Minutes of the Meeting of April 15, 2004

Members present:  Kevin Callahan, Judy Clarence, Susan Gubernat, Jiansheng Guo, Vish Hegde, Chris Lubwama, Helen Zong

Members Absent: Gloria M. Rodriguez, Michael Strait (Chair), Gale Young

Guests: Anne Pym, Julie Norton

Guest Chair Clarence called the meeting to order at 2:11pm

1. Approval of the Agenda

   The agenda was accepted. The meeting began with time certain item – Dept of Communications Five Year Review.

2. Communications 5 year Review

   Pym, who is the new Interim Chair of the Dept of Communications, gave an overview of the changes that the Dept has undergone and their plans for the future. The Dept was created by the melding of Mass Communications and Speech Communications in 2003. The Dept is unique in the country, in that its program offerings range from the interpersonal to highly technologized communication. The Dept is about to undertake two major projects which will last for several years. The first, is to redefine, meld and then refine the masters programs in Speech and Mass Communications. The second is to redefine the nine options within the current undergraduate major. Obstacles include the number of regular faculty available within the Dept. Though there are nine faculty members on the books, there are only four to six members who are readily available to serve the 376 majors and to participate in making the changes that need to occur within the Dept. At the same time, the Dept is having to drastically cut lecturers due to the budget crises. This will put even more pressure on the regular faculty.

   Pym pointed out that the Dept may suspend up to three options due to personnel issues. One such option is Interpersonal Communications. Clarence received assurances from Pym that current interpersonal communications students would be able to finish their degrees through creative retooling of courses. Next year the Dept will begin the process of reviewing and rethinking all of the options.

   Gubernat asked Pym about the reasoning behind the merger. Pym said the merger occurred due to administrative considerations and that though the faculty was originally resistant to the change, she believed that the merger has led to a stronger program. Gubernat asked Pym if the 1997 and 1999 CAPR reviews were a factor in the department merger. Pym said no. Pym expressed concern that the Speech Comm side of the department was in danger of disappearing due to faculty retirements.

   Clarence asked if the blended department and future blended programs will make it difficult for undergraduates to gain admission into graduate schools in either Speech or Mass
Communications. Pym replied that things haven’t changed that much and that many of their students go on to grad school. Pym said that the department will be putting an effort into building its graduate program and that the faculty has agreed to do independent studies in order to ensure that the program survives. Norton asked and Pym replied that the Dept had tried some “stacked” classes in order to serve the needs of different options. Overall, Pym said that the Dept expects that the process of redefining the undergrad and grad majors and getting the programs on their feet will take two to three years.

Clarence pointed out that CAPR is reviewing a program that doesn’t quite exist. Guo said that though this is a new program, it is not being created out of nothing and that he hopes that the Five Year reports can be a help in guiding the Dept faculty. Gubernat will be the “responder” to this Five Year report.

The discussion then shifted to requests for tenure track positions. Gubernat said that CAPR is interested in helping the Dept of Communications put forward an argument for additional tenure track lines, since the Administration does not consider faculty retirements as sufficient rationale for new positions. For example, Professor Radin was doing important work in a fast growing program when she died. What data can the Dept collect that shows that replacing Radin would lead to a large increase in students served? Pym agreed that this would be a worthwhile effort. She also pointed out that pages 14-15 addressed the need for additional faculty members. The Dept isn’t looking to “replace” faculty as much as build and sustain the department. Guo suggested that the Dept makes more of an argument for why it needs new faculty positions and how they fit into the University’s goals. These arguments should be brief and clear addressing the needs (and demands) of the students and the needs of society. Guo suggested that the Dept takes another look at the stats found in their report and how they appear to be contradictory. Pym pointed out that a variety of the stats come from different years and the apparent contradictions can be explained in the report. Norton suggested that Pym talk to Roseann Hogan. Gubernat suggested that the Dept leave off its cost-based argument for new positions. Pym pointed out that she can certainly make an argument for what will be lost to the University and society if regular faculty positions are not approved. Lack of new positions will cause the quality of their program to greatly decrease while new positions will allow the Dept to grow and continue to provide important services that the University and society.

Gubernat asked about the current job market. Pym responded that more and more jobs are requiring media technology knowledge.

Guo suggested that the Dept should provide more detail in their outcomes assessment document and that the Dept should also acknowledge the change to the 180 unit undergraduate degree. Pym replied that they just don’t have the personnel available to refine their assessment document.

Clarence said that at this point, the Dept should revise its Five Year document and resubmit it to CAPR. Gubernat can meet with Pym to help in that revision. Gubernat will then write her evaluation of the program.

Pym expressed her appreciation to the committee.

3. Approval of the Minutes of April 1

The Minutes of the April 1 meeting were approved. The last sentence “Guo then moved to discontinue the Arts Administration program” was changed to “Guo then moved to approve the discontinuation of the Arts Administration program.”
4. Report of the Chair

Chair Clarence, who is also on the Physical Planning Cmte, reported that two benches, in memory of Connie Sexauer, will be set up on the lawn west of Warren hall. Also, the University has reached an agreement with R&B Associates to rent out the Amphitheater for summer concerts. A band shell and fencing will be installed from May through October. There will be no cost to the University for either of these projects.

5. Report of the Presidential appointee

No report.

6. Request to Postpone Five Year Review – Music Program

Gubernat pointed out that the Music Department asked to be reviewed by CAPR, so a request for postponement seemed reasonable. Hegde further added that the Dept is not required to be reviewed by CAPR since that are reviewed and accredited by an external professional body every ten years. Clarence confirmed that since the loss of two faculty members, the members of the Music Dept have been overloaded with work. Lubwama moved to postpone the Music Dept’s five year review until 04-05, with a second from Guo. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Work – Group Updates

CAPR’s College/Library Tenure Track Position Allocation Review Guidelines

Guo distributed the latest copy of the guidelines and stepped through various changes. Clarence asked Guo to include the url’s of the University documents cited in these guidelines. Norton asked if there is a current University Master Plan that would help in the development of these review guidelines. Guo wondered about CAPR’s continued involvement in the tenure track allocation process and noted that the College and University don’t seem to have five year plans which CAPR could review. Norton pointed out that CAPR is most valuable in helping departments use their review processes in the development of proposals for new tenure track allocations as opposed to having CAPR prioritize tenure track requests. Clarence said that CAPR has been debating its proper role for over ten years. Guo suggested that CAPR could be a “watch dog” for tenure track allocations and assessing how Colleges choose to make those allocations. Gubernat said that CAPR hasn’t been so interested in prioritizing positions requests as in understanding how the Deans make their decisions and having the process be more transparent. Clarence agreed. Norton pointed out that there are four new hires for the whole University this year.

Academic Standards

Lubwama said that CAPR needs an official request from the Chair of the Academic Senate to include an “Academic Standards” portion in the CAPR Five Year Review document.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Callahan
Secretary, pro tem