UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

AAAC
Academic Affairs Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 20, 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

Absent: Marilyn McFarland

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

Provost Report ► Provost Knerr provided some personnel updates regarding the School of Nursing Dean posting, University Outreach Director posting, and the Executive Secretary to the Top Executive posting.

Provost Knerr reported that Regent Weiser recently visited campus and he was intrigued with the financial relationship between Flint and Ann Arbor. He was really engaged with different aspects of the university and has governmental ties.

Provost Knerr announced that the President of Best Buy, who is also an alumni, will be the keynote speaker for Commencement.

He also reported that the Consultant for the Climate Study will arrive on May 14 and work with the Study Group in preparation for the Public Forum on May 15. A question arose whether the information was public and Doug indicated that it was following a latency period.

Doug said that Fawn Skarsten has been doing some interesting work in regard to program review as well as for accreditation purposes. He felt that we were well prepared in terms of HLC but need to continue to be engaged in the process.

Provost Knerr closed by indicating that, following the Grade Management Audit, he has been working with the Registrar in terms of next steps, which will include going to governing faculty to review the high points.

Approval of Minutes ► A motion was made and supported to approve the Minutes of April 6 as written. A motion was made and supported to approve the Minutes of April 13 as written.

Academic Calendar ► Chair Lair disseminated an email between he and Director of HR, Beth Manning, regarding the possibility of beginning the Fall Semester prior to Labor Day. Beth felt that this is a possibility, especially if the contact hours remain the same, but a Memo of Understanding with the LEO union will likely be required.
Dan indicated that the results of the Academic Calendar Guidelines Survey revealed that a longer recess between Fall and Winter was most important to faculty. Members agreed that in order to create a longer recess between Fall and Winter, we may have to start before Labor Day and/or consider combining Spring and Summer as the solution. Dan said that the only thread of objection to beginning earlier was the threat of student participation early on. Most felt that this would not be a problem. In addition, one other prominent statistic emerged that almost 88% of faculty agreed with NOT using the Ann Arbor calendar as a guide, but rather, making modifications to reflect local circumstances.

The final exam schedule was discussed and most agreed that there are too many days scheduled because many faculty do not give a final exam. Conversely, one comment made was that, “For professional programs in the health fields, this [shortening number of final exam days] is very detrimental.”

Much conversation centered on combining Spring and Summer into a flexible 14-week semester. The flexibility would allow faculty to schedule, for instance a 14-week course, two 7-week courses, a 10-week class, or even a 5-week class as long as the same contact hours are included for purposes of Financial Aid. Conversation included the following:

- The question of whether curriculum would have to be reworked if we went to a 14-week semester or some other alternative.
- How to accommodate final exams if a faculty member has two 7-week courses within the 14-week semester.
- May be a negative impact on the hybrid courses because there are not the face-to-face hours to count.

A question arose from the current schedule regarding why Spring term there is no break, but Summer Term there is a 15-minutes break.

AAAC discussed next steps and agreed to survey both students and staff.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.