MINUTES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
TRUSTEES OF PURDUE UNIVERSITY
MARCH 29, 2012

A meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees of The Trustees of Purdue University was held in Room 326 of Stewart Center, Purdue University West Lafayette, Indiana at 2:05 p.m. on March 29, 2012.

The following committee members were present: Chairman JoAnn Brouillette, John Hardin, Miranda McCormack, and Thomas Spurgeon. No other trustees were present.

Board officers in attendance were Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Sands and Corporate Secretary Beard.

Other university staff in attendance to participate in discussion were: Julie Griffith, Vice President for Public Affairs; Dale Whittaker, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs; Morris Levy, University Senate Chair; Rab Mukerjea, Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Assessment; Nancy Bulger, Assistant Provost; Dennis Savaiano, Interim Dean, Honors College; Mark Lundstrom, Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering; Audeen Fentiman, Presidential Fellow; and Maggie Dalrymple, Associate Director of the Office of Institutional Research.

I. INTRODUCTION

Trustee Brouillette thanked Provost Sands and his team for briefing the committee and noted that the lengthy agenda called for an additional meeting of the committee prior to the April board meetings. Provost Sands thanked the committee for the opportunity to update the board on the agenda items and will summarize today’s meeting for the entire Board at the April board meetings.

II. nanoHUB-U PRESENTATION

Mark Lundstrom introduced the nanoHUB-U experiment, a new approach to education that has grown out of nanotechnology. It is the desire of the National Science Foundation that nanoHUB-U be a community resource not associated with one university. It arose as a method for offering formal courses developed from independent initiatives and has become a major resource for education with online tutorials and short courses. Mark reviewed the objective of nanoHUB-U, which is to bring new insights and approaches from nanoscience into the traditional fields of engineering and applied science, and he discussed the level, format, instructors and timeline. He noted that it is designed to be interdisciplinary and discussed the outcome of the first course,
previewed forthcoming courses, and listed curriculum topics. The nanoHUB-U experiment provides Purdue an opportunity to provide leadership in this emerging science and experiment with learning technologies and practices, ultimately generating revenue for Purdue through a sustainable financial model. Provost Sands shared that the HUB-U platform will be uniquely capable of delivering simulations without downloading software and offer broadly accessible modules that students can take as needed rather than sequentially.

III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Julie Griffith shared that Purdue enjoys a tremendous reputation at the Statehouse. Her office tracked 60 pieces of legislation that affected higher education during the last legislative session. She provided a summary of and discussed the pieces of legislation on which Purdue had an impact, most which will be signed by the governor and go into effect July 1, 2012. VP Griffith also shared that after the election in November, 40% of the House of Representatives will have two years’ or less experience and there will also be significant changes in the Senate. Therefore, she will be visiting with legislators during the summer to ensure they understand the economic engine that is Purdue. She also discussed the Reaching Higher, Achieving More strategic plan that was just approved by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, which looks to increase on-time graduation rates at both two- and four-year campuses and double the number of college graduates produced in the state by 2025; the plan also aims to have 60 percent of Indiana adults with college degrees by 2025. Trustee Brouillette thanked VP Griffith and her team for their diligence and efforts.

IV. UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS

A. FOUNDATIONS OF EXCELLENCE

Dale Whittaker provided the committee an Executive Summary of the Foundations of Excellence initiative, which has been a partnership of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Housing, and Diversity and Inclusion. He reviewed the initiative’s vision and the process from which the overarching recommendation and subsequent themes/responsibilities were developed. The three themes are: 1) specialized and heightened focus on the experiences of first-year students; 2) coordination of curricular, co-curricular, and academic success efforts for first-year students; and 3) focus on an environment of improvement, based on innovative, evidence-based decision-making and scholarship. Dr. Whittaker discussed the themes/responsibilities and indicated that specific action planning will be done with those areas required to implement them, including the University Senate, deans, and Housing and Food Services. He believes that the initiative will be implemented with the freshmen class of 2013, thus allowing for a four-year cycle to be completed prior to the university’s next accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission in 2020. Dr. Whittaker also sees the potential for a second phase to incorporate transfer students and would also like to see a heavier focus on STEM students.
Trustee Hardin commented that this process is much broader in scope than has seen during his tenure on the board and thanked Dr. Whittaker for moving it forward.

**B. CORE CURRICULUM**

Dale Whittaker reviewed the origin of the core curriculum initiative and the Core Curriculum Committee’s recommendation that the core curriculum be outcome based. A subsequent committee that involved each college was formed to develop the framework of the core curriculum, which resulted in two components 1) foundational elements that allow for greater mobility and 2) what do we want a Purdue graduate to be able to do (embedded outcomes)? Professor Levy discussed the University Senate’s positive reception of and support for the core curriculum initiative and setting the course for change, noting it was an historic achievement and time is of the essence. The process to implement the core curriculum will involve review of all courses currently taught, the coordination of the core curriculum across the Purdue system through the Intercampus Faculty Council, and coordination with the state’s system to comply with ICHE’s 120 credit maximum. Professor Levy believes that with the support of the Senate and the leadership in place, a core curriculum can be achieved.

**V. ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Rab Mukerjea, co-chair of the Academic Program Assessment Validation Committee, recognized those who have been involved in the academic program assessment process and the makeup of the committee. He discussed the scope and purpose of the assessment and explained that the university’s academic degree programs have majors/minors/concentrations and that the strengths and weaknesses of each are being identified to target future allocation of resources. Professor Mukerjea reviewed the objectives and preliminary findings of the assessment and the actions that have already been taken.

Nancy Bulger, co-chair of the Academic Program Assessment Validation Committee, discussed the flow chart of the assessment process and discussed the projected timeline that calls for implementation of the outcomes beginning in Fall 2012. She reviewed the survey the deans were asked to complete and clarified the nature of the questions. Provost Sands discussed the layers of implementation – those actions that can be taken right away, adjustments to or remediation of programs, and engaging stakeholders in the next academic year to implement bigger changes. Maggie Dalrymple reviewed the nature of the departmental and program data that was provided to the deans to assist them with completing their surveys and the trend factors that the Validation Committee utilized to pull together the data and the deans’ survey responses.

Audeen Fentiman explained that once the Validation Committee has reviewed the survey responses with the data and trends, they will put together a summary that will include the strengths, concerns, and questions for each program, from which the deans and the provost will identify challenges and opportunities. She clarified that the Validation Committee has only provided the data trends and the survey summary; the committee is not making any programmatic recommendations but will make suggestions for the process that will follow. The
next step will be led by the Provost working with the deans to formulate action plans for their colleges, followed by an action plan for the campus.

VI. HONORS COLLEGE UPDATE

Dennis Savaiano provided an update on the progress of the formation of the Honors College. He discussed the six working groups of the Task Force and the guiding principles they formulated. He also detailed the key recommendations of the Task Force as well as their curricular recommendations and leadership opportunities that will be available to students in the Honors College. The most challenging issue for the Honors College is to build a residential community. The Center for Student Excellence and Leadership (CSEL), the proposed student laboratories, and the Third Street Corridor will help significantly with this effort and efforts to integrate the Honors College with the entire campus. He remarked about the working group’s visits to other universities to see first-hand how they integrate their honors colleges and discussed the residential co-curricular principles formulated from those visits and the residential criteria. And finally, Dean Savaiano reviewed the timeline for the Honors College, noting that recruiting for the Honors College will begin this fall with a focus on those students who want integrated, broad experiences. Trustee Hardin noted this is real change and thanked Trustee Brouillette and Provost Sands.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion, duly seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.