

Faculty Senate Minutes
Tuesday April 6, 2010
Plaza Room, Administrative Center, 3-5pm

Present: Ebersole, McArthur, Davies, Holsinger, Luppino, Wyckoff, Humrichouser, Alleman, Pick, Johnston, Bethman, Dinakarandian, Nilsson, Krause, Plamann, Hopkins, Rice, Carbone, Yang, Williams, Ziskin, Madison-Canon, Krantz

Visitors: Chancellor Leo Morton, Provost Gail Hackett, Vice-Chancellor for Research Lynda Bonewald, Barb Shelly (Editorial Board KC Star),

Excused: Stancel, Gardner, Foxworth, Ward-Smith, Fieldman, Beard,

Absent: Potts, Hunter, Fincham

Welcome-3:30, Called to order by the Chair Gary Ebersole

Informational Items

The “all faculty” meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 8, at the Chancellor’s Residence. The general format for the meeting will be to spend about an hour for lunch and greeting and meeting others. A 30-minute session for a report on the Senate and IFC will follow, plus a 30-minute session focusing on faculty issues & concerns. There is no formal agenda. At this time there have been about 75 people who have responded.

There are 12 Commencement ceremonies scheduled for spring. Chair Ebersole noted that he tries to go to as many as possible, but he needs more volunteers to attend and to represent the faculty. Several have already volunteered. If anyone would like to volunteer for other ceremonies, please let Chair Ebersole know.

Bob Schubert announced that the annual FACET symposium is Friday April 9, from 8 am to 3 pm at the Kauffman Foundation. Even if you are unable to attend, it will be streamed from the FACET website and will be archived for future viewing.

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes for March 16, 2010

Senator Dinakarandian noted that where he is quoted as referring to “service,” he was actually referring to workload. Also, under the report by the Nominations Committee, a change needs to be made: there was one nomination for secretary.

Senator Wyckoff moved to approve the minutes with the above mentioned corrections, Senator Johnston seconded, all were in favor.

Chancellor’s Report

Chancellor Morton noted that there will be a letter from President Forsee at your desk when you get back. This letter seeks to put into perspective all of the challenges that the UM System has been facing. Chancellor Morton wanted to say “thank you” to the faculty. As a university, we are responding well to the current problems. Retention and recruitment have improved; there has been a net increase on revenue because of enrollment increases; and expenses have been managed well. This is something that needs to continue into the future. What he has seen, and what he has heard from the state, is that the university receives about \$84 million in support from the state. This coming fiscal year, a 5.2% cut can be expected from that support at a minimum. Other inflationary costs, like benefits, utilities, and insurance, are going up, so there is a little larger challenge facing the university. If we are able to maintain this prudent fiscal behavior and employ some other initiatives to absorb other inflationary costs, then we can work through the current problems. However, 2012 is of greater concern, but we don’t know exactly what to expect from it yet.

There is a Board of Curator’s meeting coming up in the next week. In that meeting, they will talk about the 2011 budget challenges and how to position the UM System to face 2012. Chancellor Morton wanted to be open about that, so the Senate knows what he is working on.

A question was asked about some of the initial plans for absorbing increased costs. Chancellor Morton replied that, to take one example, utility costs are increasing. His instructions to the support organization that manages them are to find ways to absorb those costs, meaning cuts. While there has been continued support for academic units, there was a budget cut to support units of about 8% . Expenses are being managed across the university, but it is a discipline that is ongoing.

Senator Hopkins asked about how bad things are looking for the following fiscal year. Chancellor Morton noted that about 45 minutes prior to the meeting, Governor Nixon received questions about 2012. It was noted that there is a fiscal cliff out there as federal stabilization dollars disappear. If the state can make \$500 million in cuts in 2011 and shift \$300 million to 2012, then it will make the cliff less steep. What the governor is talking about is a top-level view of the economy. What we can count on is that this governor recognizes higher education is a priority. If his current deal goes through, then we will be the only state in the US that has held tuition flat for two consecutive years. If the next cut is larger, then they would allow for an increase in state tuition. We may know more about this by mid-May.

Provost Hackett followed Chancellor Morton’s comments saying that one of the things that they have discussed is that it would be wise to put together a group composed of faculty, staff, and representatives from support units to take a look university wide at what we can do to streamline university operations and move forward in these potentially tough times. We have a strategic plan, which is going to be implemented, so we don’t want to lose momentum. We want to continue to grow in areas that are in alignment with the plan. It’s good to look ahead to options for the future. With advice from the University Budget Committee, we will be putting together such a committee. Chancellor Morton continued by saying that this probably won’t be the last time that the State of Missouri will make cuts. The University has to figure out what the most prudent thing is to do, which isn’t to continue just reacting to what the state is doing. He noted that we should be driven by something else that is more important to us, which is to be the kind

of university that we want to be, and have the structure we want. This committee will be focused on defining this, so we can get past what the State is doing. Senator Luppino added that the UBC has spent a lot of time on this. It is a very inclusive process that includes faculty at all steps and very current information. He thinks everyone will see it as a very collaborative process, not an easy one, but everyone is involved.

Senator Hopkins raised a point that this talk about proceeding without regard to the State seems to be moving us towards becoming a private university. Chancellor Morton said that we can't afford to do that, and that's not what they are considering. If we improve retention by 1% then it is worth about \$750,000 to the bottom line. If we were at the leading edge of a peer group, then the question to ask would be what that would look like. If we start using that as a target, then we can understand what the best in class would be like and can start looking at where we're going. Provost Hackett said that there are examples of this. Her alma mater, Penn State, is as close as you can be to being private, but state institutions across the country are suffering from this. Increases in tuition at public universities are related to a decline in state support. Hopefully we won't be declining much more. Like other universities have done, we have to be a little more self-reliant, but we cannot give up on trying to obtain our share of state support.

Senator Wyckoff asked if it would be possible to hear from the UMKC Foundation in regards to how we are doing. Chancellor Morton said that is not a problem. It's still a start-up, but he knows that he will be spending a lot of time in front of supporters over the next several months. The foundation is currently working to set up the next capital campaign in the late 3rd to 4th quarter of this year. It has to be aligned with elements of our strategic plan and they are working on leadership gifts.

Provost Report

Provost Hackett said that she has a preview of coming attractions. She is hopeful that by the next meeting they will have an announcement of a faculty retirement transition plan. She is waiting for final touches on the plan and waiting to hear from the System. The plan involves the availability of named Professorships for faculty who retire and can then be hired back for up to three years at up to 25% of their final salary. It will also help people transition into retirement and honor them.

The second is the strategic plan implementation, which she had hoped to get to much sooner than this. It was completed in the fall, and working groups were formed to put together plans on how to implement it. She has received those plans and most of them were very detailed, so detailed that it was very overwhelming. Because of that, it has taken a long time to pull them all together into one implementation plan. She will have something to present very soon and will schedule town halls to discuss it before everyone breaks for summer. Many elements of this plan have already started. The entire thing, or at least phase one, will be presented before the break for summer.

One of the immediate actions was to appoint a Vice-Chancellor for Research (Dr. Lynda Bonewald) and her charge was to get the research house in order for life and health sciences.

Vice-Chancellor for Research Report

Vice-Chancellor Bonewald noted that she accepted the position in October and had to prioritize what to do first. One of these items was the animal facility. The feedback she has received so far is that the investigators are very happy with the new facility. The other thing is the pre- and post-award sides of grant support. There has only been one unfortunate incident that she knows of, but most faculty are happy. The third component deals with human subjects and IRBs.

She has met with a number of parties to figure out the issues with the IRB's. They are working to solve those issues. She has been receiving advice on how to structure IRB's. One suggestion was that they need one chair and two-sub chairs. Another was to do away with the UMKC IRB model and use someone else's. In the meantime they are continuing to use the current system so they don't make any arbitrary decisions. She has appointed an IRB infrastructure and development committee for the IRB and tasked them to come back to her with suggestions.

In regards to personnel, they have recruited an Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Research, Ted Knous (formerly with KU Med). She will be working with Dr. Knous to look at personnel issues and believes that they are on way to solving them.

Another point with the IRB's is education. She has lots of experience with basic research and animals. What she and colleagues in the past did was to institute an animal users group. This is not a group that makes policies or regulations. This was a group where investigators could go to find help when problems come up. This is another group that she will be putting together over the next year. There has not been much improvement yet, but hopefully you have seen some. Senator McArthur noted that phone calls are much more pleasant. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that the ORS staff is always supportive, and that their reason for being there is the research and that their goal is that they are successful.

Senator Wyckoff commented that he knows that she hasn't been long into this, but wanted to tell her that some sort of cradle-to-grave mechanism, where investigators can see what's going on with their grant proposals would be helpful. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that they are looking into software that will help investigators know where their protocol is. Senator Wyckoff noted that the number of solicitations, or amount of support, has dropped recently, and it seems like more proactive steps could be taken in searching for research opportunities. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that she has been working on this. She has talked to Dean Truman about ways to search. He has supplied her with list that they use hopes that it is something that they can institute as well.

Provost Hackett noted that Vice-Chancellor Bonewald's position is very new and should be at strategic level. Dr. Knous's is at a more operational level. She isn't casting any aspersions on anyone who has been there before, and she (Bonewald) has been trying to do both jobs. They are hoping to get the operations up and running the way it should be very soon. This isn't an excuse for the problems faculty have encountered, but an explanation.

Senator Krause asked that those outside of the life and health sciences not be forgotten. She knows that the staff doesn't work with social sciences and humanities, but would like to have help in the future.

Senator Davies had a question in regards to budget and staffing. When she got here, ORS would upload proposals, but has been pushed down to the departments. She noted that not every unit has a grants officer. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that she is talking to the Deans about this. They get a lot of the indirect funds and we have to talk about how to help with this. She is looking at how each different unit supports research. She has started an educational process where ORS is going to units to train personnel. Currently they are starting with Medicine. She also mentioned that faculty has not been fully educated with regards to compliance and the IRBs and they need to have sessions that focus on compliance.

Senator Dinakarbandian commented that he has noticed a very high turnover of staff in the research office and asked if there is any way of making it a more attractive place to work. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald agreed, and said that they almost lost some very important people in that office. However, they are hopeful now and are looking forward to new changes. If you talk to them, they will say that there is improvement.

Senator Johnston complimented Dr. Bonewald on the new animal facilities, but raised concerns about protocols submitted to IACUC. He noted that it seems to be a fragmented process and that when an animal protocol is submitted it may get contradictory reviews. He noted that getting all the information back at one time would be beneficial. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that she knows it's a painful process. The new vet has a different way of doing things. She is hopeful that with new software they will be able to track those changes and it will get taken care of before it gets to the investigator.

Chair Ebersole said that there is lots of interest surrounding these issues. The Faculty Senate will welcome Dr. Bonewald and the new Assistant Vice-Chancellor, Ted Knous, to come back. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald asked individuals to please contact her with concerns. She also asked that they not expect immediate results, but everyone's concerns will be heard. They have to fix research office first. She would like to see research funding double in the next 5 years.

Senator Johnston commented that he would hope to see that most faculty salaries get funded by NIH grants. The problem is with low funding rate from NIH, and asked if she had any thoughts on how to overcome that. Vice-Chancellor Bonewald said that funding rates are not getting any better. One thing we can do, though, is to work on excellence by having internal critical reviews of grants before they go out. It's not an easy thing for an investigator to take criticism, but it is better to get it from friends than from study sections. We have to see what funding agencies want, and we have to do high quality research.

Adjourned at 4:58. The next meeting is on 18, 2010.