

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 17, 2021 COMMITTEE MEETING

VIRTUAL MEETING

Academic Affairs Committee Members

Nancy Boettger (Chair)	Kevin Kregel, University of Iowa
Jim Lindenmayer (Vice Chair)	Jon Wickert, Iowa State University
Rachel Boon, Board staff	Jim Wohlpart, University of Northern Iowa

Campus & Student Affairs Committee Members

Jim Lindenmayer (Chair)	Toyia Younger, Iowa State University
Zack Leist (Vice Chair)	Paula Knudsen, University of Northern Iowa
Jason Pontius, Board staff	Sarah Hansen, University of Iowa

Guests: Patrick Pease (UNI), Tanya Uden-Holman (SUI), Ann Marie VanDer Zanden (ISU), Reginald Stewart (ISU), Elizabeth Tovar (SUI), Gwenne Berry (UNI), Roberta Johnson (ISU), Cindy Seyfer (SUI), Tim Bakula (UNI), Regent Bates, Regent Barker, Regent Dunkel

Chair Lindenmayer called the meeting to order at 9:30am

Approval of Academic Affairs Committee minutes from November meeting

Amendments: None offered

Approved as presented.

Approval of Campus and Student Affairs Committee minutes from November meeting

Amendments: None offered

Approved as presented.

SUI New Center Request: Center for Advancing Multimorbidity Science

Provost Kregel said the request comes from the College of Nursing. The focus on multiple issues impacting aging populations, with an approach that uses data science and other techniques. This is all tied to a “precision health” approach in healthcare and it maximizes expertise across many colleges and departments at SUI. Funding is established primarily from external sources.

Regent Lindenmayer asked if this will require additional staff. Kregel said that it won't. The College of Nursing has the space, and the grant funding has permitted some hiring that was needed earlier in the process.

Approved as presented and moved to full Board.

Regents Admission Index (RAI) Biennial Review Report

CAO Boon provided an update on the biennial analysis of the RAI that was completed in 2020. The general findings were that the RAI continues to serve as a good mechanism for admissions and correlates well with important student success factors. Given the changing landscape of

standardized tests, and the current two-year pause on requiring standardized tests for admission, the Admissions Study Team will immediately initiate another analysis of the most effective approach to an admissions index or other mechanism if that change becomes permanent. The Team will report back to the Board with findings and any potential recommendations at a future meeting.

Annual Distance Education Report

ISU Associate Provost Ann Marie Van Der Zanden talked about transitioning 6,000+ courses to online instructions over a 10 day period in March 2020. Prior to that, just 550 courses were in an online format. Three additional online programs were launched in 2019-20 that help meet some workforce needs in real estate, business and supply chain fields. Engaged in the national Degrees When Due initiative to help 10 students who were within a few credits of completion to get to graduation. General trends continue to go up (pre-pandemic), especially with undergraduate enrollment over the summer. Total courses offered is fairly steady. Continuing to improve faculty and staff development for distance education, create consistent templates for online courses and maximize the technology tools available to us.

SUI Associate Dean Anne Zalenski described the Remote Instruction Team created in April 2020 to help faculty with their transitions, creating resources for faculty and students, and helping redesign courses. Created website and podcast of successful stories that really demonstrate how hard and created a lot of web-based supports for students as well. Generally students expressed satisfaction and patience with the situation that came up from the pandemic. Students were also clear that they want meaningful engagement directly with faculty. No single solution works for all types of courses. Many students did not have regular wifi access which certainly made learning more challenging, on top of the other stressors that students were experiencing.

Regent Lindenmayer asked about the student evaluations of courses. Associate Provost Uden-Holman shared that there are evaluations of every course, but the pandemic supplemental questions were open-ended and one-time.

Regent Barker asked about comparison of course evaluations from now versus pre-pandemic. Zalenski indicated that is currently being examined. Uden-Holman said that response rates were lower than normal this time around. Expect the results soon.

Dean Kent Johnson spoke about UNI's distance education. Pivot in spring 2020 relied on a lot of existing support systems and training that had occurred with half of UNI faculty over the years prior to make them ready to teach in an online environment. Going from 10% to 100% online in 2 weeks was a big challenge. Growth in comfort with online tools is a benefit we will realize moving forward. Student expectations have shifted, and that is positive, but they have been clear that they value the face-to-face, on-campus experience very much. Moving forward UNI will continue to be strategic about what is offered online. Expecting even more competition for adult learners, so the institution will work through this impact over time. Provost Wohlpart noted the campus did great work making this transition.

Regent Barker asked UNI about the course evaluations. Dean Johnson indicated they are still evaluating this and also noted the response rates were down.

Regent Lindenmayer asked if faculty compensation varies for teaching online. Provost Wohlpart shared that there is a stipend for doing the training and development, but not for the teaching itself.

Regent Lindenmayer noted the appreciation of the Board for the major effort and how smoothly they did this major transition. He also noted that the cost issue is important for us to continue discussing because it is a costly endeavor.

Regent Bates acknowledged the extensive work that went into this transition and the good work done by the institutions.

Provost Wickert emphasized the historic effort, but also shared that the students clearly miss the engagement of face-to-face learning, teamwork and other collaboration that is typical. In addition, the labs, studios and team projects are hallmarks of some programs, and those have been modified in ways that may impact learning.

Regent Leist asked about impact on recruiting given the opportunity for distance education at a lower cost from community college. Provost Wohlpart shared that the institutions are seeing this impact. Kristin Woods said it is particularly impacting transfer students right now.

Annual Student Financial Aid Report

Jason Pontius initiated the financial aid report and introduced Tim Bakula, Director of Financial Aid at UNI. The trends in federal aid continue a downward trend while institutional grants are used to make up the gap. Many requests throughout the year were increased this past year due to COVID-19. FAFSA completions are down which is discouraging regarding student intention to enroll in college.

Student borrowing has been on a downward trend through a lot of hard work. Institutional efforts to reduce the amount students borrow have been extensive and effective. Regent universities have some of the lowest debt loads of any institution in the state. In addition, default rates for Regent universities are well below the national average as well as those of any other sector in Iowa. Graduates do well in terms of the capacity to pay back their loans.

Financial literacy initiatives are important to how to help students through college. Helping to manage borrowing is critical, and a lot of individual conversations with students and families. Entrance and exit counseling is critical and federally mandated. The required financial literacy training is helpful, but is currently being updated as our CashCourse provider will no longer provide this curriculum. The universities will collaborate to create a new curriculum to start using next year.

CARES Act funding to support students in the spring and summer was really helpful for students and a great opportunity to help students. Nearly \$23m was distributed across the three universities.

Annual Diversity Report

Chief Academic Officer Boon indicated that we want to give enough time for a full conversation with the Diversity Officers, so will reschedule this presentation a future meeting.

The committee will approve these reports and move to the full board for consideration.

Meeting adjourned at 11:08am.