ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL
Minutes from meeting of 6 April 2000

Visitors: Marilyn Tufte, Shiv Tandon, Bob Warfield, Esther Ofolue, Duane Ford, George Smith, Bob Lind, Phil Young, Hal Evenson.

Ken Buttry called the meeting to order at 4:05.
Mittie Nimocks agreed to be secretary.
The minutes from the meeting of 23 March were tabled.
Buttry distributed a memo from George Smith (Assessment and Oversight Committee)

BIOLOGY SELF STUDY
Buttry introduced the Biology faculty and, as APC liaison for that department, summarized their faculty survey. Ray Spoto moved to receive the study; Kathleen Tigerman seconded. Spoto noted that this department has dire need for additional faculty members. Barbara Parsons asked why General Biology is not required for a biology major. Shiv Tandon responded that General Biology is a course designed for non-majors and that majors take a 2-semester sequence that covers similar information in greater depth. Parsons inquired the percentage of students who pursue medical careers. Tandon estimated 20-25%.

ENGINEERING PHYSICS
Spoto served as liaison for the Engineering Physics program and reported the results of the faculty survey. He saw a constant theme regarding limited staffing. Faculty and students are unhappy about lack of opportunity to teach or take elective courses. A second constant concern among faculty is that Chemistry and Physics should not be in the same department. Phil Young emphasized Spoto’s perception by saying that the problem with Chemistry is real. He pointed out that they are the only engineering program to provide service courses and that the failure to offer electives is a strongly felt concern. The Council moved to receive the self-study. The motion was seconded. Parsons raised a concern regarding the stated role of liberal arts in the study. She felt that it was too narrowly stated as being only applicable to a specific major. Young reminded the body that he and his discipline are traditionally housed in the liberal arts and sciences and that he completely agreed with Parsons’ observation. These goals had been tailored specifically for ABET but that the department faculty certainly perceived general education as being of value to the whole person rather than only the engineer’s professional life. Parsons responded that she was glad to hear this and added that she had asked the question not as a criticism but as an on-going concern.
Tigerman noted the relative weakness of oral communication and wondered if there existed an assessment of written communication. Young replied that Hal Evenson had been teaching oral communication skills in his junior level course and that it had been successful. The Council voted to receive the self-study.
ADDITIONAL BUSINESS
Buttry instructed council members to review all the program reports from this year and to come to the next meeting with recommendations.
Parsons asked about the document from Smith which had been distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Smith explained that he is Chair of the Assessment and Oversight Committee. He will send the APC a report to clarify the role of governance bodies in assessment in a move to refocus their efforts. A workshop for UUCC, APC, and the Assessment and Oversight Committee will take place in the Fall.
Buttry indicated that Provost Carol Sue Butts had asked if the APC could find a different time to meet since the present 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 4 p.m. time slot conflicts with Regents meetings in Madison which she attends.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mittie Nimocks