DEANS COUNCIL RETREAT  
January 29, 2019  
Minutes

The Deans Council met for a retreat on Tuesday, January 29, 2019 from 8:30 a.m.-12:00 noon in the Board of Visitors conference room, Broderick Dining Commons. Those present were Austin Agho (Chair), Stephanie Adams, Jane Bray, Andy Casiello, Gail Dodge, George Fowler, Kate Hawkins, Renee Olander, Brian Payne, Elaine Pearson, Kent Sandstrom, Jim Shaeffer, Bonnie Van Lunen, and Robert Wojtowicz. The following agenda items were discussed.

1. Austin Agho welcomed all, and commented on the Chronicle document that he hoped would spark conversation. He indicated he wanted to frame discussions with questions related to the document.

2. Critical Issues and Challenges Facing Colleges and Units in 2020-2025

Each participant gave a five-minute update on critical issues and challenges during the 2020-2025 time frame.

a. Jeff Tanner, Strome College of Business
   - Close accounting of costs and revenues at the individual student level; unable to do that here at ODU; disincentive to program development due to lack of revenue distribution.
   - Graduate stipends are inadequate, particularly at the doctoral level.
   - Need more tenure-track faculty to maintain accreditation for current programs; need additional faculty to build programs that are responsive to market demand.
   - Fewer faculty have to manage more governance issues; inhibits their ability to teach and engage in research and scholarly activity.
   - Need to have a better value proposition; should have a greater focus on academic excellence as a part of our value proposition.

b. Kent Sandstrom, College of Arts and Letters
   - On the national level, 10-15% enrollment declines are occurring in liberal arts majors, particularly in the arts, humanities, and interpretive social sciences. A&L has been effectively addressing this challenge by ramping up student recruitment activities and offering innovative interdisciplinary programs to draw more majors (e.g., Cybersecurity, Cybercrime, Leadership Studies, Technical Writing, etc.).
   - The hegemony of STEM-H and STEM-H degree production – The College is striving to transform STEM-H into "STEAM-H2" and to insert its disciplines more centrally into discussions of
• Promoting innovation, particularly in program and curricular design. The College is encountering a few challenges in pushing some faculty from more traditional disciplines to think about doing things in a new way. How to counteract “cultures that resist change” and promote “cultures of innovation”? One way A&L is taking this matter on is to foster more interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and transdisciplinary programs.

• Meeting the needs of non-traditional and adult learners/degree completers. The College is trying to address this challenge by finding ways to offer more courses and programs online or in a hybrid format. For instance, A&L is “going big online” in some programs (e.g., the English Ph.D. program, which now has 78 active students).

• Retaining top quality faculty, especially scholars of color. The college has initiated important conversations among the department chairs and search chairs about how to diversify applicant pools and how to avoid the "reproduction of whiteness" in the processes of defining positions, recruiting applicants, and selecting and interviewing finalists.

• Program prioritization and internal reallocations – how to engage in these processes with an eye to ROI and strengthening A&L programs.

• How to address distributive justice issues within the university. The College’s faculty feel understandably concerned and frustrated about having a heavier teaching load than any other college on campus. ODU needs to find a way to address this issue. The College’s units are also concerned about their very meager operating budgets and the low return they receive for the revenues they generate for the university. The college has tried to address this issue in the latest round of budget requests by asking for notable increases in A&L operating budgets.

C. Jane Bray, Darden College of Education and Professional Studies

• Faculty generate a lot of money from contract courses and distance learning that goes back to the departments, so revenue streams are not so much of a problem.

• “Usedtoland” refers to faculty who talk about how much better things “used to” be; a challenge to get people to see beyond their own context.

• University administrators need to have a better understanding of the budget building process.

• We don’t have formal business plans for new programs or if we have them, we don’t follow them.

• Need to think about “pieces” of degrees; various credentials at different points in a student’s academic career.
d. Bonnie Van Lunen, College of Health Sciences
   - College is in a re-invent stage; struggling with the loss of old programs as new programs and initiatives are being launched.
   - Need to build reputation as scholars, not just as practitioners.
   - Working with the faculty to determine what their new building will look like, as form should follow function; that means there needs to be an agreement about function.
   - Developing a new School of Public Health; will need to be separate, as accreditation requires that they report directly to the Provost; how will that work?
   - Relationship with EVMS is changing; no longer co-offering a Master’s degree, so how will that impact the relationship?
   - Competing with other providers of instruction in health, such as Sentara; what will the impact be?

e. Stephanie Adams, Batten College of Engineering and Technology
   - Aging workforce. If they all retire at the same time or close to one another, there will be a crisis in terms of being able to offer the classes needed. Additionally, it can take 2-4 years for junior faculty to get labs set-up, running and productive.
   - Program Innovation (new courses, technological tools and possibly need degree programs) is needed based on feedback from external stakeholders.
   - Inbred leadership model at ODU, which can lead to a lack of awareness of critical trends and innovative approaches in engineering education.
   - Students lack the math preparation necessary to be able to jump right in to the engineering degree plan, which lengthens time to degree; we do not offer a suitable suite of support programs for the students we admit in engineering.
   - High student to faculty ratio; as much as 25:1
   - Inadequate space and resources.

f. Gail Dodge, College of Sciences
   - ODU has advantages to be mined (e.g., research mission in an urban environment; VA has population growth, tuition is low relative to other VA public colleges and universities).
   - Research is expensive (e.g., start-up costs, need to renovate space and have better infrastructure, especially technical support).
   - Need better structures; old buildings and inadequate lab and research space in Mills Godwin Life Science Building (MGB).
   - Teaching science is expensive; need to add labs to prepare students to meet industry needs.
   - Need to improve student success.
• Need to be more engaged with those who employ our graduates; perhaps specific certificates should be developed to meet industry needs.
• “Old-fashioned degrees and boring websites;” need to make course offerings and degree programs/tracks more attractive to students.
• Faculty can be resistant to change (e.g., curriculum).
• Budget system is very time consuming and difficult to access.
• Business processes are antiquated and need to be streamlined and updated.

g. Jim Shaeffer, College of Continuing Education and Professional Development
• Three individuals are responsible for outreach at ODU. But this is part of the problem. Overlapping responsibilities.
• Institutions that will be impacted the most are non-selective colleges, like ODU. We’re at the cliff and may go off if we don’t address the needs of non-traditional students and non-degree credentials, and other areas that others are competing for.
• UMUC, Penn State, Arizona, and others are out there more than ODU is.
• JMU, VT, and UVA will have people next to Amazon in Northern Virginia, and we’re planning to deliver to Amazon in online formats.

h. Robert Wojtowicz, Graduate School
• Need to reach more adult, part-time students with professional master’s programs, professional doctoral programs, as well as other graduate certificates and credentials.
• Need to retool traditional research degrees (M.A., M.S., Ph.D.) in the face of uneven academic job pool (particularly tenure-track faculty lines) and unreliable government sector.
• Need budget training and fund-raising training for college deans.
• Fewer international students; undermines our research and entrepreneurial efforts.
• Intellectual property theft and technology transfer are real threats and we need to be prepared to defend our interests.

i. George Fowler, University Libraries
• Need to have a better sense of the mission of the institution; there are competing understandings of what our mission is; our collections should reflect our mission.
• Need to reallocate resources for better efficiency and better meet the needs of faculty.
• When we start new programs, we don’t include funding for additional materials in the Libraries to support the new programs;
that’s especially a challenge when accreditation requires that certain materials be held in the Libraries.

- Materials are much more expensive than they used to be with no increases in funding to support acquisitions.

**j. Brian Payne, Academic Affairs**
- Need to embrace our culture of innovation; ODU has been an innovator since the beginning.
- Need to engage in advising innovations; need to find and fund a model that really does make a difference to student success.
- Need to develop more interdisciplinary partnerships in response to needs of industry.
- Need to make sure we add value in instructional delivery for social and economic mobility.

**k. Kate Hawkins, Academic Affairs**
- How can the Office of International Programs support internationalization when the number of international students in the U.S. continues to decline?
- Developing effective models for full-time tenure-line faculty in the areas of teaching and mentoring; beginning to develop programs for full-time non-tenure-line faculty; need to develop support for part-time faculty.
- Working with school/department chairs, developing best practices and effective models for professional development for effective administration at the school/department level; need to design professional development opportunities for those interested in someday becoming a chair, at ODU or elsewhere (e.g., Chairs Institute).
- We recognize there have been significant changes in the environment in which higher education operates. Do our tenure and promotion documents reflect appropriate expectations for our faculty in light of those changes? For example, some have suggested that there is an inordinate amount of emphasis placed on scholarly productivity in the review for promotion to full professor. Should teaching, service and community engagement play larger roles in that review process?
- Multiple data sources demonstrate faculty compensation at ODU is not comparable with institutions with which we compete for the best quality faculty. In the absence of significantly increased funding from the state and our inability to significantly increase our tuition (due to concerns re/accessibility and affordability), how will we fund necessary increases in faculty compensation to make us more competitive with our peers? Are there efficiencies that may be found in our operations that could at least partially fund increases in compensation?
1. Renee Olander, Regional Higher Education Centers
   - Challenge of continuing to educate people about what the centers can do and their value proposition to the regional market; centers are agile and flexible, but can be "out of sight/out of mind" especially given turnover in deans, chairs and program directors.
   - Need and opportunity to be responsive to community needs and present a "hometown advantage" for transfer and commuter students, returning adults/stop-outers, military-affiliated populations.
   - Have a strategic plan dated 2016-2021 -- some recommendations have been implemented (e.g., the School of Nursing expansion in VB and ongoing collaborations with the CVB Human Services Department) and others -- including developing distinct/unique branding for each of the centers -- still have merit but have not been pursued.
   - No new resources have been allocated to the Tri-Cities center since the building was constructed in 2007; no investment at Peninsula since before 2005 -- all three centers have lost funding, dedicated faculty members and staff positions in the past nine years.
   - The university's Campus Restrictions Flowchart and system of routing students to specific CRNs based on their "on-campus" vs "online" admissions status, plus the increased numbers of in-region students admitted via online portals since the adoption of the binary Common Application, have undermined students' access to courses and services available at the centers and may not serve the changing times.
   - Student surveys support the need more F2F activities and instruction at the centers.
   - A major challenge/goal is identifying next steps in Virginia Beach and if needed gaining capital funds for an additional facility.

m. Andy Casiello, Distance Learning
   - Our institution needs to be more nimble; very slow to make changes happen at our institution.
   - Need to invest more in marketing of our programs; need to offer programs that are responsive to the needs of students and potential students; need better alignment with industry needs.
   - Need access to analysis of data we have already collected so that we can make better decisions about developing programming.
   - Competition is already severe and it’s going to get worse; we don’t have the deep pockets that some institutions do; “It’s an arms race.” How do we stay competitive with other providers, especially in terms of better preparing our students for jobs?
n. Elaine Pearson, Academic Affairs
   • Need to be more transparent and more accountable in how we build and spend our budgets.
   • College staff are sometimes not able to access information they need to do their jobs.
   • Need to develop a model to distribute resources more equitably (e.g., ETF funds).
   • Need to think about the different ways we can cover costs (e.g., identifying savings, increasing revenues).

3. Strategic Plan

Austin Agho talked about the strategic plan process and indicated that everyone around the table should be part of one of the seven committees. The steering committee did not create new committees but built on seven existing campus-wide committees (i.e., academic, research and entrepreneurship, qualify of life, internationalization, enrollment, community engagement, diversity and inclusion). Diversity, race, gender, college representation, faculty, staff, students, and deans will all be included. In addition, the Rector of the Board of Visitors along with Board member Bruce Bradley will serve on the strategic planning committee.

4. Budget Discussion

Elaine Pearson provided a spreadsheet related to budget requests submitted by everyone in Academic Affairs for the coming year. The spreadsheet includes positions, NPS, equipment, etc.

Elaine presented data related to the last few years in each college, and suggested that if a new business model is created, we need to determine what the data pieces are, as well as each entity involved. What are the factors that will go into a new model? She wants to show an incentive for the business model planning and coming up with the new model. Austin Agho noted the factors to be used in prioritizing the requests will include meeting accreditation requirements, STEM-H faculty positions, and student retention.

5. IDS Teacher Prep

Austin Agho shared an update on the shift of teacher preparation programs from the College of Arts & Letters to the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies. He had formed a committee that reviewed the current structure and researched whether the programs can stay in A&L or move to Education. Prior to making the final decision to move the program from Arts & Letters to Education, he also called provosts at VCU and Longwood. He met with faculty in both colleges and with the committee. The final decision was to move education programs to Education. Austin thanked Kent and Jane for their help in moving these transitions forward.
6. Library Reorganization

George Fowler shared background information related to changes recently made in the library. He knows that it is extremely unlikely that there will be additional funding for the library, and so he looked at personnel reductions in order to better address the needs of the ODU community. He has a management team that will determine how to reallocate the resources, including consideration of a position that may provide fundraising services for the library. Robert Wojtowicz asked how George is dealing with morale in the library, since he understands it is a serious concern for many around campus. George said this is a high priority for him to enhance morale in his unit.

7. Office of International Programs Reorganization

Kate Hawkins described similar changes in the Office of International Programs (OIP). Essentially, she pointed out that the American Council on Education (ACE) report—developed from a study on ODU’s international programming—revealed that a number of areas in OIP needed to be addressed. Based on the ACE recommendations, Kate and Paul Currant elected to remove a layer of administration (two individuals) to allow for OIP to pay for software and an entry-level person who can help a number of areas in OIP.

8. Updates
   a. Austin Agho said the COACHE survey is moving forward. A message to faculty about the survey will go out soon.
   b. Audit report—Elaine Pearson mentioned that there were about 40+ issues to address from a recent audit. Currently 16 outstanding items are being cleaned up. Some areas are from FY 16 and others FY 18.
   c. Austin Agho provided an update on the Academic Affairs web pages. He indicated that Candice Goodin is working on the pages.
   d. Brian Payne reminded everyone that ODU has many great things going on—and not to lose sight of those.