

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
May 6, 2016

The Committee met eight times during AY15-AY16 with various UConn administrative leaders, including the Dean of the Graduate School, Vice Provost for University Libraries, Associate Vice Provost for CETL, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Research, and the University Master Planner and Chief Architect. Discussions centered on activities and issues related to general institutional advancement. The Committee also dealt with one charge from the SEC to examine eligibility for various Senate constituencies.

Notable Issues:

1: Graduate Program – This year the graduate program was discussed with the Graduate School Dean, Kent Holsinger, and the Associate Vice Provost for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Peter Diplock.

- a. Timing for loan deferments - A possible issue that will be further examined by the graduate school is the time the Bursar's Office requires to notify lending agencies of loan deferments for graduate assistants who are considered full-time even though they take only six credits. Some GAs feel their deferments are being jeopardized.
 - b. Graduate student population - Graduate student numbers relative to undergraduate population (an AAU consideration and UConn shortcoming) continue to be an issue. Although graduate student number increased by 900, to about 7000, the ratio of graduate to undergraduate student numbers remains below our AAU aspirations.
 - c. Graduate tuition charges to grants- This fiscal year approximately one-half of the tuition charged to grants was returned to the grants that generated the funds. This relieves some pressure on grant funds. The fund generated by these charges is currently in surplus but is expected to be in deficit by FY18. Continuation of the return of tuition charges to grants and/or eliminating it altogether remain issues.
 - d. Graduate student on-campus housing – There continue to be no plans for on-campus graduate student housing. Eighty “beds” were reserved for graduate students this year. Whether this met the needs expressed by the graduate student government remains in question.
 - e. Required teaching assistant training – CETL has proposed requiring all TAs to do Tier I training dealing with items such as compliance issues. This may be done on-line. Tier II and III are optional programs. The issue of time devoted to training and redundancy with departmental training should be monitored.
- 2: Library – The Committee reviewed the status of the Library with Vice Provost Martha Bedard.
- a. Financial status - Currently, the financial crisis for next year has been averted by restoration of proposed budget cuts to the library (\$1.2 million). The last five institutions admitted to the AAU had library budgets in the range of \$30 million; UConn's is \$20 million.
 - b. Criteria for advancement – Interlibrary Loan Service traffic ranks 9th nationally. This is very high because we rely on other institutions' collections. Some ILL requests are denied due to excessive costs and/or copyright rules. The Provost's

taskforce is assisting the Faculty Library Advisory Committee with budget adjustments. Possible additional revenue sources for the library include student fees, tuition, a portion of F&A charges on grants, and fundraising.

- c. Status of University Librarians – Should library staff with Ph.D.s have faculty status?
- 3: Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning – This Center’s successes include more training programs, faculty involvement and revenue generation. A review was provided by Associate Provost Peter Diplock.
- a. Graduate Assistant training programs – Tier II professional development workshops are now provided throughout the year. Tier III is a 9-credit teaching and instruction program run through the Neag School of Education. These programs are expected to benefit career development, and their outcomes should be watched closely.
 - b. Growth areas – CETL may assume a larger role in training and assessment of teaching effectiveness of Adjuncts. SETs may be useful to assess the need for further training or peer-review. CETL may also facilitate the satisfactory transfer of courses from the community colleges through improved technology such as video feeds.
- 4: Regional campus issues – These issues were discussed with Vice Provost Sally Reis. There are issues common to all campuses as well as those unique to each.
- a. Torrington campus – It seems apparent that the Torrington Regional campus will be closed and its programs merged with those of Waterbury.
 - b. Common regional campus issues – Issues include declining enrollments, a reduced number of high school students state-wide, preponderance of adjunct faculty with fewer tenure-track, a lack of enough majors at Regionals.
 - c. Student performance – Upon transfer to Storrs, regional campus students underperform, graduate later and drop out more frequently. Storrs campus academic advisors should provide more and better academic advising to students transitioning to the Storrs campus from the Regional campuses with attention to their specific issues. The alignment of the course syllabi followed at the Regionals and their counterparts in the Storrs curriculum should be carefully examined.
- 5: Research administration - Activities and issues surrounding research efforts were discussed with Vice President for Research Jeffrey Seemann.
- a. Decreased research funding – The decreased rate of growth in federal research grant dollars to UConn is a major concern and focus of OVPR efforts. Possible reasons include a shrinking NSF/NIH budget support, institutional reputation, bias, access to facilities, etc. Efforts to improve competitiveness include encouragement of collaborative proposals, better mentoring, and retention of the services of more grant writing consultants.
 - b. Activities of the Research Advisory Council – The activities of the RAC seem rather opaque to the research community in general, and better communication is encouraged. It was reported that the RAC is currently tasked with improvement of extramural support, the effectiveness of internal support and the travel policy.
 - c. Fringe benefit charges to grants – The very high fringe benefit rates charged to grants require careful examination. These may be among the factors decreasing

competitiveness of research proposals in the eyes of some reviewers. It is recommended that the Office of the Controller explore ways to avoid the prevailing wide annual swings and unpredictability of fringe benefit rates.

- 6: Distribution of eligibilities for Senate constituencies – These issues are covered in a separate report dated February 22, 2016. At this writing, a resolution is planned to recommend a change in University By-laws to include “in-residence” and lecturer titles in the listings of eligible voting members of constituencies. It was also recommended that associate deans continue as part of the faculty constituencies with a notation on the ballot indicating when a member is an associate dean.
- 7: Storrs campus planning – Updates on the Master Plan and STEM planning were discussed with University Master Planner and Chief Architect Laura Cruickshank and Director of PAES, Beverly Wood. A Final Draft “Review of Space Needs Assessment” was presented to the Committee (attached). There is a current shortfall in STEM space need of 360,000 sq. ft. 34,000 new sq. ft. are needed to properly offer beginning STEM undergraduate courses. It is important to note that these are current needs, and plans indicate that the need cannot be met for 3-10 years.

Fall 2015 Meetings:

September 17, 2015, at 10:00am Hall Building, Room 123.

October 30, 2015, at 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123.

November 19, 2015, at 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123.

December 11, 2015, 10:00am , Hall Building, Room 123.

Spring 2015 Meetings

January 29, 2016, 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123

February 19, 2016, 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123

March 11, 2016, 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123

April 29, 2016, 10:00am, Hall Building, Room 123

Committee Members

J. Larry Renfro (Chair), Michael Accorsi, David Benson, Robert Bird, Tracie Borden, Greg Bouquet, Alec Calva, Joseph Crivello, Maria Gordina, Karl Guillard, Kathy Hendrickson, Faquir Jain, Andrew Moiseff, Kristen Schwab, Lyle Scruggs, Larry Silbart, Suzanne Wilson

Committee Charge: *This committee shall keep under review the general changes, actual and prospective, of the University over time and may recommend any desirable expressions of Senate opinion on these matters. The committee may also provide on behalf of the Senate an evaluation and review of specific issues and activities related to institutional advancement. The committee shall include two undergraduate students and one graduate student.*