Academic Affairs Committee
Jim Lindenmayer (Chair)
David Barker (Vice Chair)

Guests: Nancy Dunkel, Robert Cramer, Mike Richards, Greta Rouse, Kevin Kregel, Jonathan Wickert, Jose Herrera, Ann Marie VanDerZanden, Tanya Uden-Holman, DeeDee Heisted, Jason Pontius, Laura Doering, Kristin Woods, Brent Gage

Chair Lindenmayer called the meeting to order at 12:35p.m.

Approval of Academic Affairs Committee minutes from February meeting

Approved by general consent.

ISU New Program Requests
Master of Digital Health
Bachelor of Arts in Sports Media and Communication

Associate Provost VanDerZanden described the new BA in Sports Media and Communication as one that has significant career opportunities. There are internship opportunities with ISU athletics and many other sports and broadcast organizations in the area. The courses in this area that are already offered are popular and there are faculty in place for this expansion.

In the area of Digital Health, the new master’s degree will be delivered through Iowa State Online. There are broad applications for the skills in this program in the healthcare industry and digital health is an emerging program area at universities in other states, but there are none in Iowa.

These programs will be recommended for approval by the full Board.

SUI New Program Request: Bachelor of Arts in Counseling and Behavioral Health Services

Associate Provost Uden-Holman shared that this new program will emphasize counseling and service-oriented work, as well as prepare for graduate study. This is not a licensure-eligible degree. The need for bachelor-level trained professionals in rural Iowa is driving this program. Research, an internship, study abroad or service learning will be required in this program.

This program will be recommended for approval by the full Board.

SUI Department Change Request: BS/BA in Economics to TCOB

Uden-Holman noted that the current administrative home for Economics is CLAS while the faculty are all housed in the Tippie College of Business. This change will simplify the administrative structure and be less confusing for students. Revenue already goes to Tippie, so there is no real
change in the financial aspects of this realignment, though there will be minor savings to CLAS for administrative work.

Regent Barker noted this seems like a positive move for the program.

This department change will be recommended for approval by the full Board.

**UNI New Program Request**

**Master of Arts in Organizational Management**

**Master of Business Administration (online)**

Provost Herrera noted that the new MA in Organizational Management is intended to be a flexible program for graduate students seeking something other than an MBA. It is largely interdisciplinary with a base in traditional business courses. The resources are already in place to offer this new MA.

Herrera indicated the addition of an online modality for the existing MBA at UNI will be good for expanding access geographically throughout Iowa. There are no changes to the curriculum.

Regent Barker noted having questions about the Shanghi MBA program.

Regent Lindenmayer asked if it will be staffed by current faculty and Herrera said yes, the current faculty will handle it.

These requests will be recommended for approval by the full Board.

**Annual Tenure Report**

In accordance with Board policy, the committee received the Annual Tenure Report describing the policies and practices associated with tenure at each of the universities.

**2024-25 Promotion and Tenure Requests**

The committee reviewed the request to recommend 314 faculty for promotion and/or tenure at the universities. They unanimously agreed to forward it to the full Board for consideration.

**RAI Biennial Review**

Associate Chief Academic Officer Pontius presented the results from the study done by the Admissions Study Team. The analysis continues to indicate that the cut point of 245 for automatic admission continues to be effective. The test optional pathway has led to about 1/3 of enrolled students entering through that path. Among residents only 20% choose that pathway, but half of non-residents do.

Regent Barker asked what sort of results might be necessary to indicate the need for a change in the 245 threshold. VP Doering indicated that student success outcomes are the most important aspect (retention, graduation rates, etc.). VP Gage emphasized the importance of making sure the student is a good fit academically.

Regent Rouse asked about when we need to consider reversing our test-optional policy. Pontius shared that the analysis did look at that issue.
Lindenmayer asked if the below 245 admitted students have conditions with their admissions. VP Woods shared that in some cases, yes, but it is an individual decision. Doering shared that ISU pushes out more academic support resources directly to these students as well.

Regent Barker indicated that test optional was a big experiment that has now been getting used extensively. He emphasized that standardized tests do have some predictive power for grades.

Regent Bates asked about the process for individual reviews. Doering said ISU does a comprehensive review of the academic record and other predictive information. Gage shared that the high schools have also changed their methods for offering standardized testing and availability isn’t as strong across the state yet.

**Classic Learning Test**

CAO Boon described the process the Admissions Study Team undertook to review the Classic Learning Test for consideration of its role in undergraduate admissions in accordance with the request to do so last fall. The researchers and admissions professionals reviewed available information and recommended to the Council of Provosts that the CLT be accepted for holistic admission consideration, but that it is too soon to use it for the Regents Admission Index. The Council of Provosts endorsed this recommendation and are sharing that with the committee today.

Regent Barker asked if the Admissions Study Team contacted the company. Doering said they did not, but Dr. Shelley and Dr. Reason from ISU examined the documents available through the CLT organization on the contents and other documentation on the tests. They also spoke to other schools that have adopted it.

The test has been taken by 25,000 in prior years, but Barker indicated 74,000 students took the test this year. He suggested 77% of students this year were at public schools.

Gage indicated that a lack of familiarity with the test is one of the challenges right now.

Bates asked how the test is administered. Doering said it is administered online and at home versus the proctored options for ACT and SAT.

Barker asked about whether it would be good for attracting more students to accept the CLT. Gage said our confidence in the RAI being predictive of student success on campus is what makes it so effective. We will always take the CLT as additional information, but just not as a factor in the RAI.

Lindenmayer emphasized that the door hasn’t closed forever on using the CLT, but that the team will continue to monitor and examine it as the body of evidence grows.

**University presentation: High-Impact Practices**

Presenters VanDerZanden, Uden-Holman, Associate Provost DeeDee Heisted (UNI) and Frank Peters (ISU)

The research on High Impact Practices (HIPs) indicates very strong outcomes for students. Students often report acquiring job related skills through HIPs, but also other skills in problem solving and understanding their majors or societal problems/issues.
At ISU, 5.5% of students studied abroad in 2024. ISU has 3 campuses in other areas in the world. The Regent universities have 5 programs they collaborate on. By graduation, 20% of students will have done some sort of study abroad experience. Barriers for scheduling and finance are sometimes accurate but also somewhat of perceived barriers. The university helps find solutions whenever possible.

Regent Lindenmayer asked about how study abroad helps with understanding societal issues. Peters identified that the perspectives gained are invaluable.

DeeDee Heisted shared that 90% of UNI seniors experience at least one HIP before graduation. This is higher than peer institutions. Undergraduate research is a very strong area at UNI with 2/3s of STEM students engaging in research.

Uden-Holman explained the SUI efforts to give expanded on-campus, mentored employment (UI GROW model) acts as a HIP for students. The university also works to make the courses that have HIPs or experiential learning embedded are easy to find when students register for classes. Using P3 money the university is expanding these opportunities and the faculty training needed to embed them in academic programs. In addition, the university is funding to students who participate in unpaid internships, study abroad or off-campus research experiences (Hawkeye Experience Grant).

Regent Dunkel asked how many of the internships are unpaid. VanDerZanden indicated it is somewhat dependent on the major or discipline. Many of those in arts and sciences areas are unpaid. Uden-Holman said public health examples might be unpaid internships in rural public health offices or agencies. Dunkel shared that this is really valuable.

Regent Barker indicated that in his visit to the ISU site in St. John, V.I. there were no students. He asked about whether these programs are available to students from other universities. VanDerZanden said individuals from other universities can go, especially at the Rome location, but also at Uganda and V.I. There are space restrictions sometimes as well.

Regent Bates asked about the connection of this to if the HIPs help keep students in Iowa. VanDerZanden said internships often lead to employment offers, but there is no systematic data.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05pm