UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

AAAC
Academic Affairs Advisory Committee

~ Special Session ~

Thursday, April 13, 2017
3:00 p.m. – Grad Programs Conference Room

~ Minutes ~

Members Present:  Ricardo Alfaro, Sy Banerjee, Aviva Dorfman, Jan Furman, Doug Knerr, Dan Lair (Chair), Jie Song, and Rie Suzuki

Members Absent:  Marilyn McFarland

Guests:  Hiba Wehbe-Alamah, Chair/Strategic Planning Committee
Gilia Smith, Special Advisor to the Provost
Sapna Vyas, Strategic Planning Committee Member

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Dan Lair.

Academic Calendar Scheduling Guidelines ► Chair Lair disseminated a proposed Academic Calendar Guidelines survey per discussion from the previous meeting on April 6. Brief discussion ensued resulting in minor changes to the instrument. Ricardo provided a mock calendar showing how the proposed 14-week flexible term could work. The consensus of the committee was to send the survey to faculty via Qualtrics in the near future.

Strategic Planning Update ► Chair Wehbe-Alamah thanked the Committee for making this special session available to present the results from the work of the Strategic Planning Committee of five high-level strategic priorities. She indicated that the priorities are not listed in the order of importance, but rather, have equal importance. Hiba indicated that the priorities resulted from many outreach meetings, forums, emails, web comments, etc. as they listened to the voices of the campus community. She explained that since the formulation of the five priorities, she has met with all kinds of committees including Faculty Council, CAC/BSP, Council of Deans, Staff Council, etc. to gather their feedback and seek their support; she reported that so far there have been no major objections, but many suggestions.

Some comments and suggestions included the following:

- Discussion took place on the difference between “identity” and “brand.”
- A question arose whether the same Strategic Plan Committee members would continue through the implementation. Hiba indicated that that was a decision for the Chancellor and that the Chancellor would be providing an answer soon in that regard.
Priority 1: A Distinctive Identity that Builds Campus Pride

- Discussion centered on the titles of the priorities. Some mention was made that the way that the priority was titled seemed incomplete, lack of initiative; they needed verbs. Much discussion took place and consensus was that the word “priority” was a problem and it should be changed to “principle.”

Priority 2: Recruitment through Strong Programs and Campus Life

- There was concern that possibly Priority 2 implied that programs may be shut down. Hiba assured the Committee that that was not the case, nor the intent, and that “programs” meant both academic and non-academic. A suggestion was made to modify the descriptor to read: …a vibrant campus life and strong, high quality, flexibly-delivered programs… [inserting high quality].

Priority 3: A Student-Centered Culture Focused on Student Retention and Success

- A suggestion was made to include the word “process” in the descriptor.
- A suggestion was made for Bullet 5 to include “student veterans.”

A great deal of discussion took place regarding the order of the priorities. Even though Hiba indicated that they were equal, because they are in a list format, the natural tendency is for the reader to think of them in the order of importance. Some suggestions included “reordering” them. In addition to changing the word “priority” to “principle,” other suggestions were made to list the priorities in a graphic such as a wheel with spokes. Another suggestion was to, somehow, make them visual, weaving one another, like cloth, rope, or a braid.

Priority 4: Outstanding Education and Scholarship at Every Level

- Discussion took place regarding the intent of #4 and whether it meant to replace programs with online programs. Hiba indicated that that was not the intent at all. She said that the committee was not privileging new online programs, but responding to student needs. The goal is to create more online options, but not replacements for existing programs. Additional conversation focused on language that would focus on quality of online programs, and an a commitment to develop online programs that build on the quality of student-instructor relationships at this institution. A suggestion was made to add another bullet to that priority; however, it made more sense to address it in Priority #2, Bullet 3.

Priority 5: A Vital Partner to a Thriving, Resilient Community

- A suggestion was made that #5 should be expanded to include the global community. Much discussion took place and it was agreed that the “global community” should be included in Priority 4, rather than 5.

The general consensus of the Committee was to support the overall draft of priorities based on the suggestions provided. Hiba indicated that if anyone add any additional feedback to provide it to her no later than the end of the day on Friday.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.