Faculty Council Meeting Minutes: October 28, 2015

Absent: W. Li
Guests: Jerry Sanders, Erica Britt, Jason Kosnoski, Sarah Lippert (AAUP officers of the UM-Flint chapter)

The AAUP gave an overview of their concerns for the campus. These concerns include:
- Senior administrators (above the dean level) serving as department chair. They outrank dean, so how can their decisions be appealed to dean by the departmental faculty?
- There is a lack of transparency in decision making. Examples include the fact that there was no bathroom in the building that housed the Dance program and the removal of Terry Van Allen as Director of Office of Research without notification to the campus community.
- Administrative growth has outpaced faculty growth. This will be investigated further, possibly in conjunction with CESF.
- New administrators are unfamiliar with university SPGs, policies and traditions. Once these policies are learned, they seem to be ignored.

H. Wehbe-Alamah joined the meeting electronically after the AAUP officers finished. For the current and future Faculty Council meetings, if a member joins the meeting electronically, he/she will be considered to be present at the meeting and thus will have full voting rights.

The minutes from the Oct. 14th approved as corrected.

Items added to the current agenda: student evaluation resolution passed by the Faculty Senate in Ann Arbor, the UM-Flint School of Nursing proposal, and Sue Borrego’s email to S. Selig.

M. Farmer will not be able to attend Thursday’s CAC/BSP meeting. G. Laurence will attend in his place.

G. Laurence presented the AAAC update. The main item of business for AAAC is the resolution regarding administrators serving as department chairs. This was sent to Faculty Council from the chair of AAAC. The other item of business for AAAC was to revisit the issue of student representatives voting on governing faculty committees. AAAC recommends that students not have voting rights on these committees.

The Faculty Code stipulates that student representatives serve on almost all faculty committees. Student membership is sporadic, which raises issues regarding a meeting quorum and informed voting. In Winter 2015, the governing faculty voted that students have full voting rights on committees. This issue will be placed on the agenda for the Fall governing faculty meeting as an item for discussion. G. Laurence will work on a motion to be circulated.

AAAC’s resolution about administrators serving as department chairs was discussed. Faculty Council agreed with the principle that “peer faculty [be appointed to] interim chair and director positions when such needs arise. The committee advises against the appointment of administrators as interim chairs and directors whenever possible.”

S. Selig spoke with the provost regarding the Office of Research and the concern faculty have with not being informed on the situation. Legal counsel in Ann Arbor has advised that no announcement or information be released until a personnel matter has been resolved. The provost has expressed a
commitment for expanding the research funding and opportunities at UM-Flint. Faculty Council members suggested that the provost send an email to faculty with information about who to contact in the Office of Research regarding grants and other research-related matters. Faculty Council members suggested the past practice with regards to information dissemination with other personnel changes be followed with the change in the Office of Research. G. Laurence will contact with R. Alfaro (chair of AAAC) with the suggestion that he contact the provost and request he send out a notice to the faculty as to who to direct research questions to.

S. Selig will contact the provost and chancellor requesting a decision regarding the School of Nursing proposal. The next Faculty Council meetings will be November 18th. The meeting for Nov. 4th was canceled. The discussion of teaching evaluations was tabled until the next meeting.

The chancellor notified Faculty Council of a new $9 million merit scholarship program with scholarships ranging from $3,000 to full tuition scholarships. The goal of these new merit scholarships is to attract the best and brightest high school students to UM-Flint. A concern was expressed that a source of the funds for these scholarships came from shifting the burden of work study funding from the Office of Financial Aid to the academic departments, which has been a burden for some of these departments. Faculty Council is supportive of efforts such as this that attract and retain students.