

May 13, 2011

Minutes- Senate Academic Programs Committee

May 11, 2011 3- 4 pm, Room 414 CRMS

Members in Attendance

Daniel Wermeling, Marilyn Duncan, Karen Badger, Greg Wasilkowski, Andrew Hippisley, Mary Arthur, Esther Dupont-Versteegden

Members Absent: (Prior Notice): Michael Arrington

Guest: Dr. Thomas Kelly

Agenda

- Draft of MDRC proposal: Cardinal Hill Research Institute

The chair began the meeting with introductory comments about the new proposal. The proposal appears to desire to become an educational unit as outlined in university regulations. It is not a degree-granting entity – degrees and formal academic recognition is retained by the departments. However, there is education activity proposed that covers a significant breadth of student progression through the academy, from entry level professionals to post-graduate trainees in medicine and other fields. The Senate has oversight responsibility for educational activity within the university. However, to the committee's understanding, we have not formally considered such proposals, at least in recent history of the current chair and members.

The sponsors of the proposal were gracious in providing what we understood to be a draft proposal to the Senate for consideration. Three different committees of the Senate have been examining the proposal and to understand how it relates to their charges. The statements below represent the general discussion by committee members.

1. The first line of discussion was whether we should be reviewing professional programs, such as medical school, residencies, and even post-docs, since they are already examined under other mechanisms. The cross consideration is that the sponsor is asking for recognition as an educational versus an administrative unit. Perhaps the appropriate committee review is better aligned with the academic infrastructure, and perhaps research education committees.
2. Another line of discussion was how to define an educational unit for our purposes. Is it enough for the sponsor to say there is education? What are minimal educational programming, standards and evaluation criteria when a traditional educational programming sponsor is not apparent? How should one evaluate the effectiveness of such a program?
3. One could consider the Academic Program Application in current form and consider the questions therein and apply them to the current proposal. It would seem that there is considerable overlap in which the questions and statements necessary for SAPC review could be applied to something like the CHI proposal.

4. The committee had several areas of discussion relative to the statements about education activities within the proposal itself. The committee felt there was insufficient detail about the educational activity and programming. It seemed generally topical and had very little specificity, as perhaps the programming itself was still in early stages of thinking. On page 16 there was a statement about “measures of educational activity”. The committee did not agree that the bulleted points represent educational programming or outcomes. What is the education, the curriculum, programming, etc., to be delivered. There is insufficient understanding of how to consider assessment and effectiveness of educational programming.

It is confusing and perhaps contradictory in places regarding what constitutes a “home educational unit” and for what purpose. It is not clear how master’s and PhD level students, who are granted degrees through departments and colleges can have a center as a home educational unit too. We do not believe this is consistent with our current organizational systems at the university. We can’t appreciate based on current description why or how this should be an educational versus administrative unit. There is not a clear rationale.

5. I think the general sense is that the proposal raised more questions than answered. The proposal might benefit from preparation in a manner, with a few exceptions, similar to other academic program proposals SAPC typically receives. The committee recommended that the three committee chairs, together or individually, meet with Dr. Joe Springer, who we understand may be the sponsor of the proposal. After such meeting(s) the Senate may be better able to advise Dr. Springer on our expectations for the formal proposal submission.

Cc: Hollie Swanson
Thomas Kelly
Davy Jones
Dwight Dennison