Joint Committee on Academic Planning Minutes September 24, 2015

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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Minutes

Attendance: Provost Don DeHayes, Chairperson, Linda Welters, Vice Chairperson, Marilyn Barbour, Susan Trostle Brand (for Norma Owens), James Kinnie, Kyle Kusz, Ann Morrissey, Kat Quina, Damon Rarick, Gerald Sonnenfeld, George Tsaitas, and Lindsay McLennan, President, Graduate Student Association.

Members Absent: Laura Beauvais, Mary Jo Gonzales, Mary Sullivan, and Nasser Zawia.

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:10 PM. Ms. Morrissey indicated that she would provide edits to the minutes from the August 28 meeting. Ms. Neff said that they would be returned for approval at the October 22 meeting.

2. Ongoing Business

a. JCAP subcommittee members Marilyn Barbour, Kyle Kusz, Ann Morrissey, and Damon Rarick reported on their work since the previous JCAP meeting to review and propose changes to Strategic Academic Plan 2016-2021 Goals 3, 4, and 5. They indicated that, while attempting to streamline the document and retain the integrity of the work of the (summer) task forces, they had tried to ensure that the actions supported the strategies. Discussion ensued about Goal 4, “Dedication to Diversity and Inclusion.” It was suggested that the statement, “Overall Strategy” be removed because it was not consistent with the format of the other goals. Discussion ensued about measures of accountability specifically as they related to Goal 4 but also as they related to all of the goals. The Committee was asked to consider including accountability language in the strategy statements not only the actions statements. Discussion continued about the challenge of achieving Goal 4 and how to infuse diversity into the culture at all levels of the institution. The following changes were proposed to Goal 4:

   Strategy 1 - Develop robust plans and accountability measures for diversifying faculty and staff by employing new and novel approaches that realize and retain greater numbers of diverse faculty
Strategy 3 – Engender a faculty and staff community that engages in frequent discourse about what is to be a diverse and equitable community, **vigorously supported by institutional leaders.**

The Provost reminded the Committee that “preface” statements would need to be written for the final publication of the Plan. He suggested that the “Overall Strategy” statement removed from Goal 4 could be used as the preface statement for that goal.

**Overall strategy** - Continuously work to minimize systemic and institutional forms of discrimination and marginalization, cultivate more welcoming and inclusive scholarly environments, and advance just, fair, and equitable learning opportunities in every college, department and course.

b. The Committee discussed proposed changes to Goal 5. It was suggested that the following be removed and consider being used in the introduction to the Plan:

To improve processes University-wide, each member of the President’s senior team will ensure the examination and implementation of actions to streamline processes in Academic Affairs, Athletics, Community Equity and Diversity, Administration and Finance, the Research Office, the URI Foundation, Alumni Affairs, Communications, Legal Services, and Student Affairs (e.g. decrease time to completion of transactions) without compromising quality, accountability, and outcomes. Each area shall:

Review all systems and establish measurable timeliness-related criteria for each administrative process. (Review roles of personnel to ensure efficiency, effective decision-making, and accountability; may require more than one person to perform the same task to ensure that transactions may be processed in a timely manner)

Simplify signature trails on transactions; delegate/decentralize responsibility when appropriate

Clarify and revise institutional policies to ensure current policies based on specific regulations or requirements

Explore new innovative models (e.g. shared service models or other) for effectiveness in service delivery

c. The Provost distributed a two-page draft of the work of a 10-member group to
define Goal 6, “Implementing a Bold Advancement Agenda” and discussion followed. The following suggestion was made:

Strategy 1, Action 6. Develop a strategy to engage students and their families as well as faculty, staff, and the university community in a manner that elicits a sense of “pay it forward” and collective investment in the future of the university.

It was suggested to incorporate ways in which Vice Presidents could assist in:

Strategy 2, Action 1. Clarify the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each fundraising partner, including URIF & Alumni staff, VP’s, Deans, athletics, faculty, staff, etc.

Committee members were asked to review the draft of Goal 6.

d. The next steps toward completion of the Plan were discussed. The Committee considered presenting the Plan to the Faculty Senate at its next (October 15) meeting. The process of obtaining Senate support in 2010 (the launch of the first Academic Plan) was reviewed. Ms. Morrissey said that the draft of the Plan would be linked through the JCAP website and a means of making comments would be available there also.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.