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Joint Committee on Academic Planning Minutes February 8, 2018

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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Joint Committee on Academic Planning
February 8, 2018
MINUTES

Members Present: Marilyn Barbour, Laura Beauvais, Ryan Buck, Donald DeHayes, Nancy Eaton, Mayrai Gindy, Hillary Leonard, Leslie Mahler, Ann Morrissey, Michael Rice, Naomi Thompson, Travis Williams, Nasser Zawia
Guests: Christy Ashley, Judy Beckman, Matthew Bodah, Deborah Riebe

Provost DeHayes called the meeting to order at 3:05pm.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes from the meeting held 12/12/17 were approved.

NEASC Report – JCAP Input on Response
Vice Provost Matt Bodah gave a brief overview of URI’s response to the NEASC report. The report is very positive overall, and the items called out are mostly small issues. He asked for discussion and input on what our response should include. Consensus was that we will give a general response and not take it standard by standard. Matt asked that the committee members send him their input and additional comments in the next few days. He will post the final report and our response.

Academic Summit Debrief
The committee reviewed and discussed the participant Summit feedback summary report. Ann Morrissey asked how JCAP would follow up on the feedback. It was also noted that no-shows were higher than expected. Perhaps JCAP may want to start planning the Summit earlier for next year. Discussion on this topic should continue.

Proposed Program – PhD in Health Sciences
Dr. Deborah Riebe, Associate Dean, Health Sciences, explained that it is hoped that this proposed PhD in Health Sciences will attract students from the various disciplines in Health Sciences. They have had a committee from all the disciplines working on the plan, and they all support the idea. She said it will take time to develop enrollment, but we do need more PhD opportunities, particularly for Physical Therapy and Communicative Disorders. An MPH degree is also being developed in effort to provide creative options for students. After discussion, the committee voted unanimously to recommend that the plan go forward, with these points noted:

- Although there is departmental support, is it actually needed by the individual tracks?
- Fiscal details must be worked out, i.e., staffing, labs, etc.
- The idea is good, but needs more development and specific details.

Proposed Program – Executive Doctorate of Business and Analytics (EDBA)
Drs. Christy Ashley and Judy Beckman presented the proposal, saying that the target audience for this degree is executives, i.e., professionals who need/want their data analysis skills enhanced. They said that for example, accounting firms are working with larger and larger data sets, and need their professionals to have the skills to handle these data. They indicated a growing demand locally and overseas for these skills – so this degree will fill that need and add the prestige of a doctorate. Applicants to the degree program would be required to already have a Master’s degree. One of the reasons to make it a DBA degree is that there are so many more Master’s programs competing for the same audience and the perceived value of an MBA is much lower now. One of the questions arising is whether there are enough candidates who can afford the program, and for full-time working professionals, it may be a lot to ask of their time, and may add to the load of debt they are already carrying from undergraduate degrees. The College of Business also needs to consider whether it can afford to offer this new program along with the one-year MBA program, given the limited resources in the college. After additional discussion about these concerns, and some members continuing to have strong reservations about the direction of the program, the majority of the committee voted that the proposal go forward (3 opposed.)

Next meeting will be Thursday, March 8, 2018, 3:00 – 4:30pm.

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