

Chairs' Council Meeting with the Academic Deans

February 5, 2024

Deans in Attendance:

- Greg Van Patton (Basic and Applied Sciences)
- Rick Sluder (University College)
- Leah Lyons (Liberal Arts)
- Neporcha Cone (College of Education)
- Michael Hein (Behavior and Health Sciences)
- Joyce Heams (Business)

Key: DB refers to David Butler of the graduate school.

I. Introductions

II. Where are we in terms of the big picture of graduate direction of university?

- a. What influence do the deans have in terms of developing and creating graduate programs?
 - i. Lyons – curriculum is purview of the faculty. We take the ideas to the faculty, and they decide if they want to do it. The university has a consultant that says, “these programs may work,” but it’s up to the faculty.
 - ii. Cone – hasn’t been given any directives in terms of top-down directions, but she has asked faculty to take a deep dive into curriculum to look at possible next steps.
 - iii. Hein – Physician assistant program was a top-down directive.
 - iv. Heams – take it to the associate dean of grad studies in their own department, but ultimately up to faculty and department chairs.
 - v. Van Patton - Has gotten the Hanover reports but does not consider it a directive. Will always want to ensure there are enough faculty and have good opportunities to grow.

III. We have the issue with not enough faculty, and they keep decreasing. What can we do if we want these programs to grow? How do we get that support?

- a. Van Patton – not just an issue of having enough faculty, but we also must ensure we have enough students.
- b. Chairs – feels like we are in between a rock and hard place.
 - i. Correction: Hanover is not about jobs; it is about what other schools have developed and may or may not reflect what the market wants.
 1. We should partner with a company that looks at jobs.
 - ii. Deans: It can depend on what you ask Hanover, though. So, you need to ask the questions you want.

iii. Deans: there are other companies that can ask other questions for less money.

1. Also consider EAB analyses in which we already have access.

IV. **Have we asked the faculty what grad programs they want to develop and THEN do the market analysis instead of the market analysis then the faculty?**

- a. Chairs: have been given opportunities to say, “We don’t have the faculty for that,” and that argument has been accepted.
- b. Deans: They want to pick programs that have a small investment up front that leads to big investment in the long term.

V. **What is the regularity of communication between graduate schools and deans?**

- a. Example: Setting a 20% increase in graduate enrollment without chair input.
- b. Deans: Met last year, one time and will meet another time this year.
 - i. Faculty must be interested in creating graduate programs. It’s not something we are imposing.
- c. Chairs: Does DB meet with deans regularly to talk about the graduate school issues?
 - i. Deans:
 - 1. Not regularly.
 - 2. Graduate education is never an agenda item since they combined the roles of graduate dean and research.
 - 3. Graduate education does not have a seat at the Deans’ council.

VI. **How many conversations are the deans having about the grad programs we have?**

- a. Chairs: There doesn’t seem to be a lot of support for current programs. There doesn’t seem to be an investment to make it more successful.
- b. Deans: the Hanover data tells us if we are still current.
- c. Deans: There has been so much investment in the undergraduate program that it’s been difficult to advocate for the faculty for our graduate programs.
- d. Chairs: I’m already understaffed, so why do I want to shoot myself in the foot by starting a new graduate program? Even if it’s successful, it’s an uphill battle to continue that enrollment.
- e. Chairs: Current faculty line requests are driven by APS, so to build a program, it needs to come from the people you have.
- f. Chairs: If DB is not talking to deans and not talking to chairs, how can we generate enrollment.
- g. Deans: We reach out individually. We may not talk directly to DB at Provost or deans’ meetings, but we are in contact about individual department issues.
- h. Chairs: We aren’t marketers, but we feel that the best way to connect is through our faculty.

- i. Chairs: One of the issues that we have is the grad school is going directly to the graduate director in the department and not the chair
- VII. Structurally, what should be the relationship between the colleges and the graduate school?**
- a. Chairs: Who is responsible for what and what should be happening?
 - b. Chairs: Transparency is needed – that seems to be what got the graduate school and chairs out of sync.
 - i. When new programs are being started, and you don't know what they are, that is not a great feeling as a chair.
 - c. Deans: When graduate program directors were asked to do more over the summer without any communication with department chairs, that was a problem.
 - i. Chairs: A lot of the grad program directors don't get paid for that. It would be helpful for the deans to push back on that.
 - ii. Deans: Mark said he was going to try and bring everyone up to consistency across campus with payment of these extra summer duties.
 - iii. Deans: Maybe a starting point would be to make a list of how the department could benefit from support from the graduate school.
 - iv. Chairs: DB doesn't seem to understand that the chair of the grad program department needs to be involved with all these graduate student questions, rather than just the grad director in the department.
 - d. Chairs: One area the deans could help us in working with DB is for advocacy for things that would be beneficial to us.
 - i. Example: Offer a partnership with in-state schools to apply with no application fee.
 - ii. Deans: That is a multi-faced program that is above DB. Others are being told, "no," as well. It seems to be above the graduate college.
 - iii. Deans: The problem is things aren't communicated clearly.
 - iv. Chairs: It's not clear what the division of labor is between all these groups, so we don't know who is responsible for disseminating this information.
 - v. Deans: Due to the shift to R2, what has been some of the restructuring that has taken place?
 - 1. As we are supporting faculty at different levels, how are we adjusting the workloads in our department?
 - 2. What shifts have we made at the university level to support that alignment with R2 status?
 - vi. Chairs: Workload is an important part of graduate study, and DB said that he has never read the workload policy and is unaware.
 - 1. We were told (about R2), "Don't be fooled. They changed the math." So there have not been any changes at any levels above the chairs.
 - a. We were told that we "attained R2 status without changing teaching loads, so why should we change how it is?"

- b. Some type of restructuring would be nice, but that would be a new topic.
- vii. Chairs: Ultimately, it all boils down to a lack of communication and a lack of transparency.
 - 1. Deans: When things aren't working well, the lack of communication from the graduate studies office between the chairs and the deans is problematic.
 - a. Chairs: Having conversations with just the grad directors in each department is problematic because those grad directors do not know how the whole department works or where it is going.
 - b. Chairs: If there are long term plans and big goals, it would be nice to know where those ideas come from. Where is the long-term strategy that gets us where we want to go?
 - c. Chairs: Maybe we should plan to develop the strategy to be an R1.
 - i. Chairs: If we could make a long-term plan in terms of hiring faculty, we could help with that. But since we only hire year-to-year, it is hard to develop and keep that plan.
 - ii. Deans: The problem is if you set a goal that is so far out there and do not plan to observe and mark the progress is towards those goals. If we set those goals and cannot do anything about them, we shouldn't set those goals.
 - iii. Chairs: But is this the only way to get state money?
 - iv. Deans: The only reason we would do that is to direct that money towards that goal? Would we direct that money towards other issues?
 - v. Chairs: But going for R1 gives us more resources and makes us better overall. Are we going to stay at R2?
 - vi. Chairs: Grad studies is supposed to be a support unit (at most campuses they are), but if DB doesn't have any money or is not willing to give support to graduate education....?
 - 1. The issue is that these roles are not clearly defined. There is no communication about expectations for that job or office.
 - vii. Deans: Ask specific questions about what you want to know from the graduate offices.
 - viii. Deans: We get through this by having high quality programs, so we have this backwards. We are

focusing not on quality programs but on getting butts in seats.

ix. Deans: With R2, we are not going to backslide.

VIII. Deans:

- a. We are hearing that you want:
 - i. Better communication
 - ii. More transparency with the graduate school
 - iii. An increase in graduate stipends and payments for advisors.
 - iv. The issue is, why **don't** we have these things.
 - 1. As a group, you should figure out *why* it's not happening so that we can ask for clear things.

IX. After Deans Left

- a. Gina is the faculty provost fellow (yay!)
- b. Eric is on the Leadership on Deck Institute
- c. They are going to collaborate on an updated Chairs Handbook.
- d. They are also going to work on getting a job description.
 - i. I/O psych is going to help with a needs assessment.
 - ii. They will reach out for you to participate, please do.
- e. They want to work on something to create training and development for new chairs after that.
- f. A discussion was had that there needs to be a document that tells chairs what systems they need access to and who to contact to get that access.
 - i. It was noted that this has been in existence for a year and a half. Amy Atchison (PGA) wrote it last year, and it has been sent out to chairs and is on the chairs' council website that is part of the provost's website.

CHAIRS' COUNCIL DISCUSSION WITH ACADEMIC DEANS MEETING
Attendants
February 5, 2024

	COLLEGE OF BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCES	
x	Dr. Chaminda Prelis	Aerospace
	Dr. Jessica Carter, Director	Agriculture (School of)
	Dr. Dennis Mullen	Biology
	Dr. Amy Phelps, Interim	Chemistry
	Dr. Medha Sarkar	Computer Science
x	Dr. Tom Nicholas, Director	Concrete and Construction Management (School of)
x	Dr. Kenneth Currie	Engineering Technology
	Dr. Melissa Lobegeier, Interim	Geosciences
	Dr. Chris Stephens	Mathematical Sciences
x	Dr. Ron Henderson	Physics and Astronomy
	COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES	
	Dr. Joshua Harms, Interim	Criminal Justice Administration
x	Dr. Chandra Story, Interim	Health and Human Performance
x	Dr. Gina Pisut	Human Sciences
x	Dr. Jenny Sauls, Director	Nursing (School of)
x	Dr. Nancy Stone	Psychology
x	Dr. Cathy McElderry	Social Work
x	Dr. Marie Patterson (director)	Physician Assistant Studies
	COLLEGE OF BUSINESS	
	Dr. Kim Honaker, Interim	Accounting
x	Dr. Tim Greer	Information Systems and Analytics
x	Dr. Stuart Fowler	Economics and Finance
x	Dr. Deana Raffo	Management
	Dr. Robert B. Blair	Marketing
	COLLEGE OF EDUCATION	
x	Dr. Eric Oslund	Elementary and Special Education

	Dr. Donald Snead	Womack Educational Leadership
	COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS	
	Mr. Jimmy Mumford	Art and Design
x	Dr. Mary Beth Asbury	Communication Studies
x	Dr. Steve Severn	English
x	Dr. Amy Atchison, interim	Global Studies and Human Geography
x	Dr. Emily Baran	History
	Dr. Chris Dye, Interim	Music (School of)
x	Dr. Mary Magada-Ward	Philosophy and Religious Studies
x	Dr. Amy Atchison	Political Science and International Relations
	Dr. Brandon Wallace	Sociology and Anthropology
	Ms. Kristi Shamburger, Interim	Theatre and Dance
	Dr. Olaf Berwald	World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
	COLLEGE OF MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT	
	Dr. Katie Foss, Director	Journalism and Strategic Media (School of)
	Marie Barnas	Media Arts
	Michelle Conceison	Recording Industry
	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	
	Dr. Matthew Duncan	University Studies
	WALKER LIBRARY	
x	Kristen West, Interim	User Services
X x	Beverly Geckle Denise Quintel, Interim	Collection Development and Management