UMKC Faculty Senate

Meeting of 2 October

DRAFT Minutes

**Present**: Ebersole; Ward-Smith; Fieldman; McArthur; Stancel; Wyckoff; Plamann; Burnett; Holder; Ellinghausen; Grieco; Dilks; Richardson; van de Liefvoort; Solose; Morehouse; McCall; Butner; Luppino; Sykes Berry; Pennington; Gerkovich; Flowers; Kumar; Igwe; Bethman. Excused: Nickel. Absent: Petrie; O’Brien; Hermanns;Krantz.

Information and announcements:

Welcome to new Senator Viviana Grieco, History (College of Arts and Sciences), newly elected to replace Mona Lyne.

All faculty received an email today (2 October 2012) from System President Timothy Wolfe concerning the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCQT) and its request for syllabi from schools of education and related disciplines under state Sunshine laws. The UM System considers syllabi to be intellectual property and has turned down the en masse request, though individual faculty are free to make their own decisions concerning their own materials. NCQT has filed suit against the System as of 1 October, claiming violation of the Sunshine Law. Both Chancellor Morton and Provost Hackett, along with Chair Ebersole, emphasize that this is an important faculty-rights issue going forward.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

The minutes from the meeting of 18 September were approved as submitted.

**Chancellor Morton:**

President Wolfe indicated in July that he is considering taking 5 – 10% of state allotment to the System “off the top” for use for strategic initiatives; more recently this has become a certainty, though the specific percentage has not yet been decided. Even if state funding does not itself decline, the effect will be a reduction of funds to the individual campuses; thus Chancellor Morton believes UMKC must make the most of such strategic-investment opportunities. He argues that we are well-placed to do so, pointing out that all capital and other growth projects on our campus have been squarely in line with our long-term strategic plan, something that has attracted positive notice from both President Wolfe and from the Curators. Further, of the 14 4-year public universities in Missouri, UMKC is number 1 in enrollment growth, with a 3.3% increase, and students increasingly report satisfaction with their educational and campus experiences. Through the Faculty Senate, Chancellor Morton thanks all faculty and staff for the favor UMKC enjoys in the eyes of the System and the Curators.

During questioning, Chancellor Morton adds that there is as yet no allotment mechanism for the strategic funds, nor any knowledge about when the President would release any such funds. Nor is there real clarity as to what constitutes strategic initiatives, though the Chancellor again suggests that our actions would seem to be in line with what the system identifies as strategic planning. Finally, to the concern about the different impacts to campus budgets depending upon whether 5% or 10% is to be held back, Chancellor Morton affirms that he himself would be “shocked and amazed” were the amount to be as high as 10%.

The Chancellor also thanks those who have communicated with him, via survey and during the many meetings he has held, about issues concerning UMKC’s potential name change. No decision has yet been made, but he expects resolution soon.

**Provost Hackett:**

Regarding Amendment 2, the Provost refers to an article that was linked through UMatters, “Is the Devil in the Details of the Recently Passed “Right-to-Pray” Amendment to the Missouri Constitution?”; the article gives useful details about the finer print of the amendment. While the amendment was approved by voters in August and took effect on 8 September, Provost Hackett argues against strong reaction at this time, saying that, first, there are already cases in court, and second, that the System’s legislative liason does not expect significant effect at the college level, but rather that the amendment’s language regarding curricula and course content will primarily affect K-12. The Kansas City law firm of Husch Blackwell, already known for pro bono work and for its civil-liberties defense, has been retained as outside counsel. Chair Ebersole adds that IFC has been told that it will likely be 2 ½ - 3 years before legal feedback begins to flow. Even so, the System’s general counsel, Steve Owen, encourages faculty to ask questions freely, suggesting that any given individual probably voices the concerns of others at the same time.

Provost Hackett speaks briefly about administrating the online-learning program. Originally the position was held by a part-time director, but in considering how to move forward, the provost has decided to seek a full-time vice provost for online learning, as this person’s interactions with and responsibility to the faculty will be considerable. It is also more likely we will find a stronger candidate, someone better equipped to “move us forward” several steps. The System will fund half of the expenses associated with this position for two years.

**Cindy Pemberton, Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs**

The Higher Learning Commission regularly reviews its accreditation process. The Commission has approved new criteria to go into effect in January 2013; UMKC’s next formal site visit is in 2019, and we will therefore be assessed on the new criteria. There is pressure upon all accreditation bodies to become more rigorous; peer review will be one agent of that rigor for the Higher Learning Commission. Dr. Pemberton will begin to train as a peer reviewer in November; her experience will certainly help inform our own accreditation efforts. With new criteria come also a new process, the “open pathway;” it unfolds across two phases lasting ten years. In the first phase, an institution submits a proposal targeting a quality improvement emphasis area; in the second, the “assurance prowess” phase, the institution provides evidence about how the criteria are being met. Overall, these significant changes are designed to be more relevant and less burdensome to the institution. The links below lead to further information:

[www.hlcommission.org/](http://www.hlcommission.org/)

<http://www.hlcommission.org/Information-for-Institutions/new-criteria-for-accreditation.html>

<http://www.hlcommission.org/Information-for-Institutions/open-pathway.html>

**RooWriter**

Senator Stephen Dilks introduces Nathan Oyler (Chemistry) and Lindsey Martin-Bowen (WEPT Coordinator) to present a proposal for replacing the current WEPT with a new instrument, the RooWriter. This is a “directed self-placement assessment” designed to provide students with individualized information about their ability to use reading and writing as tools for engaging in critical discourse analysis. The test, in the form of an essay, may be taken multiple times; as a component of the Gen Ed program, it must be taken at least once after Discourse 2 has been completed, when it will become part of the assessment of a student’s competence. Unlike WEPT, RooWriter is more a diagnostic than a gateway; because it is entirely on line, a student can access it at any time. Each time effort will be reviewed/graded by a team with knowledge of the discipline that is the subject of the essay. This allows a student to target means of improvement and to gear course enrollment toward that end; faculty can also better evaluate a student’s critical and writing abilities, increasing the opportunities for individualized teaching and learning. The proposal, as well as a full set of instructions and reading packets that a student reads prior to writing the essay, can be found on line. The proposal is to be voted on in the Faculty Senate meeting of 16 October.

To a question regarding the cost, Professor Oyler says that RooWriter will cost approx. $33,800, slightly less than WEPT. He also reiterates that RooWriter does offer some evaluation components, in that instructors and advisors can use a student’s score to assess writing ability and to guide that student’s further development.

**Office of Research Services:**

Lawrence Dreyfus (Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development), Ted Knous (Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Institutional Official), and Maureen Hannoun (Director of Sponsored Programs), present an overview of the Office of Research Services. Vice Chancellor Dreyfus describes the five major subdivisions of the office (heads of these subdivisions can be found on the ORS website,\_\_\_); currently one of these, the Center for Clinical and Translational Research, lacks a director. Candidates will be interviewed in October and November.

The office’s guiding principles are stated as follows (also from the ORS website):

***Vision:***

The office of research and economic development supports and promotes a culture of inquiry that is based on the premise of research and scholarship.

***Mission:***

To provide infrastructure and human capital to support and promote research and economic development at UMKC.

***Goals:***

* Achieve UMKC's objectives in Research & Economic Development.
* Become a regional leader in translational research: "Ideas to Innovation"

***Strategies:***

* Focus research efforts on data defined core strengths, present trends, and future opportunities
* Encourage cross disciplinary initiatives to drive innovation
* Support and promote student research activities through program development and resource investment.
* Promote campus and private sector engagement around entrepreneurial opportunities and activities
* Increase campus awareness of R&E development resources and opportunities.
* Promote and financially support ORS practices that streamline, facilitate, and improve the quality of external grant submissions and their likelihood for success
* Help develop campus policies that promote sustainable research investment and promote productive collaborations.

***Immediate priorities:***

* Complete a strategic plan for research.
* Implement recommendations made by the external research advisory consultants who visited in the spring, in cooperation with the Life and Health Sciences Committee.

Vice Chancellor Dreyfus concludes his remarks by offering a return visit should the Senate wish.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.