

**Presidential Task Force on  
Sustaining the Academic Priorities at StFX  
October 23, 2013  
Alumni Lounge; 3:30pm-5pm**

**Present:** Leslie MacLaren (Chair), Jeff Orr, Janice Landry, Shannon Morell, Helen MacGregor, Leo MacPherson, Laura Sandre, Corinna Fitzgerald, Charmaine McPherson, Tara Callaghan, Rachel Hurst, Yvon Grenier, Keith De'Bell, Daniel McKenna, Denton Anthony, William Sweet, Matthew Meyer, Lynne Murphy, Ramsay Duffy, Tim Hynes, Richard Nemesvari, Robert van den Hoogen

Staff: Johann Le Blanc, Gina Sampson, Candice Finbow

**Meeting Summary** (made with reference to PowerPoint TF Meeting 3, October 22)

**1) Approval of Summary Notes from October 9 meeting**

Notes were approved with the following changes:

- 1.1 Correct title to read "Meeting number 2"
- 1.2 "Review of Meeting notes" #5: Clarify reference to quintile approach to reflect that no final decision has been made yet.
- 1.3 "Future directions" #5: "Mission Statement" should be changed to "Guiding Principles." References to these statements should acknowledge their source as the 2010 Academic Priorities Plan and that these are the guiding principles referenced by the BOG motion that created this Task Force.
- 1.4 "Communications": Change "constituents" to "colleagues."
- 1.5 "Review of Programs": Bullet #6 should be amended to remove the specific reference to the Library. This point refers to all programs.

**2) Introduction of Task Force staff**

- 2.1. Candice Finbow, a project manager from Facilitates Management, and Gina Sampson, who has been an academic staff member, have begun working as staff for the Task Force. Each will start at 20 hours/ week. Their office will be in XH305.

**3) Defining Programs**

- 3.1 Committee members reviewed a comprehensive draft list of programs from across all areas of university to identify omissions or repetitions. The suggested changes will be compiled and a working draft will be sent to directors, managers and deans for further scrutiny.
- 3.2 There was agreement that some programs may need to be collapsed so that the subsequent workload is manageable for everyone.
- 3.3 Consultation is necessary as programs are defined so that all units are represented fairly and accurately.

**4) Website and Communications plans**

- 4.1 Effective and timely communications is crucial to the success of the process.
- 4.2 The Committee agreed with the "Communications Timeline" as presented in the PowerPoint.

- 4.3 The website will be up and running in the next couple of weeks. It will have interactive components such as FAQ, a feedback form, and a section to address campus concerns as they arise. It will also contain task force meeting summary notes and all working documents.

## **5) University Direction and Mission**

- 5.1 For the purposes of this Task Force, there was agreement that the student experience needs to be more fully captured in the guiding principles. Other sources of potential statements were identified as the Academic Calendar and the incorporation statement prepared for the BoG. Committee members will send potential content to Jeff, who will send out a draft before the next meeting.
- 5.2 We agreed that this committee does not have a mandate to create a new mission statement for the university, but does need to recognize our current role, directions, strengths and opportunities to effectively do its work.

## **6) Preliminary Discussion of Evaluative Criteria**

- 6.1 The Committee discussed the 10 criteria defined by Dickeson and most often used in program prioritization processes (PPPs) by other Universities. Noted that the advantage of these criteria is that they are well-tested and have been considered comprehensive.
- 6.2 Establishing detailed criteria and weightings for the criteria will take place later in the process. This will be a major stage that requires campus consultation.
- 6.3. Committee members offered lessons learned from colleagues at other institutions:
  - 6.3.1. Collapsing the criteria for academic programs caused problems in some institutions, but some schools have had success with using fewer criteria for academic support programs.
  - 6.3.2. The process must be understood by all to be important for reallocation as well as for potential cost savings.
  - 6.3.3 Problems arise when the data collection process becomes unwieldy resulting in data paralysis.
  - 6.3.4 Trust is sacrificed when senior administration and Boards of Governors don't follow through.
  - 6.3.5 Problems emerge when people don't engage in the process.

### **Resources required by Task Force for next meeting**

- a. Revised list of programs (academic & academic support) ready to go to campus for feedback
- b. 'Lessons learned' session from other universities that have undergone similar prioritization processes
- c. Summary of ten criteria to help explain the purpose of each for the prioritization process
- d. Sample templates used by other institutions to gather data
- e. Examples of guiding mission statements from other Universities for this type of process
- f. Update on mission information from BoG draft and others.