Governing Faculty Minutes of October 19, 2018

Location: 111 FH

Present: James Schirmer (CAS), Emily Newberry (LIB), Joe Sucic (CAS), Stephanie Roach (CAS), Mickey Doyle (LIB), Stevens Wandmacher (CAS), Judy Haefner (SON), Jan Furman (CAS), Ricardo Alfaro (CAS), Liz Svoboda (LIB), Kazuko Hiramatsu (CAS), Jessica Kelts (CAS), Suzanne Knight (CAS), Jerry Sanders (CAS), Krista Hanson (CAS), Carman Turkelson (SON), Jacob Blumner (CAS), Susan Alcock (PVCAA), Terry Horgan (CAS), Aviva Dorfman (SEHS), Vickie Larsen (CAS), Nicole Broughton (CAS), Stevens Wandmacher (CAS), Matthew Wolverton (LIB), Marcus Paroske (CAS), David Duriancik (CAS), Chris Douglas (CAS), Laura Smith (CHS), Na Linda Zhu (CAS), Connie Creech (SON), Sue Talley (CHS), Denise Cooper (SON), Julie Hollenbeck (CHS), Keith Moreland (SOM), Guluma Gameda (CAS), Murali Mani (CAS), Cathy Larson (CHS), Quamrul Mazumder (CAS), Jennifer Blackwood (CHS), Erica Sherman (CHS), Shan Parker (CHS), Rie Suzuki (CHS)

Guests: Susan Alcock (PVCAA); Mary Mandeville (IRB); Ken Sylvester (ORSP)

Meeting brought into session at 101pm

E. Newberry welcomed everyone back.

**Interim Provost Introduction, Q&A**

Interim Provost Susan Alcock introduced herself as a teacher and scholar, an archaeologist, with a focus on the reconstruction of ancient landscapes and better historical understanding of human-environmental relations. S. Alcock explained how the archaeological mindset tends toward prioritization and valuing of the collaborative process and talking across disciplinary boundaries as well as longterm thinking rooted in history with an eye to the future. S. Alcock acknowledged her own learning process and expressed eagerness in working closely and collaboratively with faculty. Interested in figuring out a way forward together, S. Alcock is fundamentally keen on ensuring faculty have the space, time, and peace to teach, discover, and share new knowledge and rich experiences.

J. Sanders asked about the best way to contact the interim provost regarding faculty concerns about governance, lack of consultation and transparency in administrative decisions, etc. S. Alcock acknowledged the sensitive and volatile space of faculty governance and directed those with standing issues to email Jill Hubbard, Interim Executive Secretary to the Provost, to set up a meeting.
M. Paroske asked what the interim provost discovered about the university’s fiscal health and what strategies might be available to rectify any issues uncovered. S. Alcock noted that the university in general is tight on finances, but that as much funding as possible should be devoted to teaching, research, and the core mission of the academic affairs unit, and that improving student retention can help resolve budgetary issues.

J. Blumner asked about what kinds of things the interim provost might like to see happen beyond the typical goals of the institution. S. Alcock would like to get more faculty talking to each other and noted the promise and potential of MCubed.

IRB
UM-Flint’s IRB chair K. Hiramatsu and ORSP Research Compliance Specialist M. Mandeville introduced themselves and reminded governing faculty of upcoming changes in federal regulations regarding human subjects research. K. Hiramatsu also mentioned possible exemptions, noting that researchers can now perform self-determination; they should also check with relevant academic journals if doing so is acceptable. M. Mandeville stressed that IRB is always open for questions via email or phone call and the possibility of consultation on proposals before official submission.

May 10 minutes approved by acclamation

Standing committee documentation
E. Newberry acknowledged that we are in a period of extended transition, with the chancellor stepping down in July 2019, the possibility of a provost search, and ongoing issues of authority as related to faculty governance. Faculty Council addressed said issues on multiple fronts, speaking with HR, SACUA, and OGC. From everything determined so far, status quo suggests continuing operations.

M. Paroske asked about the issue of quorum and requested reiteration. E. Newberry explained that a prior motion to change quorum to 30% did not pass. Presently, Faculty Council’s interpretation of voting section 3.2.c of the faculty code allows for the conducting of business at governing faculty meetings. E. Newberry acknowledged that this situation is problematic and encouraged governing faculty to send motions for revised code language to Faculty Council.

E. Newberry continued that our present moment signals a time for initiative, for all university-wide standing committees to document past and current practices. Assuming the possibility for new ex officios as related to new provost or new chancellor, it will be important for us to document and present clear boundaries
regarding faculty authority and advisory roles. E. Newberry also noted that such
documentation could be educational tools for new committee members and chairs.

Governing faculty expressed support. A. Dorfman explained that Faculty Council had
in mind some kind of document that explains how and why standing committees do
their work, their essential functions. M. Paroske noted the importance of clarifying
relationships with administrators in advisory roles. J. Sanders suggested including
copies of the senate assembly open governance resolution. Q. Mazumder echoed the
importance of establishing clearer understanding of committee purview.

C. Creech moved that Faculty Council provide a template and working example for a
code of operations for university-wide standing committees. J. Kelts seconded. Motion
carried. J. Schirmer will contact C. Creech and representatives from other units for
current examples. E. Newberry will report back by next governing faculty meeting
(hopefully).

**Climate study**

E. Newberry expressed interest in revisiting the campus climate study, noting issues
not necessarily related to central administration, including unwanted conduct,
questionable employment practices, and work/life balance. E. Newberry also noted
that while there was a 17% response rate overall, 72.6% of tenure track faculty and
49.7% of staff responded. These are statistically significant numbers and E. Newberry
invited discussion of possible mechanisms for addressing the issues mentioned.

S. Roach observed the remarkable response rate from tenure track faculty and
expressed frustration with how quickly the entire climate study was shelved, if not
dismissed, by university administration. C. Creech shared that deans have been asked
to write about what they’ve done in response to the climate study. G. Gumeda noted
that it has been a while and we might need to get a fresh perspective on the climate
study’s results, suggesting Faculty Council look at what is being done and not done
and report back to governing faculty. E. Newberry will reach out to the deans about
their work.

J. Haefner shared that a followup panel of 4-5 people turned in their summary
findings in a report to the chancellor at the end of last semester. J. Furman suggested
Faculty Council expand their agenda to include the interim provost in asking what
the deans have been charged with and by whom. K. Hiramatsu observed that the
administrative staff reorganization in CAS was one possible result of the climate
study. V. Larsen noted that the interim provost is concerned about faculty
engagement and morale, suggesting that a return to the climate study could be a way
to respond positively and put forward a plan to address low morale and engagement
among UM-Flint faculty.

J. Furman shared surprise at how little communication there appeared to be about the climate study and ongoing work. Clearly, conversations are happening, but within committees and not across units, and with no collaborative effort among university leaders. L. Svoboda observed that university standing committees in general are not talking with each other. C. Creech suggested committee minutes be posted to the faculty governance website. V. Larsen stressed that all AAAC agendas and minutes are on that website and encouraged wider distribution of a link to that site – https://libguides.umflint.edu/facultygovernance

E. Newberry observed that there is plenty of work here for Faculty Council to come up with a broader framework and that such work is important.

**AAAC report**

V. Larsen shared that there is a new procedure for academic calendar creation involving the Office of the Registrar, the provost, and other groups (including AAAC in an advisory role). AAAC also started looking at new programs as well as the Registrar’s role in preliminary degree audits.

J. Kelts noted the difference between faculty checking Degree Works and the Registrar performing a degree audit as faculty do not officially determine if/when a student can graduate. Given disparity among units regarding preliminary degree audits, V. Larsen explained that AAAC will push the Registrar to continue conducting audits for all units. A. Dorfman observed that at issue is the authority to confer the degree. S. Roach noted that if Degree Works were more reliable, less error-prone, and inclusive of certification programs, perhaps there would be less of an issue here.

V. Larsen also shared that the search for a new provost is on hiatus until the chancellor search is completed.

**MCubed**

Ken Sylvester presented on MCubed. A recorded presentation is available on the ORSP website.

Meeting adjourned at 2:53pm