

MINUTES
LRPC Meeting
October 24, 2008
8:30 am

Present: LRPC Members: Chris Cirmo, Diane Craft, Ginny Levine, Josh Peluso, Dave Ritchie, Cynthia Sarver, Danielle Singer; and former Review of Governance Committee Members: Howard Botwinick, Laurie Klotz, Ellen McCabe

Meeting begins at 8:30.

One student member couldn't meet at the agreed upon meeting time. Ritchie will forward the student's contact information to Cirmo.

Members agree that the duties of secretary will revolve alphabetically among members every meeting.

Friday November 7 is next meeting, but it might need to be changed (since Cirmo – chair -- cannot be in town that day). If still wish to meet Nov. 7, will need chair substitute. Regular meetings on agreed upon Fridays through the fall semester (Nov 7, 21; Dec 5) all 8:30-10, OM 127.

Peluso was appointed at the October 9 meeting as LRPC representative to the Facilities Master Plan Oversight Committee.

Cirno was elected chair by a 7-0 vote via email conducted by Richie.

Cirno read charge of LRPC from *Faculty Handbook*. Cirno mentions that part B of this charge is specifically vague and allows for the LRPC to reconsider how to define its charge and procedures, on a two year cycle, to be discussed with and ratified by Faculty Senate. This discussion then elicited a history of that charge by Ritchie.

Ritchie reviews the history of the LRPC.

Botwinick reviews the recommendation of the RGC, observing that one criticism of LRPC was that it functioned as a top-down model.

Levine says that former Provost Davis-Russell tried to involve faculty in the planning process – will check with the Provost when he arrives.

Botwinick mentions that other major recommendation of the RGC for LRPC (and other committees) was that committees should be chaired by an academic faculty member and/or professional staff member, as appropriate, who is tenured or has permanent appointment. A lesser concern was that -- given the many responsibilities and meeting that the Recommendation that the chairs would be given immediate merit.

Committee agrees that faculty needs to have more input at the ground floor.

Cirno notes that the time is ripe for a reconsideration of LRPC since a new provost and possibly a chancellor means a change in philosophy about planning and related issues.

Levine mentions that the search for a new Chancellor is ongoing. Until we have a new chancellor onboard we will have no idea of whether there will be new MOU. But ~~that~~ Middle States mandates that we have to have a 5-year plan regardless of the mandate from SUNY system and locally it has been decided that at a minimum a new 5-year plan is needed (2010-1015)

Cirno points out a letter he has received from Provost Prus asking him to become a member of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Cirno discusses the goal of coordinating all the various strategic plans.

9:17 President Bitterbaum and Provost Prus arrive.

Cirno summarizes the discussion up till now, saying that our goal is to discuss the role that LRPC will play in the strategic planning process given the new leadership and possibly upcoming MOU.

President expresses his deep disappointment with the LRPC over a couple of years that nothing was accomplished by the committee because of sabbaticals.

President reviews his view of the history of strategic planning at SUNY Cortland.

Mentions that Middle States noted the College's lack on an overarching institutional strategic plan.

In response, President Bitterbaum drew institutional goals out of mission review plan. President Bitterbaum also noted that there is a sense at System that there will not be a Mission Review 3.

But given this diffuseness of current plans and lack of integration among them, the president has asked the provost to chair a new Strategic Planning Committee.

President returns to his narrative about the history of the LRPC, saying that for a couple of years, when membership was absent or uninvolved, LRPC largely "fell apart." Therefore the administration decided that the committee could best serve the campus by responding to individual division's strategic plan.

President Bitterbaum points out the goal for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee would be to develop a formal strategic plan that could be tied to budget – integrated the many plans on campus.

The committee will only be active for one year, but the LRPC can carry on afterwards, noting that LRPC should be integrated into the process.

Provost Prus notes some of the problems with the previous strategic planning cycle. Previous template included goals, actions plan, resources needed, and persons responsible, but was missing two crucial elements: 1) prioritization of goals and 2) no identification of where those resources were to come from. These omissions were “fatal flaws” of previous planning cycles.

Another missing piece became apparent as Institutional Advancement was preparing to embark on a capital campaign. IA employed consulting firm to explore readiness who discovered that the College lacked a clear vision that fundraisers could hold onto.

Goals (Provost Prus):

- 1) Consolidate and develop a comprehensive SP for the campus for all divisions;
- 2) Identify priorities and be explicit; and
- 3) Identify necessary resources and where those will come from.

Ritchie asks about opening the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to be involved in the planning – especially the faculty. Concerned about buy-in. Can administration create a more democratic spirit by perhaps involving more people in the goal-setting from the outset? Goals arrived at might be identical to those already established by the College. Ritchie notes that it will be important that people don't feel as if members are appointed but that membership is determined through a more democratic process.

President said the people who are on the Steering Committee are those who can commit time to the Steering Committee and who have a vested interest in discussing goal-setting. Will involve people after the fact who are invested in the various initiatives to come out of the Steering Committee's discussions.

Provost Prus notes that the goal of the steering committee is to steer the campus community toward a vision, to reaffirm the mission.

Cirimo asks two questions: 1) How will steering committee supplant the LRPC? Provost Prus answers that there is no intent to supplant or substitute this committee. Charge of steering committee is to reaffirm the mission and vision of the institution. 2) How committee makeup determined? Provost Prus answers that VPs were asked to appoint people from their divisions, and the Provost asked Deans to nominate people from their schools.

Botwinick says he's glad to hear that chair of faculty senate will be a member since there's been some unhappiness that the Faculty Senate has not been involved in such discussions in the past.

President says that the resultant plan will be vetted by the campus community frequently.

Botwinick stresses that the process is most important even if we were to come up with the identical goals that the president established since it is important that the campus community feel as if it is a shared mission.

President notes that as we move forward, we will review the role of the LRPC.

Ritchie says that LRPC could contribute at this point by working on making a recommendation as to “how to involve faculty and student input” (the committee’s charge).

Sarver suggests that some of this input has already been offered in the way of the departmental strategic plans and the LRPC might consider synthesizing these documents to represent some of the faculty goals, at least.

President Bitterbaum says that he has surveyed the strategic plans of colleges and universities all over the nation, and that at least 95% of them have institutional goals that are very much like SUNY Cortland’s.

Craft noted that a key aspect of job satisfaction is meaningful input into one's job. With hard times ahead, she encouraged President Bitterbaum to provide for meaningful faculty input from the beginning of the process of setting strategic goals. While the resulting goals may not differ from goals developed using a top-down approach, the attitude of faculty toward the goals and one's work may be very different.

In closing, Provost Prus notes that If LRPC has ideas about the process, he’d be willing to listen to them.

Meeting adjourns at 10:06 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Sarver