

Minutes of the Meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee
University of Kentucky
Friday, February 22, 2019

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) of the University of Kentucky (UK) met on Friday, February 22, 2018, in Room 234B of the Lee T. Todd, Jr. Building.

A. Meeting Opened

Acting Chair Cammie Grant called the meeting to order at 9:48 a.m.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the ASAC answered the call of the roll: Lee Blonder, Cammie Grant, Robert Grossman, Michael Hamilton, David Hawpe, Kim McCann, Derrick Ramsey, Sandy Shuffett, and Rachel Webb. Angela Edwards and Carol Martin “Bill” Gatton were not in attendance.

C. Approval of Minutes

Trustee Grant reported that the minutes of the December 11, 2018, ASAC meeting had been distributed. Trustee Webb moved approval of the minutes and Trustee Blonder seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Trustee Grant called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

D. ASACR 1: Candidate for Degree: December 2018

The recommendation is that the President be authorized to confer upon the individual whose name appears on the attached list the degree to which she is entitled, upon certification by the University Registrar that the individual has satisfactorily completed all requirements for the degree for which application has been made and as approved by the elected faculty of the University Senate and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. By way of background, the individual whose name appears on the attached list completed the work leading toward the degree for which application was made at the close of the 2018 Fall Semester. Due to administrative error, the name was not previously submitted. Trustee Grossman moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Shuffett. Finding no further discussion, Trustee Grant called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

E. ASACR 2: Academic Degree Recommendation: College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment

The recommendation is that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Sustainable Agriculture and Community Food Systems, within the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, beginning in the Fall 2019 Semester. By way of background, in 2007, UK joined other land-grant universities to develop sustainable-agriculture-oriented degree programs. Since that time, the number of degree programs in this area has nearly

tripled. Over the last 10 years, the College has developed this program as an individualized undergraduate major, improving experiential teaching capacity and formalizing curriculum in two tracks: farming systems and community food systems. The proposed interdisciplinary, interdepartmental program focuses on three conceptual pillars: environmental stewardship, economic profitability, and social responsibility, with core courses integrating these at the introductory, intermediate, and capstone levels. Graduates of this program will be prepared for careers in farming, the nonprofit sector, cooperative extension, local government, and on-farm conservation service providers. Initial program enrollment is estimated at 20 students, with growth anticipated to 40-50 students. The program has the approval of the appropriate councils and the University Senate, and has completed the 30 day review process of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

In attendance to answer any questions were Dr. Nancy Cox, Dean; and Dr. Krista Jacobsen, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Sustainable Agriculture and Community Food Systems. Trustee Hawpe inquired if coursework regarding communication is included in the program's curriculum. Dr. Jacobsen indicated there are written and oral communication components throughout the curriculum as well as in the student capstone project requirement. Trustee Hawpe indicated that communication occurs across multiple platforms and inquired if the communication components of the program include introduction of these various platforms. Dr. Jacobsen indicated the program will not require social media components but many students choose to pursue knowledge in this area, especially those who plan to start a farm after graduation and need to establish an online presence for marketing and other purposes. Online communication options are constantly changing, and the college works with community partners who have extensive knowledge in this area. Trustee Grossman indicated this degree program will be an exciting new offering.

Trustee Blonder moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Shuffett. Finding no further discussion, Trustee Grant called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

F. ASACR 3: Academic Degree Recommendation: College of Medicine

The recommendation is that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Master of Forensic Toxicology and Analytical Genetics degree with a major in Forensic Toxicology and Analytical Genetics, in the Department of Toxicology and Cancer Biology, within the College of Medicine, beginning in the Fall 2019 Semester. By way of background, the program is designed to prepare professionals with advanced training in focused areas of forensic science. Requirements for admission to the program will include an undergraduate degree in Biology, Chemistry, Forensic Science, or a closely related discipline. The program will have two areas of concentration: Forensic Toxicology/Chemistry and Forensic/Analytical Genetics. Through a common core curriculum, students in both concentrations will have foundational information and a skill set in advanced forensic science, writing, communication, professionalism, ethics, legal perspectives, and workplace-specific laboratory skills. The graduates will be competitive in the workforce in private industry drug testing, private DNA analysis, forensic governmental divisions, and hospital clinical labs. The faculty of record for the program is the graduate faculty in Toxicology and Cancer Biology. This proposed program is unique and focused on professional employment directly upon graduation, differing from existing programs in the Department that provide training for academic

careers. The program has the approval of the appropriate councils and the University Senate, and has completed the 30 day review process of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

In attendance to answer any questions were Dr. Robert DiPaola, Dean; Dr. Rebecca Dutch, Associate Dean for Biomedical Education; Dr. Davy Jones, Professor of Toxicology and Cancer Biology and Co-Director, Forensic Toxicology and Analytical Genetics; and Dr. Isabel Mellon, Associate Professor of Toxicology and Cancer Biology and Co-Director, Forensic Toxicology and Analytical Genetics. There were no questions or comments.

Trustee Grossman moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Blonder. Finding no further discussion, Trustee Grant called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

G. ASACR 4: Reorganization and Transfer of Degree Programs: College of Health Sciences

The recommendation is that the Board of Trustees approve the reorganization and accompanying transfer of degree programs within the College of Health Sciences, beginning July 1, 2019. By way of background, the reorganization in the College of Health Sciences changes from a two department structure with divisions to a five department structure and no divisions. Such realignment includes transferring commensurate degrees/academic programs and faculty to the new department structure. The proposed reorganization flattens the organizational structure and streamlines reporting lines. The proposal is designed to support a) program autonomy and efficiency; b) educational programs; c) success of undergraduate and graduate students; d) faculty development and advancement; and e) coordination of shared processes at the College-level to promote collaboration and minimize duplication of effort. There are no changes requested to any College of Health Sciences degrees and academic programs themselves; the proposal requires only moving existing academic degrees and programs to newly-established departments. No changes in faculty lines (other than department assignments) result from this reorganization. No student's progress toward degree will be affected. The proposal has the endorsement of the University Senate and the Provost of the University.

In attendance to answer any questions were Dr. Scott Lephart, Dean; and Dr. Karen Badger, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education. There were no questions or comments

Trustee Hawpe moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Shuffett. Finding no further discussion, Trustee Grant called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

H. Provost Report

Prior to beginning his report, Provost Blackwell thanked Trustee Grant for serving as chair of the ASAC in Chair Edwards' absence. He recognized the degree programs approved in ASACRs 2 and 3 as representative of innovation on campus as well as the overlap of faculty expertise and workforce demand. He also recognized the reorganization approved in ASACR 4 as a step that will change the trajectory of the college.

Provost Blackwell indicated today's report would focus on the attainment gap, or the difference in the rate of academic success between various student populations. This topic will be a recurring theme as much progress has been made in this area, but there is still work to be done.

Provost Blackwell began his report by sharing data regarding two indicators of academic success. The first is the second fall retention rate, or the number of students that returned to college for their second fall semester. The gap in this measurement between under-represented minority (URM) and non-minority students is 8.6 percentage points. Overall, the second fall retention rate has improved, but it is more volatile for URM students. This volatility is due in part to the relatively smaller size of this group – small changes in the number of students retained can cause large fluctuations in the rate. Another group of focus is first-generation students. With the Fall 2017 cohort, UK began to utilize the federal definition of a first-generation college student, which led to an increase in the number of students defined as first-generation students at UK. The gap in the second fall retention rate between first-generation and non-first-generation students is approximately 10 percentage points.

The second indicator of academic success is the graduation rate. UK's overall graduation rate is 65 percent. The gap in this measurement between URM and non-minority students is 13.9 percentage points. While the graduation rate for both groups has improved, the size of the gap has remained relatively stable. The gap in this measurement between first-generation and non-first-generation students is 16.7 percentage points. Trustee Ramsey indicated that the data is further evidence of a need for a plan to improve retention and graduation. Provost Blackwell indicated existing interventions are adjusted as information regarding effectiveness of these interventions becomes available.

Provost Blackwell shared data regarding the relationship between academic preparation and the second fall retention rate. A reliable predictor of student success is the High School Readiness Index (HSRI). The HSRI weights the high school grade point average (GPA) very heavily compared to the ACT examination score. Between the Fall 2011 and Fall 2017 cohorts, URM students have a lower second fall retention rate than non-minority students when they have an HSRI of below 40. As the HSRI increases, so does the second fall retention rate for both groups. Additionally, when the HSRI is higher than 40, URM have a second fall retention rate equal to or higher than non-minority students at almost every data point. This indicates that to improve the attainment gap in second fall retention for URM students, efforts should be focused on students with an HSRI of below 40. In contrast, there are very few data points at which first-generation students have a second fall retention rate equal to or higher than non-first-generation students. This indicates that to improve the attainment gap in second fall retention for first-generation students, efforts should be focused on their entire first-year experience.

Trustee Shuffett inquired if there is overlap between URM and first-generation students. Provost Blackwell indicated overlap does exist between the two groups and this overlap has been analyzed, but in the interest of time this information will not be shared during today's meeting. Trustee Grossman indicated it is remarkable that the high school GPA is such an accurate predictor of student success given that the quality of preparation provided by high schools can vary. Provost Blackwell indicated evidence shows high school GPA is a better predictor of student success than ACT score. There also is evidence that indicates bias in the structure of the ACT. While the data

presented today provides an overall perspective, when interventions are implemented, individual students and their high school experiences are taken into consideration. Trustee McCann stated that the high school GPA may give an indication of the environment a student experiences and personal characteristics whereas the ACT may not. Provost Blackwell indicated that students with access to a higher level of resources may have an advantage over students without access to such resources in the ACT. He also agreed that high school GPA can serve as an indicator of a student's personal characteristics more so than ACT score. Trustee Ramsey indicated he is pleased that high school GPA is receiving increased focus as opposed to ACT score because historically, people of color have not always performed well on this examination, and thus their score may not accurately convey their capabilities. In addition, some institutions of higher education are moving away from ACT scores. Provost Blackwell confirmed this is a trend.

Provost Blackwell indicated that while additional progress is needed to achieve the institutional goal of a six-year graduation rate of 70 percent, UK measures well in this area compared to other public institutions of higher education in the state. This is true for the six-year graduation rate overall as well as for URM students.

Provost Blackwell moved into discussion regarding University-wide student support services provided to improve student success, including those that engage students before they arrive on campus. He invited Christine Harper, Associate Provost for Enrollment Management, to discuss SeeBlue U. SeeBlue U is student orientation hosted in partnership with Advising, Institutional Diversity, and Student and Academic Life. The goal is to prepare students for matriculation in all areas. Communication regarding expectations and preparation begins as soon as a student is admitted, which makes the timing of admissions decisions critical.

Provost Blackwell emphasized the importance of collaboration between units for student success. He invited Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President for Institutional Diversity, to discuss programs focused on preparation of URM and first-generation students. The Center for Academic Resources and Enrichment Services (CARES) and Student Support Services (SSS) specifically target first-generation, low income, and Pell Grant eligible students. Communication regarding preparation for academic pursuits begins as soon as a student meeting these criteria is admitted. There are summer bridge programs hosted by both units that provide academic preparation for students prior to the beginning of their college career. Trustee Shuffett inquired if the summer bridge programs are mandatory. Vice President Feist-Price indicated these programs are not mandatory, but students are strongly encouraged to participate and are provided information regarding benefits of participation. Trustee Shuffett indicated it would be helpful to compare the performance of students who did or did not participate in these programs. Trustee Grossman inquired about the participation rate for the summer bridge programs. Vice President Feist-Price indicated approximately 75 students typically participate in the SSS summer bridge program. CARES is also striving for this level of student participation. There is a significant number of students who do not participate in these particular summer bridge programs, but there are other such programs administered across campus that students may participate in.

Trustee Ramsey indicated that while the summer bridge programs described are well-intentioned, the data shared previously calls for a different sense of urgency. Provost Blackwell agreed that there is work to be done in closing the attainment gap. Current interventions are under

analysis to determine if they are successful or need adjustment. As this analysis occurs, it provides an opportunity to look more closely at existing data to better understand factors that influence student retention, such as belonging and inclusiveness. Trustee Ramsey indicated he fit the categories of discussion (e.g., first-generation student) and was ultimately successful because of mandatory programs. He recommended that UK adjust its approach in implementing programs that are optional or mandatory. Provost Blackwell indicated there always is room for improvement. On the other hand, if these interventions did not exist, UK's retention and graduation rates would likely be worse. Thus, the way forward is innovation and data analysis for continual improvement.

Provost Blackwell moved into discussion regarding college-specific student support services provided to improve student success. He invited Kirsten Turner, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, to discuss such programs. Several colleges have summer bridge and other programs to improve URM student success. The College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment (CAFE) has a program called Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS). This is a subset of a national program and has been in existence for 21 years. MANRRS includes mentoring, workshops, and a pipeline program. It has received many national awards. Due to this program, CAFE routinely has incoming first-year classes with over 16 percent URM students. Participating students are heavily recruited for internships and graduate programs. Provost Blackwell indicated he has heard positive feedback regarding MANRRS from URM students. The College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) has a program called FastTrack/ASPIRE in which students move onto campus one week early to take courses and become acclimated to the University. FastTrack/ASPIRE also extends into the academic year via cohort scheduling and other components. This program is adjusted as information regarding effectiveness is available.

Provost Blackwell invited Greg Heileman, Associate Provost for Student and Academic Life (SAL), to discuss the SAL's programming. SAL has two programs of note in this area. The first program is Transformative Learning. Transformative Learning has several components, including academic coaching and academic preparation and placement (APP). Typically, 600 to 800 incoming students are academically underprepared in mathematics, reading, and/or English. For the most recent cohort, every student in this category was assigned an academic coach. One-third of these students are URM. Last year, a change was implemented in the admissions process which allowed academically underprepared students to be admitted earlier in the admissions cycle. This has allowed Transformative Learning to begin earlier this year with 100 students in the Fall 2020 cohort already engaged.

The second program of note is the First-Generation Student Office. This is a relatively new unit that is similar to Transformative Learning in the outreach component. This year, faculty and staff who were first-generation students were identified so current first-generation students could have someone on campus to help them through the unique challenges encountered by members of this group. Trustee McCoy indicated she knows the parent of a current first-generation student. If a parent does not have prior experience with college, sometimes they do not know what questions to ask to benefit their student. Provost Blackwell indicated there is ongoing conversation regarding improved parent education and engagement, which could benefit retention and graduation rates. Associate Provost Harper indicated Enrollment Management is seeking to begin communication with parents about the college search and decision process when their students are sophomores and juniors in high school. UK seeks to be a resource to parents for all questions related to this

process. Trustee Grossman commented that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) limits parent communication possibilities. He also indicated that even for parents who have experience with UK, because it is a large institution, uncertainty is possible. Trustee Grant suggested a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document for parents. Associate Provost Harper indicated this would be a good strategy as Enrollment Management is often able to anticipate common questions. The UK Parent and Family Association was previously fee-based, but there is now no cost to join, which has increased access to information for all interested parents and families. Provost Blackwell emphasized the importance of outreach to high school sophomores and juniors. Trustee Young reiterated the idea of distribution of a FAQ document for parents. Associate Provost Harper indicated this type of communication would inform parents and also encourage them to ask more questions. Trustee Webb provided an example of a URM student facing a challenge in obtaining time to meet with their advisor. She inquired about training provided to advisors. Associate Provost Heileman indicated academic advisors receive required training in topics such as FERPA and first aid. UK strives for uniform workloads for academic advisors; however, the student-to-advisor ratio as well as timing of scheduling meetings can be challenging.

Provost Blackwell moved into discussion regarding the pilot program Associate Provost Heileman mentioned previously of admitting academically underprepared students earlier in the admissions cycle. This created additional time to provide services conducive to student success, such as academic coaching. There were 613 students impacted. After one semester, 455 students had resolved all academic preparation issues. Of the remaining students, 155 students were considered academically underprepared in only one area. The program will continue this year. Different types of students require different types of programming and outreach. Data analysis will provide additional insight in this area. Vice President Feist-Price and Associate Provost Heileman are developing a proposal for a program called CATapult. CATapult will be a comprehensive approach to academic preparedness for URM students, first-generation students, low income students, and others. This program will leverage many existing resources and programs. In addition, a Living Learning Program (LLP) for URM first-generation students may be created. This kind of program could address belonging and wellness in addition to academic preparedness.

Trustee McCann indicated that there is a plethora of options and tools available, but students may not be well-informed about what is expected of them to succeed. Even if programs are not mandatory, there may be a more effective way to communicate the importance of these programs. Trustee Shuffett indicated that students coming straight from their senior year of high school may have issues with motivation, so setting clear expectations is vital. Trustee Blonder inquired about the current ratio of students to advisors. Associate Provost Heileman indicated the current ratio is 285:1, which is the national average. He emphasized that academic advisors are just one of many layers of student academic support.

I. Meeting Adjourned

Hearing no further business, Trustee Grant adjourned the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cammie Grant
Acting Chair, Academic and Student Affairs Committee

(ASACR 1, ASACR 2, ASACR 3, and ASACR 4 are official parts of the Minutes of the meeting)

CG/afc