Minutes of the Academic Planning Council Meeting  
March 28, 2007

Members present: Carol Sue Butts, Amanda Trewin, Jason Thrun, Tim Deis, Christina Curras, Laura Anderson, Jennifer Snoek-Brown, Phil Young

Guests present: Max Anderson, Mark Meyers

I. Call Meeting to Order
• The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. Tim Deis filled in as chair for Sheryl Wills.

II. Minutes
• Christina Curras pointed out a few minor formatting and spelling errors.
• Laura Anderson moved to approve the minutes of the Feb. 28 meeting, and Amanda Trewin seconded. Motion passed.

III. Announcements – None

IV. Old Business
• Amanda Trewin moved to approve the APC summary for Mechanical Engineering, and Christina Curras seconded. Motion passed.

V. New Business
Civil & Environmental Engineering Program Review:  
Max Anderson presented the self-study report for both Civil and Environmental Engineering. Although presented in one report, Max distinguished differences between the two programs, plus each program’s strengths and challenges.

Key points:
• The goals and objectives for both programs are the same. The programs are very hands-on and practice-oriented, with a focus on students becoming licensed professional engineers.
• Most students take 5 years to graduate and often do 2 emphases in Civil Engineering. Environmental Engineering has no emphases. Some students do dual majors.
• The program data sheets were missing information, so Max supplied more statistics for faculty load, student data, and number of graduates on an annual basis. He also updated the number of grants written/awarded.

Strengths
• Dedicated faculty
• Service learning and design projects
• Substantial alumni/employer contributions
Challenges

- Enrollment size: the department has raised the core GPA twice this year (now at 2.7) to manage class size. The program’s growth has created a strain on the faculty’s resources and teaching loads.
- Renovation needs for lab space and classroom: Ottensman Hall will need to be renovated when other departments move into the new engineering building.
- Non-competitive starting salaries: It is hard to hire new faculty.

Discussion & Questions

- After the presentation, the members of the APC asked questions about the program and discussed the self-study.
- The members commended Max Anderson for an excellent presentation, report, and updated data sheet.
- Carol Sue Butts mentioned that the Civil Engineering program has been nominated and been a finalist for a Regents system-wide award for the past few years.
- Why is Environmental Engineering our smallest engineering program? – This may be due to a couple of factors: conservation focus is spread out with other majors (Agriculture, biology, chemistry, etc.), and some Civil Engineering majors pick an environmental emphasis.
- The department won’t know the effect of the raised GPA in Civil Engineering or how it might affect the Environmental Engineering program (which is still at 2.3).
- The building is a major concern because engineering is a premier focus on campus.
- Employer comments and assessments mention lack of technical writing/communication skills.

Recommendation

- Strengths: Commendation for concise report, active faculty, service-learning in classes, relations with alumni and employers, and recognition of Civil Engineering as a system-wide award finalist
- Areas of concern: Enrollment size needs to be monitored, and we recognize that current facilities are inadequate
- Phil Young moved to recommend that the Civil and Environmental Engineering programs be continued. Jason Thrun seconded, and the motion passed.

VI. Other

- Tim Deis will check in with Osama Jadaan about the Software Engineering program review, which is set for April 11.

VI. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Snoek-Brown