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Council of Chairs Meeting, May 2, 2013

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COUNCIL OF CHAIRS, 2012-13

Minutes of the Meeting on May 2, 2013, 3:30 p.m.

Room 402 Drinko Library (plus connections to SC and SOP)

1. Attendance:

Chairs/Division Heads: Mike Castellani (CHM), Harlan Smith (FIN/ECN), Jeff Archambault (ACC/LE), Dan Holbrook (HST), Marty Laubach (SOC/ANT), Allyson Goodman (MC), Jane Hill (ENG), Denise Landry (NUR), Allen Stern (AST), Eldon Larsen (Engineering), Alfred Akinsete (MTH), Byron Clercx (Art & Graphic Design), David Castleberry (Music /Theatre), Cam Brammer (CMM), David Mallory (BSC), Karen McNealy (CD), Fred Mader (MGT/MKT/MIS), Jennifer Perry (CLS), Paula Lucas (CI), John Schloss (SOP), Kim Broedell-Zaugg (SOP), Venkat Gudivada (CS), Lisa Heaton (ESE), Joyce Meikamp (Special Ed), Louis Watts (for Mike Cunningham, LS/ATE), Eric Lassiter (Humanities)

Guest: Marty Amerikaner (Faculty Rep; MUBOG)

2. Mike Castellani called the meeting to order at (roughly) 3:30 p.m.

3. One major topic of discussion was the first (May 1) meeting of the newly-formed ad hoc Budget Working Group (BWG). The Council received two reports: (1) Dean Somerville (COS) sent his notes of the meeting to the Deans and to his Chairs; Mike Castellani forwarded these notes to the Council email list; (2) Dan Holbrook, the Council Rep on the BWG, circulated his set of notes, along with the Budget Sheets discussed at the meeting, to the Council in hardcopy form. After the meeting Dan sent copies of these documents to the entire Council via our email list.

- A. All of the documents referenced above will be attached to the Minutes of this meeting when they are circulated for Council review.
- B. Mike Castellani noted that Dean Somerville put forward a proposal for more faculty participation in the budget process. During the coming year he would like to see President Kopp meet with 10-person group of faculty from each college, on a once-per-month basis, so that 80 faculty would have the opportunity to discuss budgetary matters directly with President Kopp. We have no word, yet, on the status of this proposal.
- C. During the final section of today's meeting, Dan took us through the May 1 BWG meeting and the handouts he provided. Dan emphasized that the meeting was open, friendly, serious, and that the BWG was focused on moving forward. All recommendations to be made will be targeted to the Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget only, and should not be construed as permanent. There's a 6.8 million dollar gap that needs to be closed, now. The BWG understands that this will require a shared sacrifice. And it was agreed that closing the gap primarily via tuition-and-fee increases is not acceptable or desirable; these increases will be kept as small as possible. Dan closed his report with a request for help: he wants to represent the entire Council and desires as much input as we want to provide.
- D. Discussion: (1) Mike Castellani noted that a free exchange of ideas and suggestions should mark BWG proceedings, with every constituency (with its special knowledge and own perspective) free to provide input. The BWG should then focus on picking the ideas it thinks will work best. (2) Marty

Laubach noted that even though all BWG outcomes pertain to Fiscal 2013-14 only, precedent will be set for the future. The BWG should keep in mind that the decisions it makes now will establish the framework within which future budget decisions will be made. (3) Allyson Goodman warned that the consequences for faculty research productivity must be considered when making budget decisions. (4) Cam Brammer and Eldon Larsen noted that FYS is now on the Faculty Senate table for discussion.

4. Another major topic of discussion was the written response of the MUBOG to the published results of the faculty No-Confidence Vote.

A. Marty Amerikaner noted that he met with Dr. Touma (Chair of the BOG) before the April 30 faculty meeting, to discuss the Board's response to the vote. Marty suggested that the Board hold off on releasing its written response until the next BOG meeting, but Dr. Touma wanted to release the response immediately.

B. The content of the Board's response, and its timing, were discussed extensively. Different Council members had different opinions about both: some viewed the letter as dismissive of faculty; some viewed it as containing an olive branch and hence as an opportunity; some viewed it as an example of the particular genre of statements-of-support common at the Executive level in the business world; some viewed it as revealing the difficulties that the Board (dominated by private-sector business leaders from the corporate world) has when dealing with the university environment—characterized by, among other things, traditions of shared governance and faculty autonomy. Dan Holbrook summed up the discussion as follows: We must remember that the Board did refuse to approve President Kopp's request for fully-centralized budgetary authority, and did urge the President to engage with the faculty and other stakeholder constituencies at MU to figure out a better, more participatory way to manage our fiscal difficulties. We faculty did in fact win the opportunity to participate in the budgetary process, going forward. We need to exploit this opportunity and begin the dialogue. We need to learn how to work with the President and work together to create the best set of outcomes for the university as a whole.

C. Mike Castellani met with 5 Deans this past week and put out the following message: We want to participate in the dialogue. We don't expect to be given decision-making authority, but we want a seat at the table as discussions proceed. Mike also emphasized that a window is now open for us, which will close if we don't take advantage of it. So, let's grab the chance we've been given because, if we don't, we'll lose our chance to promote change and growth.

D. Dr. Touma met with Eldon Larsen for lunch this week and would like to continue meeting. Eldon takes this as a positive sign. A window is open.

E. Cam Brammer noted that the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate has been asked to develop an instrument for evaluating President Kopp and the Presidency. This would be the faculty's first such opportunity. Doing this can help us articulate our concerns in a more complete way, and give us an opportunity to provide feedback to the President. She would like the Council to help the Faculty Senate develop this instrument during the fall.

5. Mike Castellani asked the Council to provide him with list of goals and recommendations for the Council, which he can begin working on this summer and which can shape our agenda next year.

A. Eldon Larsen noted that the proposals for (1) the Council to have a non-voting ex officio seat on the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, and (2) a member of the Senate to be designated the Senate's official liaison to the Council, are in the talking phase and will be on the Senate's fall agenda.

B. Should we designate a member to be our liaison to the Associate Deans, and to attend their meetings? Do we want to designate a member to attend the Deans' Meetings? Should we invite the Deans and/or the AD's to send liaison reps to our meetings?

C. Should we ask the Provost to invite more people to the Deans' Meetings? Suggestions included a Council of Chairs Rep, a Faculty Senate Rep, someone from the Graduate Council, and possibly an SGA Rep.

D. The bottom line is that the Council seeks honest, open, trustworthy communications with the upper administration and the other major stakeholders across campus. We seek transparency, too: documents need to be shared, while initiatives and decisions are still in the discussion/planning stages, so that informed input can be provided by all who are affected. We emphasize again that we don't seek decision-making authority or veto power; we do seek to be involved and consulted when new initiatives are being developed. Can the aforementioned liaison arrangements promote this kind of communication environment? Additional ideas are always welcome!

E. Allyson Goodman suggested that we invite the Foundation to be a Council guest next year, to help us learn about the fundraising options available to us and the rules we must abide by as we raise money.

F. Fred Mader noted that one way to improve communications between the faculty and upper administration it to expand the operational mandate of the Dean's Search Committee. A Dean's Search Committee should be allowed to rank-order the finalists it selects, and should the upper administration choose not to select the Committee's first choice, the upper administration should provide the Committee with an explanation. Much discussion over how Dean's Search Committees operate ensued; Mike Castellani agreed that this was a topic he will bring up at some point in the future during a meeting with either the President or Provost.

6. The Council learned that Byron Clercx is leaving MU for UCF this fall. Byron has been an active, thoughtful, engaged member of the Council all year, and will be missed. Thank You, Byron! We wish you the best of luck in your new endeavors.