

September 21, 2006

TO: Provost's Council

FROM: Judith M. Bowman
Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies

SUBJ: Provost's Council Agenda for Tuesday, September 26

The Provost's Council will meet from 8:30-10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 26 in the Board Room in Koch Hall. The following agenda items will be discussed.

1. Approval of the August 22 minutes (see attachment, p. 1-2)
2. Checklist for Sites Operating in High Schools or Other Off-Campus Locations (see attachment, p. 3)

Nancy Cooley

3. Considerations Regarding Competition at a Distance and Summary Demographics at Distance Learning Sites (see attachments, p. 4-7)

Nancy Cooley

4. NRC –Assessment of Research Doctoral Programs

Phil Langlais, Brenda Lewis and Marty Sharpe

5. Student Attendance at the Fall Job Fair – 9:15 a.m.

Tom Wunderlich

6. Graduation Ceremonies

7. Other Business

PROVOST'S COUNCIL
September 26, 2006
Minutes

The Provost's Council met on Tuesday, September 26, 2006, from 8:30-9:50 a.m. Those present were Tom Isenhour (Chair), Nancy Bagranoff, Andrew Balas, Oktay Baysal, Nancy Cooley, Chandra de Silva, Bill Drewry, Bill Graves, Phil Langlais, Ginny O'Herron, Joe Rule, and Charles Wilson.

1. The August 22 minutes were approved.
2. Checklist for Sites Operating in High Schools or Other Off-Campus Locations

Nancy Cooley provided an updated version of the policy checklist governing the roles of Distance Learning and the Academic Colleges in establishing off-campus teaching sites. Dr. Cooley noted that one other bullet, similar to Item 2, would be added, calling for a point of contact to be established at a given site, just as there will be a point of contact within an Academic College. Dr. Cooley assured the Council that the checklist is always a work in progress and will be revisited whenever either party wishes to do so.

3. Considerations Regarding Competition at a Distance and Summary Demographics at Distance Learning Sites

Dr. Cooley initiated the discussion and then several of her staff provided information regarding not only the shifting demographics among DL students but also the challenges confronting ODU with regard to student expectations and increased competition from other academic providers. Edie Barnett (Associate Vice President for Distance Learning), Mark Halsey (Regional Director), Regenia Hill (Regional Director), and Kirk Dewyea (Site Director, Blue Ridge CC and Piedmont CC) provided a detailed assessment of these issues. Compelling points include increased demand from traditional-age and non-working students as well as increased demand from single mothers. The DL population is almost exclusively female. Students expect to complete their studies at a much swifter pace, and they expect flexibility and convenience (with regard to course offerings and admissions cycles), along with low costs. At the same time, ODU is still catering to the older, working student. Dr. Cooley noted that perhaps the University should decide which population it wishes to target instead of trying to cater to everyone's needs. Dr. Sharpe questioned whether or not ODU had saturated certain, small-town markets. Dr. Baysal suggested the DL unit conduct research and determine which audience should be targeted. Dr. Graves prompted discussion on the George Washington Model for tuition costs, a business model whereby students are offered an upfront cost for their entire degree program if they agree to take a certain number of degree hours with the institution. Dr. Cooley reminded the Council that so many for-profit schools have entered the Commonwealth and that only recently has SCHEV begun tracking these schools.

Dr. Barnett noted, as well, that even the University of Richmond is aggressively marketing itself across the Commonwealth. Dr. Barnett also made recommendations for protecting/enhancing ODU's market share: dedicating tenure-track faculty to the DL enterprise, offering flexible schedules that cater to the demanding schedules of working adults, increasing the use of video-streamed delivery, improving transfer and articulation practices, and providing special tutoring options for certain gateway courses. Dr. de Silva observed that the University, given resource restrictions, cannot honor all of these recommendations. He suggested instead that DL, in consultation with Departments and Colleges, pilot certain initiatives within the individual colleges.

4. NRC—Assessment of Research Doctoral Programs

Brenda Lewis, with the assistance of Phil Langlais and Marty Sharpe, provided an overview of the upcoming assessment of doctoral programs sponsored by the National Research Council. The purpose of the assessment is “to help universities improve the quality of research doctoral programs through benchmarking; to provide potential students and the public with accessible information on these programs nationwide; and to enhance the nation's overall research capacity.” The study requires the collection of quantitative data from institutions, graduate programs, faculty, and students. To be included in the study, a program must have graduated 5 PhDs during the last five years. Dr. Lewis will coordinate this effort.

5. Student Attendance at the Fall Job Fair

Tom Wunderlich solicited the help of the Council in advertising to faculty and students the upcoming job fair, which is the Career Management Center's most ambitious annual event. This year the fair will be held for the first time in the Constant Convocation Center, and a record number of prospective employers will be in attendance. Mr. Wunderlich reminded the group that the fair is for all students, not just seniors. In addition, alumni and their immediate families are invited. Dr. Graves inquired whether or not the Alumni office could provide Colleges with a database of alumni email addresses so that the Colleges could assist in notifying alumni for events like this.

6. Graduation Ceremonies

Dr. Isenhour requested input on two issues: a) how to encourage faculty to attend graduation ceremonies; and b) whether or not the University should institute an August graduation. On the first issue, at least two deans noted that faculty feel as though they are no longer participants in Commencement and are thus discouraged from attending. Discussion ensued about how best to rectify this problem. Dr. de Silva suggested that the discussions should occur within the Colleges, while Dr. Isenhour said he would discuss the matter further with the President. About the August graduation, most agreed that having such a ceremony is a good idea,

especially since more and more Ph.D. students will graduate during the summer and will not want to return the following December to participate in ceremonies.

7. Other Business

Dr. de Silva reminded the Council that President Runte will be bestowing upon Mary Robinson an honorary degree on October 10, 2006, during fall break. Dr. de Silva requested that each Dean designate five faculty to attend the event to ensure a reasonable turnout. Dr. Graves apprised the group that also during fall break Art Linkletter would be speaking and signing his new children's book.

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