

October 24, 2008

TO: Provost's Council

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

SUBJ: Provost's Council Agenda for Tuesday, October 28, 2008

The Provost's Council will meet on Tuesday, October 28 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the Board Room in Koch Hall. The following agenda items will be discussed.

1. Approval of the minutes of the October 14 meeting (see attachment, p. 1-2)
2. Program Review Process
Marty Sharpe
3. Requirements for Level II Authority
Marty Sharpe
4. Report from GAC on the Administration of Graduate Programs (see attachment, p. 3-4)
Phil Langlais
5. Proposed Revisions to the Policy on Eminent Scholars (see attachment, p. 5-8)
6. Proposed Revisions to the Policy on Academic Rank and Promotion in Rank, the Policy on Tenure, and the Schedule for Faculty Seeking Tenure (attachments will be forwarded separately)
7. Interest in Bachelor of Applied Science from VCCS

PROVOST'S COUNCIL
October 28, 2008
Minutes

The Provost's Council met on Tuesday, October 28, 2008, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the Koch Hall Board Room. Those present were Carol Simpson (Chair), Ali Ardalan, Andrew Balas, David Branch, Andy Casiello, Paul Champagne, Chandra de Silva, Philip Langlais, Ginny O'Herron, Chris Platsoucas, Marty Sharpe, Linda Vahala, and Charles Wilson.

1. The October 14 minutes were approved.
2. Library Budget Reductions – Ginny O'Herron

University Librarian O'Herron updated the Council on how the current budget reductions will affect library operations. The library will initiate a cancellation process for subscriptions to underused journals. This decision will allow the library to meet current reduction requirements as well as prepare for other imminent reductions. University Librarian O'Herron indicated that certain criteria/conditions would be considered before cancellations are ordered (e.g. cost per use, electronic versions of print materials, high enrollment programs, national reputation of the department or area, graduate student/faculty research needs, inter-library loan options, high-demand programs). Dean Balas asked if the ODU library could coordinate these reductions with other area libraries. University Librarian O'Herron noted that such coordination has been in effect for 6-7 years. Vice Provost Langlais asked if essential Ph.D. journals could be identified (and protected). University Librarian O'Herron replied that faculty would have to identify those. Dean de Silva cautioned the library not simply to cut materials but to consider proportionate reductions in personnel. University Librarian O'Herron replied that the library is already woefully understaffed, having lost 4.5 positions during the last major round of reductions. She reassured the Deans that faculty/departments will have an opportunity to appeal cancellations; Pamela Morgan will facilitate these appeals.

3. Program Review Process – Marty Sharpe

Vice Provost Sharpe distributed a draft document highlighting a proposed program review process, immediately reassuring the Deans that the process is not meant as a "witch hunt" for low-enrollment programs. Rather, the process is designed to help colleges and programs "improve quality and effectiveness" and to ensure "centralized accountability." The last significant program review was conducted 7 years ago, though such a review should be conducted every 5 years. This proposal is designed to ensure a regular, systematic process. Vice Provost Sharpe stated that the review process should allow for "a broad array of measures" so that every college "will have a favorable metric." Provost Simpson urged the Deans to review the draft and offer feedback to Vice Provost Sharpe so that the review process can be launched in spring 2009. The Deans should look for what is missing in the proposed process, and what might be omitted. Dean Balas cautioned that the review should include a stated quality improvement goal (as opposed to simply focusing on closure). He also wants to make sure this process

aligns nicely with accreditation reviews so that faculty are not duplicating their work. Provost Simpson agreed that such alignment should occur but also reminded the Council that this over-arching review process will ensure that all programs are reviewed, not just those that are subject to discipline-based accreditation review. Dean Platsoucas noted that the following are very important when assessing quality: 1) Quantitative measures (e.g. number of grants); 2) Quality of publications; 3) Number of citations achieved; 4) Employment of graduate students, immediately and five years later; and 5) Return on investment. Vice Provost Sharpe agreed but also noted that the goals for this process are for it to be “streamlined, collaborative, and interactive.” Provost Simpson concurred, stating that the process should be “painless and useful.” Associate Dean Ardalan suggested that process include benchmarking (comparing our programs to those at peer institutions). Dean Balas suggested that we use data to further the argument for enrolling more out-of-state students. Dean Platsoucas asked that we also initiate a process for reviewing endowed professorships. Dean de Silva urged that the draft document be altered to reflect what will be, initially, a quantitative approach for review so that faculty know right away that such an approach will be used, though the qualitative review will follow. A compromise was reached; the document will read “available data will be used initially” as opposed to Dean de Silva’s suggested “quantitative data will be used initially.” The Deans will continue to review the document and offer suggestions by the next Council meeting.

4. Level II Authority

Vice Provost Sharpe apprised the Council of the criteria required for ODU to achieve Level II Authority under the Commonwealth Restructuring Act. The institution “must agree to implement two academically-related goals for growth and improvement associated with the public policy areas outlined in the Goals of the Restructuring Act or other areas which demonstrate [the institution’s] willingness to engage in self-improvement and effectiveness.” The Deans were asked to consider three goals (from which list two will be chosen) or to suggest other possible goals. The three proposed goals are: 1) Improve the strategy for course offerings and scheduling to reduce time-to-finish for students; 2) Increase online offerings to improve access to high-demand programs; and 3) Increase articulation with community colleges by creating selected Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees. Provost Simpson cautioned that whatever goals we agree upon, we must be prepared to achieve them regardless of resource stream, because they will probably be unfunded mandates. She urged consideration of the BAS proposal, because the community colleges have expressed this as a need, and this is one that ODU could implement with very few resources; we could simply re-package some of our existing programs. Provost Simpson assured the Deans that this proposal would in no way shift the mission of the University. Were ODU to offer such degrees, it would be the first institution in the Commonwealth to do so. The Deans will discuss the issue with the appropriate faculty/departments and report at the next Council meeting. The Faculty Senate will also want to weigh in. On the issue of increased online offerings, Associate Dean Ardalan asked for confirmation that the faculty incentive plan had, indeed, been approved. Dean de Silva asked that the plan be revisited this year, because of his concern that the plan may unduly punish colleges for increasing their enrollments. While colleges

would be rewarded for such increases in the first year of expansion, they would not sustain such reward into the second and subsequent years. Provost Simpson responded by stating that of the new tuition dollars generated from departmental growth, 50% (or a bit more) will be returned to the college and the expanding department. Still, Dean de Silva believes the plan, in its current iteration, should be reviewed over the next year. He agrees that the plan does well to “jumpstart” growth but that it does little to sustain the growth. Provost Simpson stated that the plan provides a way of increasing enrollments “without stressing on-campus capacity,” with the ultimate goal of providing funds for hiring more full-time faculty.

5. Report from GAC on the Administration of Graduate Programs – Philip Langlais

Vice Provost Langlais explained the process whereby the Graduate Administrators Council (GAC) came to recommend the following. GAC proposes to clarify the duties of Graduate Program Directors, listing specific core duties and then listing auxiliary duties to be performed when the requisite resources are available. The core duties are: 1) Marketing and recruitment; 2) Admissions; 3) Advising and problem solving; and 4) Program policies and manual. Brief discussion ensued. Associate Dean Vahala reminded the group that no marketing budget is housed in the colleges for outreach. Associate Dean Ardalan echoed this point, offering, however, his unqualified support of the recommendation. After no further comment from the Council, Provost Simpson authorized submitting the recommendations to the Faculty Senate for approval.

6. Proposed Revisions to the Policy on Eminent Scholars – Philip Langlais

Because of actual or perceived conflicts of interest in the last cycle of selection, a committee was formed to review the process for selecting Eminent Scholars. Two major changes are proposed: 1) In the case of a conflict with the representative from a given college (and if that college has only one Eminent Scholar), the dean can review the credentials of an Eminent Scholar from another college and determine that the “external” Eminent Scholar can represent the college. 2) The Eminent Scholars committee will be determined “after” the slate of Eminent Scholar nominees is presented so that potential conflicts of interest can be prevented. Some discussion ensued. Vice Provost Wilson asked for clarification on one bulleted item. Dean de Silva suggested that specific dates be removed from policy. With those changes, the Council approved the document. Vice Provost Langlais will coordinate with Judy Bowman to get the revised document to the Faculty Senate.

7. Miscellaneous

Other agenda items were postponed for the next meeting. Faculty Senate Chair Champagne noted that Faculty Senate had returned to committee the discussion on the Schedule for Faculty Seeking Tenure. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.