Faculty Council Meeting Minutes: October 14, 2015

Absent: A. Dorfman, M. Farmer (CAC/BSP rep.), S. Selig

Meeting began at 2:35pm

The minutes from the September 30, 2015 meeting were approved.

The meeting’s agenda was modified to include reports from AAAC and CAC/BSP.

G. Lawrence gave update on current AAAC business. AAAC is investigating the practice of administrators serving as department chairs and is working with OEL on the low response rate in the online course evaluation system. Issues with the student evaluations include the low response rate skewing the median scores to the questions, the possibility that extra credit would bias the numbers. Ideas on how to increase the response rate was discussed.

The lunch meeting between Faculty Council-AAAC-CAC/BSP and the chancellor and provost was recapped by T. Wrobel. The meeting began with S. Selig giving an opening statement that covered the issues from Faculty Council’s agenda. The chancellor then gave remarks that covered general university issues such as retention and governance. Specific items discussed by the chancellor included the impending purchase of a building on Saginaw Street and the gifting of the Riverfront Center to the university. The chancellor and provost expressed concern with the university’s decline in enrollment for the current academic year. Neither the chancellor nor provost had been at an institution that experienced an enrollment decline. UM-Flint is the only or one of the few schools in Michigan to see a decline in enrollment. UM-Flint’s enrollments has recently been bolstered by DEEP enrollments. This is a concern, as is the low retention rate of a portion of UM-Flint’s typical freshmen class. The importance of communication between faculty and administration was discussed. The issue of the purchase of faculty regalia for newly promoted faculty was discussed in this context. The chancellor and provost were not aware of this tradition at UM-Flint and quickly worked to rectify this oversight.

Last year’s Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (CESF) report was discussed. L. Alexander gave an overview of the history of the report. The previous provost tasked Faculty Council with investigating the issue of faculty retention, as per a motion made at the April 2014 governing faculty meeting by Jerry Sanders and approved by the governing faculty. Faculty Council charged the CESF to investigate this issue and include their findings in their annual report to the faculty. The goal was a preliminary report due on Fall 2014. Faculty Council also would like 2015-2016 CESF report to follow the template of the 2012-2013 report with the 2015-2016 report in terms of reporting on faculty salary data. The 2015-2016 report could cover the salary data within this time period. CESF could present preliminary findings and methodology at the Fall governing faculty meeting in November. Also, the names of the committee members should be on the cover page, with consistent formatting and page numbering used in the report. C. Douglas will contact CESF to inquire on their progress with the report and what is feasible to present, and relay what Faculty Council would like to see in their report.

Follow-up on old business was suggested for the next joint meeting between the three committees and the provost and chancellor. Old business includes Jerry Sander’s motion and School of Nursing proposal.

Faculty Council decided that the results of electronic ballots would be posted on the Faculty Council Blackboard shell after the results are emailed to the faculty.
November 12th from 2:00pm-and 4:00pm was chosen for the Fall governing faculty meeting. Faculty Council will invite the two new vice chancellors (Development and Inclusion and Student Affairs) and the provost to introduce themselves to the faculty plus take questions in a panel discussion format. The CESF report will possibly be an item on the agenda for the governing faculty meeting as well as a report from S. Selig on faculty governance issues.

As a matter arising, student voting on faculty standing committees was raised as an issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm