Deans' Group Minutes 6/10/05


Minutes of May 25, 2005 were approved.

Discussion of graduate program issues with CGS consultants
Ron Henry introduced the Council of Graduate Schools consultants - Scott Bass from UMBC and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan from UCLA.

Ron Henry opened the discussion with a background on the purpose of the consultants visit. The review of the graduate programs will be to increase the quality of the graduate programs and to find ways to link more strongly with our research programs. The Areas of Focus proposals helped to provide cooperation within the various departments on campus. The review will also look at the pros and cons of various functions within the graduate programs in the colleges.

Bill Fritz added that the focus of the review will help to improve the quality of the graduate programs, examine effectiveness, and the service provided to the students. Bill Fritz mentioned that the consultants have met with graduate directors and associate deans in each college.

Claudia Mitchell-Kernan opened the discussion on the elements for a successful graduate program. Establishing quality of graduate programs is important coupled with maintaining and advancing programs. The colleges need to decide on areas to place the most emphasis and priorities and ensure the resources will be there to move a program forward.

Scott Bass added that quality drives a graduate program. The institution must be ambitious, vigilant, and work hard to maintain programs. The institution needs to plan where they want to go and make the necessary strides to get there.

Fenwick Huss inquired on who makes the decisions on programs that are not producing. Claudia Mitchell-Kernan gave examples used at UCLA. The university looks at programs for disestablishment or continuation. There have been some programs that have been consolidated with other schools and others have been disestablished due to loss of quality. Claudia Mitchell-Kernan added that the decision to disestablish a program is a tough call. A program review by the Graduate Council of the Senate utilizes an array of data along with reports by external reviewers making decisions about a program. Some programs are reviewed within a 1-3 year time frame. The ultimate decision on a program is voted by the Senate.

Claudia Mitchell-Kernan mentioned that establishing a new program is taken just as seriously as disestablishing a program. There must be justification for the program and the resources that will be needed to fund the program.

Bill Nelson inquired on how the workload of a graduate assistant is monitored. Claudia Mitchell-Kernan reported that UCLA leaves the workload monitoring up to the departments to manage and ensure a student is not overloaded.

The consultants concluded the discussion by emphasizing that an institution must have a plan for attracting quality students and maintaining quality programs. The institution’s mission plays a key role in having successful graduate programs.

Any other business
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.
Next meeting: Wednesday, June 22, 2005, 9:30-11:30 am, Golden Key Board Room, Student Center.