February 3, 2012

University Planning Council

Minutes for February 3, 2012

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

Absent: Buffy Bagwell, Keller Berry, Melissa Burchard, Katja Greeson, Robert Straub

Guests: Ben Judge, Clayton Fogg, Jessica Dunsmore, Bruce Larson

UPC met on February 3rd from 3:40 to 5 PM in Highsmith Union 223.

1. Chancellor Ponder convened the first UPC meeting of the semester and noted the varying start times on our schedule.

She reported that the 2012 Legislative Short Session officially starts in May, but guided budget advice will be completed before the session opens. The UNC Board of Governors will meet next week and the Planning and Budgeting Sub-Committee is expected to ask for authority to submit proposals directly to the Legislature. Mr. Pierce has been asked to submit a proposal for how we might use $1M in recurring funds, should that be allocated to our campus.

As a second piece of good news, Chancellor Ponder reported that the Spangler Foundation, which previously announced suspending funding for endowed professorships, has decided to continue the program for small, special mission campuses.

In response to an especially challenging competitive admissions environment, we have added scholarship funding this year.

UNC Asheville’s attorney is working with WCU’s attorney to work out the details of WCU relocating their graduate programs elsewhere. The timing of the exit is set to make the space used by WCU available for use this summer.

Chancellor Ponder spoke about the Asheville-Citizen Times’ highly critical reporting of the Men’s Basketball conference tournament controversy and reported that we have achieved a “win-win” solution.

She noted that the “ Seriously Creative” TV spot that ran during the UNC Asheville – UNC-CH basketball game recently has received a CASE award and praised our marketing and communications team for their good work.

During a round-robin discussion of social sustainability, a concern was expressed that curriculum review discussions have become very emotional. Chancellor Ponder suggested that we should set the standards for civil discourse and share more information in advance about these meetings.
2. Dr. Fernandes gave an update on our preparations for the SACS on-site visit scheduled for March 27-29. UPC members were provided with a roster of Reaffirmation Committee members and a detailed itinerary. UPC received advice on interacting with team members and the importance of everyone on campus having a basic understanding of our QEP Inquiry Arc Project. Dr. Larson informed UPC that the visiting team will focus on the QEP project, seven items found to be not in compliance last Fall, mandatory SACS items, and federal requirements. Dr. Dunsmore reported that it was very positive that SACS was not going to send a finance evaluator and emphasized how important it was for everyone to have some knowledge of the QEP Inquiry Arc project.

3. Mr. Pierce presented an overview of University budget planning. From 2009 to 2011, our state appropriations as a percentage of general fund revenues declined from 75% to 71%. On a per-student basis, state support dropped about $1,500 per FTE. We have an approximate 3-1 ratio of budget cuts to tuition increases. Our tuition and fees remain the lowest in our peer group and Kiplinger ranks us as #45 nationally among their list of “best buys”. In 2011-12, we had a cut in state appropriations of $4.5M and gained less than half of that back in tuition increases. For 2012, UNC Asheville requested a $500 tuition increase with the support of students and our Board, but President Ross decided to limit increases on all campuses to 10 percent, reducing our request to $310 for undergraduate instate students. President Ross’s proposal goes to the Board of Governors next week for review. Mr. Pierce stated that despite these challenges, we have followed the UPC Budget Planning Guidelines and protected the academic core. To illustrate, he noted that expenditures for instruction have increased as a percentage of the budget, Institutional Support (administration) has remained constant, but Physical Plant has declined slightly during this period.

Return to UPC Minutes