

Council of Deans
3/19/2014

The Council of Deans met in regular session at 8:32 a.m. on Wednesday, March 19, 2014. Steve Runge presided and the following members were present: Michael Hargis, Diana Pounder, Gary McCullough, Art Gillaspay, Terry Wright, Steve Addison, Jonathan Glenn, Kurt Boniecki, Laura Young, Maurice Lee and Wendy Lucas. Brad Lacy, UCA Board Trustee, attended as a Board representative for Admissions/Retention.

1. The COD minutes of March 12, 2014, were approved unanimously with revisions.
2. S. Runge informed Council members that the University of Arkansas System will be rolling out an "Online U of A" that will include all campuses to provide online degree programs. These programs will be University of Arkansas branded, and it will reflect no distinction between campuses or between a traditional versus online degree. Dustin Summey is currently looking at possible comparable online programs that UCA might be able to offer. A summary of activity toward expanding UCA's online presence was provided to Council members. Discussion followed.
3. S. Runge announced availability of a webcast providing training for Department Chairs. This webcast training is available on March 26, 2014. Deans were asked to determine if any of their college's chairs are interested in the training and let Robin Voss know. Discussion followed.
4. D. Pounder shared with Council members her concerns with regard to a visit by the new fire marshal. The fire marshal visited the College of Education and instructed her that no furniture is allowed in any open areas, such as lobbies and hallways, in campus buildings. Discussion followed.
5. S. Runge announced that the Council of Deans annual retreat will take place on May 15th and 16th. The retreat will take place at 120 Elizabeth Place, as renovations of this facility are expected to be completed by that time. The decision to have the retreat at this location is a positive one, as it makes use of existing space, saves on travel funds, and allows attendees to stay close to home. This facility will allow other units to save on travel funds as well. Discussion followed.

Brad Lacy joined the meeting at 9:08 a.m.

6. S. Runge provided Brad Lacy an organizational chart for Academic Affairs.
7. Council members each provided an overview to Brad Lacy on their respective colleges, and/or divisions, and/or roles.

8. Brad Lacy asked that Council members share with him what they would agree to be the number one best use of state funding at this time. Discussion followed, and the consensus was that the hiring of dedicated, professional college-based advisors would have a significant impact on student retention and would be the best use of funding at this time. There are only seven dedicated advisors now. He asked about advising for student athletes. W. Lucas stated that there are currently 3 dedicated advisors for student athletes, compared to only 7 dedicated advisors for all other students. More discussion followed.

Brad Lacy asked about the status of the Computer Science program. S. Addison stated that the program has grown; however, the number of students entering the program is higher than the number completing it. This is due to the fact that upon entering, students may not understand the significant role that mathematics plays in this program and later find that they do not have the math skills to be successful. Discussion followed.

Brad Lacy asked A. Gillaspay to identify any “stretch” programs he would like to see brought to campus. A. Gillaspay identified the Cardiac Rehab program that the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences has been looking at, as well as a Clinical Doctorate in Nursing and Occupational Therapy. S. Runge added that while the existing programs are strong, we need to look at how we can bring them to a level of excellence or beyond. A. Gillaspay also stated that the college has been discussing the idea of bringing a School of Optometry to UCA and considering a Clinical and Research Institute that would be a center to serve the public and train students at the same time. Discussion followed.

9. Following the Council member presentations, Brad Lacy thanked the members and said the information they provided was very helpful. He stated that he is pleased that the Council of Deans is in agreement on the need for more academic advisors. He stated that low college graduation rates are a problem in Arkansas, and he believes UCA can be a part of the solution to the problem. He is committed to UCA, and believes that UCA is what makes Conway’s growth possible. He asked Council members to continue to let him know what is needed. Discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

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