

Minutes

Faculty Senate

May 3, 2011

Plaza Room, Administrative Center, 3 p.m.

Present: Ebersole, Ward-Smith, McArthur, Stancel, Burnett, Wyckoff, Plamann, Gardner, Pick, Baker, Peng, Mirkin, Bloemker, Thiagarajan, Madison-Cannon, Sherburn, Rice, Wang, Nilsson, Luppino, Alleman, Yang, Hermanns, Krantz, Stanley, Fincham, Johnston, Bethman

Excused: Mutti-Burke, Holt, Hinds

Absent: Durig

Guests: Chancellor Leo Morton, Provost Gail Hackett, Vice President of Human Resources Betsy Rodriquez, Ken Ferguson (Law)

Welcome at 3 p.m. and meeting called to order by the Chair, Gary Ebersole.

Informational Items

- Chair Ebersole took this opportunity to offer the Chancellor thanks for guiding the University through troubled waters for another year. And kudos to the Provost, for the way she handled the incident with Judy Ancel. It was a situation that involved issues of freedom of speech, intellectual fairness and dealing with the media.
- Muddy's Coffee Shop is undergoing change, Oliver Burnett is leaving that business. Oliver is a UMKC graduate of the College, he is currently President of the Friends of the Library and has endowed several scholarships. He's turning the coffee shop over to one of his younger employees. If you have a chance, thank Oliver.
- At the end of this meeting, there will be a closed session to consider a request for two honorary doctoral degrees for the December ceremony.
- The Dean's evaluations are up on blackboard. Let your faculty and schools know about that. They will be up for one month.
- The campus has held an election, one for the IFC position that's open and then the faculty's consideration of revised definition of voting faculty for campus level positions. Those results will be known by noon tomorrow.

Chancellor's Remarks: Leo Morton

The Chancellor reported that this year had been a pleasure for him. He mentioned the students who participate in free enterprise, having won again at the regional competition in Chicago; the student athletes, who continue to perform in the classroom and on the court, the tennis team and the golf team won their championships. Student athletes have an average 3.12 GPA. He also had praise for the increased research productivity among other things. From a revenue standpoint, the University is exceeding budget expectations for the year, despite spending more than anticipated.. Going into next year will be a challenge, but we've also talked about ways to approach that. Enrollment numbers are ahead of where they were last year. Student credit hours are up six percent. Head count is up as well.

Summer is going to be up over the prior year. All of those indicators look good. He is still planning to support a merit increase for faculty and staff. He is constantly out in front of potential donors, and at this point, while there are more asks out than we've ever had in our history (\$ 68 million), \$ 23 million has already come in; with \$ 2 million for School of Education and a million and a half dollars for the School of Medicine to endow faculty in pathology. Because we have to position ourselves so that our good work is better known in the community, we are searching for a new Vice Chancellor in Marketing and Communications. There are some excellent candidates. We should be in the position to announce in the very near future. This campus will also be a mess with all the construction.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Senator Fincham and seconded by IFC Representative McArthur.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Senator Wyckoff and seconded by Senator Tom, approved.

Provost's Remarks: Gail Hackett

The Provost explained that what happened with the Labor Studies issue has had a chilling effect, not just on faculty but on students, who are understandably upset. Students' educational experience was ruined, that was their last class. Not to mention, students are afraid to speak up in class. They are concerned because employers are seeing them on these tapes. Nobody seems to be concerned about the students. This class recording was a streaming video, password only, and it was a student who purposefully went in and obtained this video ripping off of a live streamed password video. Her office sent a statement to the Labor Studies program offering assistance. Judy Ancel requested campus police be posted at the outside door of the class and nothing happened on our campus. A couple of students asked that their names be removed from the student directory. Very early in the Fall it will be appropriate to follow up and discuss with faculty the issue of recording in classrooms, and giving guidance for faculty: on their rights and suggestions for what to do if there is disruption in classrooms. There is a statement on our main website, but it's also been shared with the media. We did file formal complaint, because originally it was on YouTube, and supposedly they took it down.

Chair Ebersole explained that this incident was by the same journalist who got the African American woman in the labor department fired. Rather than responding irrationally, Gail dealt with it rationally and carefully.

The Provost also mentioned that she hopes to announce the appointment of the Interim Dean of the College of A&S within the next week before everybody scatters. She also reported that her office has completed the recommendations for P & T reviews.

Retirement Plan Project: Betsy Rodriquez

Vice President Rodriquez reviewed the final recommendation of the Special Advisory committee: that if after thorough review and study of the viability of the current plan, they would be okay with moving to a new retirement plan for new employees only. The committee conditionally recommended a combination plan, one that shares risk between employee and employer, which is about half the benefit of the current benefit plan. If the Curators talk about it in June, the soonest it could take effect would be October 2012. The committee also stated that the Board of Curators should put in writing and officially

announce their commitment to the current plan. Other important findings were first, to provide full funding of annual required contribution, second, to pay off unfunded liability over time, and third, to continue the stabilization fund with the primary purposes of minimizing employee contributions to the Defined Benefit plan. A stabilization fund is the difference between seven percent and what the actuary says we need for the year, which allows the fund to build up for a rainy day. A few other recommendations: strive to maintain employee contributions to be as low as possible, with consistency between the current plan and any future plans, develop and support a strategic employee communications plan to foster understanding and appreciation of benefits, and future plans must include options to reduce employee investment and other retirement risk (e.g., auto-enrollment, default to highest contribution levels, etc)

Secretary Burnett asked whether the Curators will have the information to decide whether or not the current plan is viable.

Senator Luppino expressed concern that the stabilization fund as currently structured can be used for other purposes, not just for the retirement fund.

Rodriquez responded that 60% of employees do not vest, and it's a much smaller number of faculty. Only 17% retire with more than 20 years of service. Shows how up and down required contributions have been, mostly driven by investment performance. The university was applying seven percent and extra one percent going into the stabilization fund. The actuary sets, then predicts what will be needed for the next five years. Starting this July, it will be 8.3%. Some employees pay one percent, some pay two, and we'll break even. Starting next year, assuming these are close, we won't have enough money. The one and seven don't get us to those numbers that are projected. Rodriquez showed a chart with the differences that wipe the stabilization fund out. Every one percent is ten million dollars. If we were to use the stabilization fund for something else, we'll have a problem. Let's say the number comes down to eight, what if the same event happens in two years, but we'd only have ten million because we wiped out the stabilization fund. Rodriquez believes that it is quite clear we need it.

Senator Luppino responded that he meant not just the current the stabilization fund, but forever. He noted that at a key November 1 meeting one of the Curators talked of a projected 17% required contribution at a time when new numbers had already been released showing a less dramatic increase, and expressed concern. He noted that the contribution is about ten million dollars a point. He also noted, in connection with his concern about the stabilization fund not being expressly limited to supporting the retirement plan, that, the investment return has been better than eight percent, so, going the other direction, if in this and subsequent years the investment return in over 8% and there's a dent in the requirement contribution, then presumably more can go into the stabilization fund to provide the money ready to deal with subsequent dips. But if it's spent elsewhere then we won't have it.

Senator Wyckoff said that this potential change is based on a worst case scenario made to look worse than it actually is.

Rodriquez responded that the Plan was growing at faster rate than university budget, and any change big or small has an impact on the budget. A second consideration is whether this is the right kind of plan for a population that doesn't stay with an employer for a full career?

Senator Luppino, citing a Fall presentation by System HR to the Curators, contended that the “primary” motivation for the change is to shift the risk, then the mobility issue. On the mobility issue, he urged that the Curators see a comparison of outcomes on employees of varying pay and years of service and with particular plans.

Rodriquez stated that the committee did not look at making changes to the current plan. She explained that those assumptions are tested every year, and every five years the assumptions reviewed, and those have held true for almost twenty years. She also explained reasoning to the effect that we’d all love to say we got 3 or 4 percent salary increases. Some people do have huge salary increases; they may one year get ten percent or move from Manager to Vice Chancellor, it’s the way to spread increase over the whole group. It’s a typical calculation based on data over a lifetime. She reminded the Senate that faculty are only 4000 out of 19000 people.

Senator Luppino responded that the committees with which he is involved have taken all that into account and their results raise a legitimate question, that it’s possible there is an overstatement of salary increases in the actuarial assumption (he pointed to the large actuarial gain in recent years from actual salary increases coming in at lower than assumed). In response to a question from Vice President Rodriquez he noted that he was not at all questioning the competence of the lead actuary, but was asking that we make sure the actuary has the most current information to revisit the reasonableness of the salary increase assumptions.

The Chair thanked Vice President Rodriquez for attending our meeting and reminded the Senate that the next Board of Curators meeting is in June. He extended an open invitation to her to return and answer questions. He praised the very interested and involved Faculty Senate group, and ad hoc committee that has helped assess these proposals. The questions we have been asking are informed questions.

Report from NCAA Faculty Representative on Athletics: Ken Ferguson

The Faculty Athletics Representative is the information gap in respect to academic and faculty issues. It’s appointed by the Chancellor and reports to the Chancellor. A position designated by the NCAA. The position was established to make sure the Athletic Department remains an integral part of the institution and the student athlete an integral part of the student body. The NCAA requires that the athletic department monitor the success of the student athlete. One of the ways we’re able perform function is through the Intercollegiate Athletic Committee, made up of subcommittees, to look at all aspects of the Athletic Department. The NCAA requires communication between admission, registrar and athletic department. UMKC has had a meaningful relationship between these three offices. One of the other subcommittees is Compliance. Tutoring services for athletes, methodologies for identifying at risk student enables university to provide service available to any other student. Our graduation success rate is 83% which is about fifteen percent higher than the general graduation rate for institutions. We did look back at 2003 graduation rates and notice a differential between men and women. This will be looked into.

The Chair explained that this is the group officially established in 2009 and is just now giving the Senate an initial report, when it really should be annual.

Vote on the Nominees for the two Grievance Resolution Panels (GRP)

- #1: David Achtenberg (Law) & Hali Fieldman (Conservatory)
- #2: Ann Smith (Biological Sciences) & Alex Holsinger (A&S)

Chair Ebersole explained that the new Grievance Procedure needs two panels of two faculty each plus a designee from the Provost's Office, that review faculty grievances. Two panels are needed for two reasons: 1) if two cases came up simultaneously, the work is intensive, and 2) there may be cases in which a member has to recuse her or himself. Need to have a pool from which to step in and serve on the panel.

Senator Krantz moved to confirm, Senator Yang seconded the motion. All approved (23).

Financial Report: Cathleen Burnett

The Secretary presented the Financial statement is before you. Senator Krantz moved to accept the statement and Senator Wyckoff seconded the motion. Approved.

Other Committee Reports

Grievance Panel Hearings:

Nancy Stancel said she didn't have additional information to report. The impression is that grievances may be down because of the work of the Faculty Ombudsperson. Chair Ebersole said the new process incentivizes early mediation and will ask the Faculty Ombudsperson to give the Senate a report.

Academic Issues: No report

Administrative Issues:

Vice Chair Ward-Smith reported on the work of the committee: the Dean's evaluations, and the proposed change to definition of voting faculty are being handled through Blackboard. She would like to see a bigger response rate.

Senator Stanley expressed thanks to the entire faculty from the General Education Oversight Committee for passing the learning outcomes. She felt that the support of the Senate made a great deal of difference.

Executive Session

The Faculty Senate went into Executive Session to consider a proposal for an Honorary Doctorate for December graduation.