

# Deans' Council Minutes

Wednesday, May 31, 2006

9:30-11:30 a.m.

Provost's Conference Room

**Attending:** Beisel, Bowers, Edwards, Ginnetti, Herbert, Hirtzel, Kasvinsky, Khawaja, Kobulnicky, Licata, Ritchey, Yemma

## 1. Announcements

- Dean's Offices' annual reports ... due date and format will be communicated as soon as the President's Office gives us a deadline. Format will likely be the same as in the past (report progress on this year's plan; indicate items carried over and added for next year).

## 2. Update on Summer

Summer enrollments are down, but in the same proportion as during the rest of this past year. The record number of students graduating in 2005-06 likely affected summer enrollment. Classes seem to have rolled out smoothly. Some courses that were converted to conference courses because of low enrollments increased to enrollments of 15 or more by the end of the "add" period. Per the summer guidelines, these classes will revert to normal courses.

The Provost thanked Marilyn Ward (in absentia) for her work over the holiday weekend to get summer data prepared.

The Provost's Office and President's Office received no complaints about classes from students. Compliments go to department chairs and faculty for helping ensure that (it appears) no student who needed a course to keep on schedule for August or December graduation was thwarted.

## 3. Academic Affairs Projects for Centennial

A general discussion took place on the history of the Institution, its relation to the culture and industry of the Valley, and the use of alums to give significant talks during the centennial.

- How can we leverage the Centennial to go outside the Valley? Half of our alumni reside outside the Valley. Bring back or profile successful alumni to recognize their achievements, not to raise money from them.
- We can use Centennial materials, activities, and exhibits to show the Higher Learning Commission accrediting site team that YSU is a "mature" institution.
- We can use what's good about what we've done in the past as an indicator of what we want to carry forward into the future. What do we want to do in the next 100 years? Perhaps this needs to be done in the context of the Academic Affairs strategic planning effort.
- We can use Centennial initiatives to create a different (more positive) public appreciation of what/who we are.
- Some of the following are possible initiatives:
  - Invite alums with significant accomplishments, and perhaps other high-profile individuals, to

- speak at events throughout the Centennial.
- Prepare virtual and/or physical exhibits (and timeline) on YSU's and the community's history, linkages, and significant accomplishments.
- Highlight significant developments in our disciplines over the past 100 years.
- Present awards for alums, faculty, etc. with highly significant accomplishments over the years.
- Expand Quest to include businesses, alums who have contributed to their disciplines, and the larger community.

**Nate Ritchey will convene a small committee (Ritchey, Beisel, Hirtzel, Kobulnicky, Licata) to identify key academic initiatives to support the YSU Centennial. Their suggestions will be discussed at the next Deans' Council meeting, so that we can be prepared to offer and discuss ideas at the Deans' Development Council meeting on June 28.**

#### **4. Draft Planning Document (previously circulated)**

The draft planning/review document was discussed. Data collected in the program review process can be used as a mechanism for a broader strategic planning effort. Items such as those identified in the draft document can be used along with an "overlay" that asks departments to use the data to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and to address certain critical questions and the Higher Learning Commission criteria. Cynthia Hirtzel will e-mail some program-review material she prepared to Bege, who will forward it to Deans' Council members.

Planning processes should take advantage of upcoming department chairperson meetings and the August full faculty meeting. The formal review and planning process must begin in the fall. Colleges must critically review department submissions and forward college priorities to the Provost by March 2007, so that he can present an academic strategic plan to the Board of Trustees a year from now. We need a timeline and flow chart showing what goes to whom when.

Paul Kobulnicky suggested that the Provost chair a committee to identify the most significant forces likely to affect us in the next 5 to 10 years and to finalize the review and planning process. Everyone should send the Provost a list of any "overarching" issues that need to be addressed.

The provost will work with a small group to develop the key questions that departments, colleges, and the division should use to frame the discourse within the documents. It is important that the exercise be future-oriented and place the University's mission at its center. What sort of institution do we seek to be in five years' time? Ten?

We will return to this topic in our next scheduled meeting. If possible, we may use the occasion of the chairs retreat to distribute draft material.

#### **5. Summer Vacations**

E-mail your projected summer-vacation dates to Marlene Dailey as soon as you know them.

#### **6. New Business**

- **Commencement "Debriefing":**
  - Student speakers need guidance about what the student "reflection" is meant to do. Could we prepare a page to do this and perhaps have someone such as Ron Shaklee review the reflections in advance?

- How can we get to reading of students' names more quickly? Have only student speakers (graduation is a celebration of students graduating, not a time for long speeches)? Shorten or delete the musical interlude? Shorten the speeches? Coordinate the President's and Provost's scripts better? Cut out the deans' self-introductions if the Provost is going to introduce deans?
  - How can we improve logistics at the Graduate ceremony? It was difficult for deans to climb over trustees to shake hands and hood graduates. Could trustees sit more to the back? Could faculty be made more prominent? Could the musicians be moved off-stage?
  - Can faculty be highlighted more prominently at the morning ceremony?
  - How can the receptions be enhanced to leave graduates with a good final impression of YSU? Can the colleges involve departments in the receptions? Or can large departments hold their own receptions? Should we host college-based receptions after all of the commencement ceremonies?
- **Honorary Degrees:**
    - The Provost will develop a process for determining honorary-degree recipients (as noted in the *YSU Guidebook*). We need to develop a nomination process.
    - It has been suggested that the President could give a "President's Medal" to donors. We need to reserve honorary degrees for people with appropriate accomplishments and credentials.
  - **New-Faculty Orientation and Mentoring:**
    - The Academic Affairs portion of the orientation will include sessions such as advice to new faculty from faculty in their third year at YSU. We could survey faculty who were new in the past couple of years to see what they wish they had known when they started at YSU, what some of their concerns have been, etc. and then have experienced faculty address some of those items.
    - We should provide more opportunities for social interaction for new faculty (including their guests and children).
    - Some of the HR material presented at orientations in the past could be distributed electronically or done later in the semester.
    - Deans need to be sure chairs know about the dates for the new-faculty orientation (see Notes and Reminders below).

## 7. Adjourn

### Notes & Reminders:

Deans' and Associate Deans' Workshop (Holiday Inn Boardman - June 12, 2006)

Chairs' Workshop (DeBartolo Stadium Club - June 13-14, 2006)

(deans to attend final sessions starting with lunch at 11:45 a.m. on June 14)

President's Address & Reception – August 21 (Chestnut Room – 10:00 am)

Provost's All-Faculty Meeting – August 21 (time and place TBA)

Academic Affairs New-Faculty Orientation – August 23 (DeBartolo Stadium Club)

Human Resources New-Faculty Orientation – August 24

Chairs' Retreat – Punderson State Park (September 21-22, 2006)