

DEANS' COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Provost's Conference Room

Attending: Bowers, Bosley, Edwards, Ginnetti, Herbert, Kasvinsky, Khawaja, Kobulnicky, Chad Miller (guest), Nicole Mraz (guest), Ritchey

1. Announcements

(Edwards) The play *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* is running Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (Nov. 17-19, 2006).

(Herbert) YSU will have a playoff football game over the Thanksgiving weekend.

2. SGA Presentation - Nicole Mraz and Chad Miller

Nicole Mraz, Chair, Academic Affairs Committee of student government, and Chad Miller, President of the YSU Student Government Association, presented to the Council their research and proposals on several topics (see the attachment).

A comprehensive "First Year Program" for Freshman students was suggested as a way of addressing students' academic, social, and personal needs. Mraz and Miller identified the challenges of our commuter campus and suggested the components they felt the program should include. They asked for input from the council, and much discussion followed. At the students' request for gathering further information, it was suggested they talk with Dr. Sharon Stringer, Director of Assessment, to get her input on results from NSSE administrations and other sources. In the context of the current reorganization of the colleges and the role the new colleges might play in first-year services, they should speak to Jane Kestner, Associate Dean, Arts and Sciences, about how to get more students involved. They should also talk to Paul Sracic, General Education, who can offer a perspective on the benefits of general education as well as to coordinators of English and Communications courses. SGA is sending out a campus-wide student survey inquiring about students' first-year experience. Dr. Bowers would like results of that survey for use in the accreditation self-study.

Chad Miller asked how to get the initiative adopted. It was suggested that they strategically visit each college and try to get it globally accepted. It would be best to come through and be supported by the faculty, and the initiative could be tied to general education. The current academic planning process includes the Community College initiative and the collegiate reorganization, and the First Year Program is something that could be incorporated as a component in that process. It was suggested that the students coordinate this with Jane Kestner.

Dr. Herbert asked that the students keep him posted and let him know if he can help.

Chad Miller inquired about administering comprehensive examinations to recent graduates, for assessment purposes only. Dr. Bowers suggested they talk to Sharon Stringer--every department has an assessment plan defining student-learning outcomes and how to measure whether students are meeting them. Certain disciplines already test. Generally, many colleges have moved away from mandatory testing.

The students next sought guidance into administering shrinking travel funds to student organizations. They were informed that students working with faculty can be awarded up to \$300 for travel from the Student Use Fund through the Office of the Provost. The College of Arts and Sciences traditionally gives support to some students. Graduate students can apply for \$300 through the Graduate School; if the request is for a national conference, they can also make a request to the Student Use Fund. There's a separate fund through the School of Graduate Studies and Research for undergraduate students--the Grad School funds twenty \$500 requests as tuition waivers, which frees up \$500 that the students can use for research. Student Government has awarded up to \$800 for student group travel. The total funding awarded for all student presentations is about \$4,000 per year. Procedurally, the students should inquire first with the department, then the dean, and finally the Provost's office.

Lastly, Chad Miller proposed a modified *USA Today* Readership Program for reconsideration--it would provide newspapers to students in the larger General Education classes, such as Writing I/II and Communications 1545, since nearly all students take these courses. Discussion followed, and Dr. Herbert thinks initially that if the department endorses the goal, then it could be mandated. The cost could be part of the course fees. The students might begin discussions with Cary Horvath, the coordinator of Communications, and Dr. Salvner, English. Dr. Herbert asked the students to keep him informed.

3. Retention Efforts

Dr. Herbert asked those who had not sent him their list of the top three things their college or departments are doing to address the challenge of retention to do so right away.

4. College Review/Planning (PG)

Dr. Ginnetti passed out a departmental review/planning outline that was distributed at the chairs' meeting November 14, and opened the discussion about the college review and planning process. He asked for input, and a broad discussion followed with regard to ensuring that the end product will be properly focused, and, generally, uniform. The council will return to this topic at subsequent meetings. How do we want to synthesize collegiate plans at the divisional level? The deadline of February 1, 2006, for the colleges to submit their report is firm.

5. New Business

There was no new business.

6. Adjourn

Minutes recorded by Debbie Withrow