

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MIAMI UNIVERSITY
December 11, 2008
Minutes of the Academic Affairs Committee Meeting**

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Miami University Board of Trustees met on December 11, 2008 in Room 314 Pearson Hall on the Oxford campus, Oxford, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Committee Chair Lolita McDavid. Committee members Richard Smucker, John Christie, and Sue Henry and Student Trustees Heath Ingram and Kerry McCormack were in attendance.

In addition to the Trustees, the following Miami staff members were in attendance during the meeting: David Hodge, President; Jeffrey Herbst, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; Barbara Jones, Vice President for Student Affairs;; Mary Woodworth, Senior Associate Provost and Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs; Michael Dantley, Associate Provost and Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs; Bruce Cochrane, Dean, Graduate School; and Stephen Snyder, Secretary to the Board of Trustees. Also in attendance were Bethany Bowyer, ASG Secretary of Academic Affairs, and Anne Towne, Secretary to the Executive Cabinet, ASG.

Prior to the business meeting, the members of the Academic Affairs Committee toured the Electron Microscopy Facility in Pearson Hall (tour led by Richard Edlmann, Director of the Facility) and the Center for Bioinformatics and Functional Genomics (tour led by John Hawes, Supervisor of the Center).

Admissions Update

Provost Herbst reported that two-thirds of the admission process is completed and applications are nine percent higher compared to last year. There are significant gains in applications from African Americans, Hispanics, and international students. Dr. Herbst stated that he is uncertain how the current economic situation will ultimately affect the yield rate and the retention rate of upper class students. The Enrollment Management Committee has recommended that the goal for the Fall 2009 first year class be set at 3,500 students. He also commented that the implementation of the sophomore residency requirement next year makes enrollment management even more critical than in the past.

Graduate Program Review

Bruce Cochrane presented a report on the recently completed graduate program review initiated by Provost Herbst. In December, 2007, Provost Herbst appointed a committee, chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School and consisting of Divisional Associate Deans and senior faculty members, and charged it with evaluating graduate programs to provide a basis for reallocation of resources, particularly graduate assistantships. Departments and Programs were asked to provide input on the nature of appropriate quality measures in their disciplines and to provide data about their program with respect to those measures, including student recruitment and quality, engagement of faculty with graduate education, scholarly productivity, involvement of graduate students with undergraduate education, diversity, and external support of assistantships.

Programs were then placed in one of three categories. In the first category, Programs clearly contribute to the University goal of selective excellence in graduate education, although they should continue to work on improvement in some areas. In the second category, Departments are contributing to excellence in graduate education, but have room for improvement in some areas. These Departments and Programs could contribute to selective excellence in graduate education at Miami, but should immediately consider restructuring or realigning their programs to move towards that goal. In the third category, Departments and Programs have significant weakness in more than one area. Their accomplishment of their own mission and their contribution to selective excellence in graduate education raise questions that need to be addressed.

Dr. Herbst stated that he is reviewing the committee's recommendations and will consult with President Hodge about making decisions on reallocation of resources based on the tiered system identified in the review. He commented that graduate assistants do assist with undergraduate teaching, and care will be taken about not adversely affecting the undergraduate experience when reallocating graduate assistantships among graduate programs.

Status Report on Academic Advising

Dr. Dantley presented a report on the progress of improving undergraduate academic advising, and his report is included as Attachment A. During the discussion of academic advising, questions were posed about the effects of the budget situation on class availability and class sizes. Provost Herbst noted that the percentage budget cut for Academic Affairs was the lowest for all University divisions, which indicates that the goal is to protect the academic and instructional program. Additionally, the recently adopted faculty workload policy will assist with scheduling a class size.

With no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Stephen D. Snyder
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Brief Report on Progress of Undergraduate Academic Advising
for the Academic Affairs Committee
Miami University Board of Trustees

Historical Context

- Comprehensive studies on undergraduate academic advising were conducted in 1999 and 2002. More recently studies were completed in 2004-2006. Student concerns about advising as well as a commitment to enhancing the process have been motivators for these studies.
- July 2007 and October 2007 two separate external reviews were completed as advising was once again assessed under the auspices of a committee of four from both Academic and Student Affairs. Several affirmations of strengths as well as recommendations for improvement of the advising process were made.
- Appointment of an Associate Provost to serve as the point person responsible for oversight of all undergraduate academic advising activities, campus-wide.

Initiatives Undertaken

- Assignment of Kim Ernsting as the Coordinator of the Academic Advising General Information Office – July 1, 2008.
- Opening of the General Information Office – August 24, 2008.
- Assigning Michelle Minton as Program Associate to the General Information Office.
- Creation and execution of a functional, interactive web site.
- Rosalyn Mason from Student Affairs is also serving on a part-time basis as an adviser in the office.
- Establishment of the Undergraduate Academic Advising Council.
- Five subcommittees of Council: Policy, Technology, Partnerships and Communication, Training and Assessment. An undergraduate serves on the Council and one undergraduate student sits on each of the five subcommittees.
- Held beginning of the year retreat facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Bloom (President of the National Academic Advising Association) and Dr. Bryant Hudson, University of North Carolina, Greensboro.
- Articulation of five broad contexts for the work: creation of a philosophy for advising, consistent, university-wide mechanism for tracking students' progress in advising, examination of current policies and procedures to determine efficacy, delineation of the role of Academic and Student Affairs in the advising process, and the alignment of advising with retention and graduation.
- Focus Groups: Chief Departmental Advisers, students, and first-year advisers.