

## Meeting of Subcommittee on Upper-Division Cross-School Opportunities

October 5, 2009

In attendance were: Ladelle McWhorter (Chair), Kathrin Bower, Crystal Hoyt, Joan Neff, Porcher Taylor, Steve Thompson, Chris Cotropia, and Margaret Denton.

The main topic of discussion was the infrastructure needed to support cross-school majors, cross-school concentrations, and cross-school upper level courses.

There was general agreement that the support needed for cross-school initiatives required a director or coordinator who would report directly to the Provost. Porcher Taylor also suggested a Director of Cross-School Programs who would work in tandem with a Vice President for Enrollment Management and the registrar to facilitate the implementation of cross-school courses and programs.

Chris Cotropia raised the issue of overlap between the Faculty Development Coordinator and a Director of Cross-School programs. Joan Neff clarified the responsibilities of the Faculty Development Coordinator. The Faculty Development Coordinator will not be responsible for coordinating academic programs, but will, instead, focus on programming for faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and leadership. This person is to assess faculty needs in these areas and to seek resources and provide opportunities to facilitate development of teaching, scholarship, and leadership. An example given was the creation of workshops, including those dealing with technology. PETE will be absorbed into the Faculty Development Center.

Committee members emphasized that effective communication between a Director of Cross-School Programs and the Faculty Development Coordinator would be necessary. Del McWhorter suggested that the Director be a member of the PETE Committee.

Joan Neff also clarified that a Director of Cross-School Programs might have responsibility for facilitating and coordinating cross-school programs, but probably would not have a separate budget. She added that the Director of the Faculty Development center probably would have an allocated budget to support workshops, programs, etc.

Steve Thompson presented a structural chart that proposes an Office of Interdisciplinary Programs that receives resources from the Provost's Office, but which also has faculty oversight. His chart aimed to address two main issues with interdisciplinary programs: stable funding/resourcing and evaluation of the professor (merit, promotion and tenure). He pointed out that interdisciplinary courses often receive what resourcing is available after discipline-specific programs are fully funded. There would need to be a way to guarantee the continuation of

interdisciplinary programs, for example, a service level agreement signed by the dean of a school that obligates the school to provide a number of sections of certain courses per year. This assumes that each school is reimbursed for its commitment to approved ID programs.

The OIDP, he proposed, would manage and coordinate the process by which funds dedicated by the Provost to interdisciplinary initiatives are allocated, and provide oversight to ensure programs that receive funding are staffed according to the initial proposal. A mechanism would be in place to further fund interdisciplinary programs, as well as, a method for evaluating interdisciplinary proposals. The OIDP would provide a forum to facilitate the hiring, tenure, and promotion of faculty involved in interdisciplinary programs and to ensure their replacement if necessary. An additional responsibility of the OIDP would be to evaluate existing programs.

Crystal Hoyt pointed out that currently if a cross-school program is based, for example, in Arts and Sciences, vetting of curriculum changes only occurs in that school. An alternative for approval of curriculum changes in cross-school programs would be the creation of a University Committee that would vet proposals.

As to the issue of evaluation, the Chair proposed that the tenure committee for a cross-disciplinary faculty member should have the two relevant deans involved. The same should be for the hiring of faculty whose teaching involves more than one discipline.

The committee returned to the position of the Director of Cross-School Programs, specifically the relationship between it and the Associate Provost. Joan Neff described her responsibilities as Associate Provost, which primarily have to do with curriculum issues. These include cross-school courses and programs. The question was then asked: could the Associate Provost assume the responsibilities of a Director of Cross-School Programs? She answered that responsibility for cross-school courses and programs makes sense, but not all interdisciplinary programs. We also need to consider the future development of these activities, which might necessitate a position separate from that of the Associate Provost.

What became clear from the meeting was the need to separate the issues of resources and governance when thinking about the infrastructure needed to sustain cross-school courses and programs. Committees will be necessary for governance. In addition, the Chair focused attention on the need to define cross-school programs. How many courses in two or more schools are required for a program to qualify as a cross-school program? If a program requires just one course in a different school, can it be considered a cross-school program?