

June 5, 2017

To: Dr. Wolde-ab Isaac, President

From: Drs. Kathleen Sell and Susan Mills, Strategic Planning Co-chairs on behalf of EPOC

On June 1st EPOC met for its final session of the year and took up the recommendation on faculty hiring from the joint leadership councils as an action item. EPOC is forwarding that recommendation to you (which includes the rationales provided by divisions and the agenda and opening statement from the May 18 meeting). EPOC is also including its observations about the process of faculty hiring prioritization and concerns about making sure that the joint councils are equipped to make the best strategic decisions possible in the future and how to improve the process moving forward.

Below you'll find (in blue) the questions and concerns raised at EPOC (this is from the draft minutes).

i. Process discussion

1. The process continues to be a faculty-process. As such, should it go to the Senate?
 - a. The Senate has approved the councils' structure. Because of this, the Senate can give the authority to make the decision to the Councils. The Senate is focusing on process and making sure that the processes are effective – but aren't necessarily involved in content because the councils, committees, etc. are the bodies which have delegated authority.
2. Strategic planning is involved but a concern is that only 1 group is involved in the voting (faculty). Why are the other groups even at the meeting?
 - a. Some members of EPOC would like the voting to be more inclusive, but the faculty hiring process is subject to both academic senate and faculty union oversight and determination as it is both an academic and professional matter and a work conditions matter. Allowing non-faculty a role in this process runs counter to the positions of both groups.
 - b. That said, it is important and valuable to have the other voices in the room for input. There was little conversation during the Joint meeting, but having dialogue about the direction of the planning is important.
 - c. A lot of the positions which have been identified as priorities are not necessarily "FTES" generators. FTES generation is an important goal. While a breadth of offerings is important, acknowledging that we need to pay attention to – and add—high FTES courses.
 - d. Also important that we need to add based on the need for the college – including what students need to graduate.
 - e. Concern that this process results in popularity ranking versus student needs. The current process as a ranking is not based on need, demand, cost, student success, etc.
3. Proposals should be vetted through the Division Deans and the voting should be based on need and alignment with Strategic Plan, Educational Master Plan, etc.
 - a. This means that each of the voting members needs to take responsibility for evaluating the requests based on a holistic take.
 - b. Engineering is an example of a position request that needed cross-divisional conversation. One of the reasons the position wasn't prioritized is because that conversation didn't occur. Do note that Engineering is included in the Educational Master Plan.
 - c. These positions are very important – and the positions are key to the long-term health of the college.

4. During a prior process, a data sheet was provided for each position. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness could provide it for all of the positions. It is possible that this type of process would be implemented next year.
 - a. Recommendation is to not dramatically change the process, but provide “standard” data as one piece of the evaluation. Qualitative considerations are important, too.
 - b. Would we take this out of a “vote” and into a selection methodology?
 5. Leadership Council members need to participate – engage in discussion and help frame.
- ii. Outcomes discussion
1. EPOC has some concerns with the process – and recommendations for how to improve it next year (see process section above). The IE-LC has been asked to take this feedback and create recommendations.
 2. Important to note that EPOC has the responsibility to support the framing of the process in a pro-active manner. In early fall, the IE-LC can present a proposal for a revised process.
 - a. The August retreat can potentially include this discussion along with the overall discussions.
 3. Guidance for the president will include the document as well as a cover letter:
 - a. Concern that the rankings didn’t necessarily take efficiency into account. In light of the requirement to increase FTES, some of these full-time faculty will not contribute to FTES growth.
 - b. While positions are in alignment with discipline, department, and divisional plans, the position requests were not necessarily in alignment with the college plan.
 - c. The decision, ranking could have been better supported by data.

The Program Review Committee is working on revising the process and addressing the process recommendations from the Joint Leadership Councils feedback. A proposal will be presented to the IE-LC in October 2017 and EPOC in November 2017.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Sell, faculty co-chair
Susan Mills, administrative co-chair