

MINUTES

LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 3, 2011

The Long-Range Planning Committee of the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees met on Thursday, March 3, 2011, in the University Center. Present were Committee Chair W. Harold Calloway and Trustees Amy MacDonell; Lauren K. Raikes '11; and Ronald D. Romain '73. Also in attendance were President Linda L. M. Bennett; Provost Ronald S. Rochon; and Faculty Senate Chair Adrian Gentle.

Committee Chair Harold Calloway convened the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

1. REPORT ON STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS) PROGRAMMING: A REGIONAL APPROACH TO A NATIONAL ISSUE

Mr. Calloway called on Provost Rochon to introduce Dr. Scott Gordon, dean of the Pott College of Science and Engineering, and Dr. Shelly Blunt, associate dean of the Pott College of Science and Engineering who discussed outreach, engagement, and College programming related to STEM recruitment, retention, and workforce development.

Dean Gordon and Associate Dean Blunt reported on programs created by the Pott College of Science and Engineering to recruit students into the STEM disciplines, improve science and mathematics skills, and increase retention among STEM students. In 2007, USI was selected as the Southwest Indiana lead institution for the Indiana STEM Resource Network. The University of Southern Indiana established the Southwest Indiana STEM Resource Center in 2008 with assistance from state and regional grants and organizations. The overarching goal of the center is to "Help Indiana and our region achieve its vision to be a national leader in student academic achievement in STEM disciplines and in the quality of its workforce". Initiatives of the program include STEM Camps for P-12 students, lending of equipment/instrumentation resources, student competitions, science fairs, student research experiences, classroom assistance, and career exploration.

The Pott College of Science and Engineering created the PLUS (Pathways Leading to Undergraduate Success in the Sciences) Program, the goals of which are: 1) to improve retention of students; 2) to assist students in developing alternative and/or expanded academic pathways; and 3) to help students identify and establish realistic and attainable academic goals. Students in the PLUS Program are declared majors in the Pott College of Science and Engineering who tested below the level of college algebra on math placement tests. These students are carefully monitored by meeting with advisors at least five times a year; enrolling in a STEM 101 seminar; and completing a MAP-Works survey to allow advisors to view the results and identify potential problems.

The retention rates of the PLUS-Eligible Students mark the success of the program. In fall 2007, 65 students participated in the PLUS Program – 63 percent were retained in the Pott College of Science and Engineering and 77 percent were retained by USI. In fall 2009, 85 students participated in the PLUS Program – 47 percent were retained in the Pott College of Science and Engineering and 64 percent were retained by USI. These data show significant increases when compared to the same cohort of students who entered into the University from 2001-2005.

The Early Undergraduate Research Program (EURP) was designed by the Pott College of Science and Engineering to challenge STEM students; promote a team-oriented approach to teaching and learning; create a more hands-on nurturing faculty; increase retention and graduation rates; produce highly qualified, innovative undergraduate STEM majors; and promote collaboration between USI and IVY Tech Community College faculty and students. This program is an eight-week residential research program during two summers in which students participate in weekly seminars and visit local STEM industries. It culminates in a research presentation.

The Early Undergraduate Research Program has reaped benefits including an increase in student retention among participants; closer interaction and community-building among students and faculty; more scholarly work produced; nurturing partnerships between USI and IVY Tech Community College; promotion of a 24/7 campus community; and an increase in student recruitment.

Following the presentation and a period of questions/answers, Mr. Calloway concluded the discussion by thanking Dr. Gordon and Dr. Blunt for sharing information important to the region and its workforce.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.