained unanimous agreement from Trustees to contribute $25K annually for scholarships. This bold step by the Board of Trustees sets a good example and will increase our average annual amount of $100K for scholarships by 25%.

The Board of Trustees authorized the construction of an astronomy lab and observatory at the end of Campus Drive and received a briefing on the acquisition of the MAHEC property. We have signed a lease agreement [as a back-up plan], and the purchase contract is being reviewed by the Office of State Property. The Board of Trustees concurred with the recommendations of the campus Tuition and Fee Committee composed of students, faculty, and staff. UNC Asheville’s recommendation has been sent to the UNC President for consideration. His recommendation will go to the UNC Board of Governors for approval in February. Their recommendation will need the concurrence of the Legislature in the spring. The BOT also announced a gift of $25K per year by Carey and Charlie Owen to establish the Anne Ponder Scholarship Fund.

Chancellor Ponder announced the Holiday Party next week and invited UPC members to drop by.

UPC members raised questions about transportation options for students to Student Health and Counseling Center when these services are relocated to the MAHEC property on W.T. Weaver Blvd. Faculty have asked to be apprised of the procedures for requesting transportation to better assist students having emotional difficulties. Dr. Haggard stated that we will guarantee transportation to the MAHEC facility, and we will work out the specific model of delivery in the months ahead. The move would be more than a year away.

2. Drs. Larson and Dunsmore briefed UPC on the SACS Off-Site Team report and noted that we were found to be non-compliant in only seven areas. Five of these non-compliant areas are either minor, deal with on-line learning, or have already been resolved. The most problematic issue was the number of
terminal degree faculty in one program. UNC Asheville will also have to respond to changes made to existing SACS standards at the recent December SACS Annual meeting. Additionally, there are four new federal standards, three of which deal with on-line learning, and a new requirement on the definition of credit hours. UNC Asheville responses will be submitted in the Focused Report in February 2012.

3. UPC continued its review of proposed changes in the Undergraduate Education and Economic Sustainability Strategic Plan Benchmarks:

a. Provost Fernandes’s proposal to replace the current NSSE survey self-reported item on the extent to which students think they have received a broad, general education with results of the Collegiate Level Assessment (CLA) test was approved by UPC. Since the November meeting, UPC members were given the opportunity to review the full CLA report to understand what is being measured and how. The CLA test will be administered every four years and provides an objective measure of value-added student learning based on 1,200 colleges and universities. The target will be to exceed the expected level of performance based on SAT scores.

b. UPC discussed the proposed new measure of economic sustainability defined as the proportion of expenditures based on state funding compared to non-state funds. After considerable discussion, UPC concluded that the interpretation of this indicator was too confusing to be a useful benchmark. We will add a benchmark that uses the actual state appropriations adjusted for holdbacks as a benchmark for economic sustainability, with a target of increasing these dollars each year.

4. UPC members participated in a brief round-robin update of social sustainability issues as the final agenda item.

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