

Long-Range Planning Committee, Minutes, 11/21/08

Present: Chris Cirmo, Diane Craft, Mel King, Joshua Peluso, David Ritchie, Kimberly Rombach, Cynthia Sarver, Danielle Singer, Virginia Levine

Chair Cirmo convened the meeting at 8:45am, and mentioned that there was no formal agenda distributed for today's meeting. He then suggested that we begin our meeting by reviewing the minutes of the Nov. 14, 2008 meeting. Chris read from the minutes, identifying the role of the LRPC while providing some additional clarification stating that one of the roles of the LRPC will be to look at the different plans that currently exist at the academic levels, make them public and get feedback on the plans from the general community. Discussion ensued.

Craft mentioned that we should limit ourselves to items that are clearly academic. Cirmo mentioned that this is to be certain that there is no overlap with SPSC's activities. Craft asked: How wide of a net should the LRPC cast? Cirmo mentioned that at our last meeting, we decided that our committee would represent the academic (teaching) faculty (including librarians), professionals, students and perhaps other offices under the Provost. The LRPC will be distinct from the SPSC with membership and with the goal of focusing on the academic mission of the college.

Cirmo reported on the SPSC's meeting (11/20/08): Cirmo discussed some issues that were mentioned in the SPSC meeting such as students not being on the committee and that classified staff not having representation. Cirmo thought that classified staff should be represented on that committee. Discussion ensued. Some of our members thought that students and classified staff should be represented on the committee.

It was discussed that LRPC might have an ex-officio student affairs member. After some discussion, it was agreed that current student representation at the LRPC was determined appropriate for this committee.

Discussion regarding last meeting's minutes continued. Sarver suggested an amendment, offering that the LRPC not be identified as an idea committee. Cirmo replied that the minutes were already revised, deleting that bullet. However, the recently distributed minutes didn't identify striking the 'idea committee' information from the 11/14 minutes, so it is noted that the LRPC is not an idea committee. Cirmo stated that he would send out revised minutes identifying this correction (this was subsequently done later on Friday, 11/21).

King motioned to approve the minutes. Peluso seconded. Passed. Minutes approved.

Cirmo stated again that there was no agenda for today's meeting, but stated that procedurally, the Chair of the LRPC will send out an agenda the day before future meetings. Members agreed.

Cirmo reported on the discussion and activities of the SPSC meeting. He reported that the discussion included the history of the committee.

Levine mentioned that it would be good to come up with a one page overview about the role of the LRPC and its goals. Cirimo mentioned that he wanted us to be prepared to go the Senate with a procedure for the LRPC. Ritchie suggested that the procedure would be about gathering input on the long range plans.

Cirimo asked Sarver to forward the former procedure to us following this meeting (they were subsequently sent out to the LRPC membership later on Friday, 11/21). Ritchie mentioned that they might be posted on the Senate's website. Sarver found and read the LRPC's procedural process dated April 7, 2007. She read 8 steps that are part of the process. Sarver mentioned that we have an opportunity now to change any of this. Cirimo mentioned that he didn't know that there was a procedure already in place and that it, perhaps, seems too detailed, too binding.

King suggested that the role is to represent the academic mission and planning of the college.

Cirimo suggested that a statement of our role should be a beginning for this and perhaps advertise it to the college. The minutes of this committee will be posted on the Senate's website. Should we have a webpage also?

Peluso mentioned that we could post future minutes and LRPC activities on the new Portal. Cirimo said that he'd work to define the role of the LRPC. Craft mentioned that this work might have already been completed and Cirimo suggested that he would pull the info. out of the minutes and bring it to our next meeting.

Sarver suggested that we should keep the language/wording open regarding asking for departments' strategic plans. Presently our goals might be to interact with the strategic plans, but this might be too limiting for the future. Sarver said that we should use this as a more general procedure for us to serve as a conduit between students/ faculty/administration. Sarver mentioned that we could possibly look at the handbook at some point in the future to possibly change some of the language to have it be more general.

Discussion continued about ways to ask departments/units to share strategic plans/long range plans. Ritchie mentioned that we may want to replace the term departments with units. Cirimo suggested that we may want to take out the term strategic. It was generally accepted that we would include all terminology (departments/units/long range planning/strategic planning/goals) to gather the data.

Levine suggested that there are different goals that are often isolated in different plans. We need to identify the overarching plan. Cirimo added that we can work to show the way that they are connected. Levine continued offering that we are the link; LRPC is the link for this.

Craft offered that last meeting's minutes had wording that could be used to identify the LRPC's role, suggesting it be worded as follows: (a) ask academic units either (i) to prioritize the aspects of their academic unit's long range (strategic) plans if these exist, or (ii) if no formal plan exists for the academic unit, to submit a statement of the long range plans of their academic units with those directions prioritized, and (b) ask faculty and students directly to suggest strategic directions as individuals through use of a wiki and other methods of input like open forums; --

would present its findings and recommendations to the Faculty Senate and to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

Sarver mentioned that last year, we saw that the concept of strategic planning for the departments can be unifying. We could use the plans that are available to inform, communicate and influence the units that haven't yet created one. Cirimo mentioned that when any unit is asked to come up with a long range plan, there's often an initial groan, but when we look to what we want, that becomes fun, and when we develop a road map for getting there, that becomes difficult. King offered that oftentimes, the groan is that the task will just be another piece of paper that makes no difference. Peluso suggested that it's nice to have a plan and good to have one in hard times like this. Levine added that having a long range/strategic plan gives the departments/units strength. They can then have a better position 'strategically' to argue for what's needed. Peluso added that from a professional side, they always prioritize what they need and their plan is always developed from their goals. King offered that we need to convince people that the strategic plan is potentially useful.

Cirimo asked: How do we craft our request? Discussion ensued. King offered that it might be good if the Chair of the LRPC make a presentation at all 3 of the Chair's council meetings. Cirimo said that he accepts this charge. King suggested that we could put out the charge and procedures to the chairs so it is noticed. Sarver suggested that we could create a wiki to upload our plans or find an online secure spot so units could share ideas with others.

Cirimo suggested that we move forward with this idea to collect the plans, and identified charges for our next meeting:

(a) Cirimo would write the role of the LRPC and outline the procedures so that next meeting's #1 priority is to review the identified LRPC's role and procedures and vote on it. Craft suggested that the role and procedure had already been fairly well spelled out from the discussions of last meeting with some modifications from this meeting, so that perhaps Cirimo could just abstract that info and send it out for some final editing and a vote by LRPC members by email so that he could present the proposal to the Dec 1 chairs' council meeting for their feedback, and not delay getting that feedback until next semester. This was agreed to. Then Cirimo will go to the Joint Chair's meeting on Dec. 1 with our committee's proposed role and discuss collecting unit plans/goals.

(b) Singer would report to the SGA that the LRPC needs another student representative.

(c) Members agreed to bring their spring semester calendars to next meeting so we can plan upcoming meeting dates and times.

Next meeting: Friday, December 5 at 8:30 in Old Main room 127. Please be on time.

Meeting adjourned at 9:56.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Rombach