

Report

The Voice of the U.M.K.C. Faculty

January 18th & February 1st, 2000

Note: This Report covers two meetings. On January 18th we were supposed to meet with Provost Smelstor. Immediately before the meeting she cancelled. We were suspicious of her motives, but it turned out that she was genuinely sick. Of course the Senate wished her well. Apparently she is now recovered and the Senate hopes to meet with her in the near future.

The Senate did meet with Craig Klimczak, the new Chief Information Officer. He is still working towards the development of a comprehensive IT (Information Technology) plan for the campus, and is trying to both restructure the IT sector, formerly divided among different (and warring) Vice Chancellors, and to assess the needs of the campus. The Senate urged him to work with the faculty in deciding on their needs, and said he should not claim to be a deity who could single-handedly make wise decisions for the faculty. He seemed amenable to the advice.

Incoming Chancellor Gilliland wanted to meet with the Faculty Senate even before she officially came to the campus. A meeting has been set for February 15

Arghhh... An Error

A mathematician (Larry Eifler) noticed that the **average salary** for Associate Professors on the UMKC campus was below the average salary of either male or female associate professors. He didn't seem to be persuaded by my observation that there might be a third category bigger than the other two. A check of the web site showed that my figures were wrong. The correct figures are that for an Associate Professor on the UMKC campus the average salary is \$55,500. Males have an average salary of \$55,700 and the average female salary is \$55,100. All figures are from 1999.

Dean Durig (College) wrote that UMKC already has a **post-tenure review** process in place, and thought that the system ought to be told of it. It was initiated by Chancellor Memorandum #77 (12/1/89, revised 5/29/98). The process calls for annual review of tenured regular faculty by a unit or department review committee.

Discontent

There was some discussion of the Senate Report of December 14, 1999, which noted (in the Secretary's personal comments) that the current administration seemed reluctant to

discuss many important issues with the faculty or Senate. The Report was overwhelmingly approved. There was also a discussion of the role of the Senate Budget Committee. It was supposed to be a part of the priority setting process, but has been squeezed out of that role, and the administration seems to want to simply tell the committee about decisions that it has already made. The Committee and the Senate did not feel that role was especially valuable, and wants to discuss the issue with the Provost. It was also noted that budget decisions had very short deadlines, with little opportunity for discussion. The process seemed to be chaotic and bizarre, with little information and no meaningful consultation. The administration often seems to value and trust only itself.

The Senate wasn't only in a negative mood. It liked and respected Larry Dietz, and Senators were unhappy that he was moving to another University. We regretted his departure but wished him well.

Elections: We need nominations for the Senate officers and the IFC. Nominations can be made directly to Barbara Glesner Fines (Law) either by e-mail (glesnerb@umkc.edu) or snail-mail, and will be accepted until March 15th.¹ We'll be able to hold the elections after the Spring break, in early April. It was noted that we have not had campaigns for Senate offices but, since many faculty members did not know the people running for office, and since the Senate officers are often called upon to speak for the faculty, it might be good if candidates briefly stated their positions. This issue will be discussed further.

Odds & ends: Nominations for Honorary Degrees should be made by the units.... Emeritus status is not granted by the administration but by faculty.... There was some concern about the new articulation agreement and general education requirements and we asked Prof. Dale Neuman (Pol. Sci.), who is a member of the committee discussing these issues, to give a report to the Senate.... There was concern expressed about the new IT plans for the University. People were especially worried about rumors of centralized control, standardized PCs, decisions from the top, rules that forbid taking university computers home, and about the use of the student computer fee. We were anxious to talk with the new IT director about these issues.

Meeting of February 1, 2000

IT issues: Discussion with Craig Klimczak

The new Chief Information Officer (CIO) discussed his plans with the Senate. He said he was new to the campus and was still trying to figure out what was needed. Within the

¹ Self-nominations are accepted. Faculty nominating others should have the nominated faculty member's approval. The officer positions are Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Two representatives to the IFC are also to be elected. All positions are 2-year terms. According to the Faculty Bylaws "Those who are eligible to serve as representatives shall be those regular faculty whose current appointments involve less than half-time administrative responsibilities with the University."

IT structure he wanted to reorganize, flatten the hierarchy and eliminate duplication. He said we were not likely to get new IT money, so to move ahead we needed to utilize current resources more efficiently. He thought functions were duplicated, and too many people within the IT structure were generalists. This led to inefficient and slow service. There were many common inter-unit services that could be consolidated. He also thought instructional computing courses for faculty should be expanded.

There needs to be an assessment of the present computing capacity of the campus, and a survey is being done. Also many of the buildings on campus had to be upgraded for the new communication media. Additionally, the problem of doing more with less meant that choices might have to be curtailed. Perhaps people would need to standardize platforms or software - did it really make that much difference to people whether they had a Dell or a Gateway or a Mac? Additionally there would be fewer support people, so this function would have to be streamlined.

There were a number of Senate questions and comments:

- ❖ Although the CIO kept saying that he wanted to plan with, not for, faculty they had not yet been involved in the planning process. People liked different computers and software, and didn't want choices made for them by a bureaucracy that decided upon the "best" package. It wasn't enough to sporadically inform faculty groups about what was going on. There needed to be knowledgeable and permanent faculty committees that understood both the computing problems and faculty needs in their units. These committees needed to be intimately involved in the priority setting and planning process. The CIO said he wanted to form an IT Advisory Council with 2 Senators and 2 members of the Administrative Council. Senators felt this was inadequate, and Craig asked them to recommend an alternative structure. The Senate placed this issue on its Agenda for the next meeting.
- ❖ The Senate questioned some of the priorities that had been set and thought different issues were important to the faculty. Klimczak argued that sometimes there were strong reasons for doing things in a different order than the faculty would like. Grants might be available, for example, or certain infra-structure needs might need to be met. This issue should be explored by the computing committee structure.
- ❖ The new CIO thought that too many projects had been started without adequate plans for maintenance. This was particularly true in areas that involved student computer fees. He wanted to form a Student Computer Fee Task Force, with 4 faculty and 6 students, to set priorities in student related areas like e-mail, labs and classrooms. These programs would need to be funded off the top. Funding for some computer labs has been delayed but it was not intended that the funds would be lost.

The meeting was a friendly one. Klimczak is genial, and seemed eager to make changes. He was aware that he could not act alone. The Senate, in turn, was one of the original

groups that supported the creation of the CIO position to coordinate the various campus IT functions. We weren't hostile, but wanted to create a structure that would ensure that changes would help the campus rather than hindering it.²

General Education Requirements

A Steering Committee has been meeting to coordinate the general education requirements in the higher education institutions in the state [all public institutions and

² Craig Klimczak sent the following letter to the Report after he saw the summary of his comments:

As you have stated I am still very much in an assessment phase of the IT situation here at UMKC.... In being selected for this position I have made implementation of the ITEC Strategic Plan a top priority. That plan called for many actions including the development of a consolidation plan for various existing IT organizational units including the Student Computer Fee Committee and the creation of an IT Advisory Council....

I have focused on developing the consolidation plan. To date most of the work on the consolidation plan has been internal to the IT organizational units. However, this will change in the future....

This proposed organizational model would flatten the hierarchy and eliminate duplication. It would consolidate like functions and create specialty groups. This is being done to address the problems of duplication, inefficiencies, poor service, and staff overload. Since we are unlikely to get new IT money, we need to use current resources more efficiently.... This plan is still under development and will soon be released for comment and review....

I went on to suggest that... standardization could be used to cut total support costs and get more computers for our money. I questioned the value gained from individually selecting and buying computers based on brand preference or short term cost savings.... I acknowledge that forcing 100% compliance would be unrealistic and counter productive, but we should seek to maximize where we can.

I also mentioned the "Baselines For Success" project. This is a campus wide technology census covering four application areas, employee computer access, division IT support, classroom IT capabilities, and network readiness....

We talked about the formation of the IT Advisory Council and how it might relate to various constituencies on campus. The plans for this group... call for participation from the Faculty Senate, Academic Council, Staff Assembly, Student Government Association, Distributed IT Liaison Council, External IT Liaisons, and IS organization. I welcome comments from the Faculty Senate and encourage the formation of a Senate technology subcommittee. There are many existing technology committees within administrative and academic units. I see the IT Advisory Council working in unison with these groups to review IT policies, initiatives, standards, and priorities and recommend them for approval by the University's officers....

The ITEC Strategic Plan called for consolidation of the Student Computer Fee Committee under the CIO.... The Chancellor is establishing a task force to review the process by which the student fees are distributed and to make recommendations.... The Chancellor and I are in the process of forming this task force and are looking to convene a task force of 4 faculty members and 6 students.

Some of the Senators wanted to know what problems... I [saw] with the current student computer fee process. I mentioned... several complaints.... First, I feel that certain essential student computing needs are being neglected by the process. Essential student computing needs such as e-mail, remote access services, general purpose student labs, and classrooms need to be funded off the top with planning for ongoing maintenance and repair. It is unfair to the students working in the computer labs to be the lowest paid student employees on campus. Second, the current process would try to fund as many projects as possible but would not take into account recurring support and maintenance. Third, the point funding of projects doesn't encourage strategic alignment or leveraging technology investments. More objectives could be met if we took advantage of existing facilities and larger labs. It takes just as many employees to staff a small lab as it does a larger one. This is just another opportunity for leveraging resources and meeting more needs. These are areas in which I believe the process can be improved.

[Additionally] there is a "Technology and Curriculum Task Force". This... was convened by Interim Provost Smelstor to review the role and function of the Technology for Learning and Teaching Center. Ted Sheldon and I will chair this task force to look at strategies for Faculty Technology Development and support.... This task force is half technologist and half faculty. It is not connected to the student computer fee task force nor the IT Advisory Council.

those private institutions that wished to sign on]. Members of the task force were a mixed group: faculty, provosts, advisors, honors directors, people involved with evening college programs, campus faculty senates and representatives of writing programs.

Professor Dale Neuman is a representative from UMKC and gave a brief report to the Senate. He said the process was an open one, with a great deal of discussion, and the final result was not too different from what now exists at UMKC. Institutional autonomy had been preserved, and the enumeration of specific courses had been avoided. Goals were to be met, but schools could meet the goals in their own way. (This allowed the community colleges room to experiment with their curriculums.) There was a core block of 42 hours, as opposed to the 39 hours in the old system. Institutions could add to the core block (as with the College's Cluster Course requirement) as long as the courses were also required for students who had enrolled on the campus as freshmen ("native students"). Students don't need an AA degree to transfer courses certified as meeting the core requirements, but if they transfer with less than 42 hours the courses may be evaluated on a course by course basis. There is an appeal process and a four-year phase in period. As is true under the current system, the sending institution certifies that its courses meet the core requirements. Neuman noted that the transfer system from the community colleges had worked well, and students who came into some four year schools with an AA degree had a greater success rate than native students.

Odds & Ends: The Senate Report had not yet been written, so it couldn't be approved. ☺ The IFC is considering the academic calendar. Generally UMKC faculty preferred that the Spring break come in the middle of the term.³

Respectfully submitted,

Harris Mirkin,
Faculty Secretary

³ The later time is dictated by UMR's felt need to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in grand fashion. Since the Video Network is coordinated in Rolla this creates problems for those courses that depend on it. Senators felt that other arrangements could be made for those students on the UMKC campus.