

# Report

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

February 20, 2001

### Resolved:

Because the Senate thought the Education School issue presented both an immediate problem that needed to be solved, and a long term problem that was suitable for a retreat, it passed 2 resolutions. The first one dealt with the short-term problem of the appointment of division chairs. It passed by a vote of 17 to 3, with 0 abstentions.

Resolved: The Faculty Senate proposes that a fact finding effort be undertaken for 2 purposes:

1. To discern whether the rules of the university and the principles of academic freedom have been violated; and
2. To give guidance to the Chancellor in handling proposed appointments.

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The following resolution was passed unanimously.

Resolved: Regardless of the outcome of the fact finding committee report, the Senate thinks a retreat, involving the Chancellor, the Interim Provost, the dean, other Education School administrators, and the faculty would be useful. Hopefully, some of the core issues in the present conflict can be addressed and resolved at the retreat.

*Note: This was an unusually intense Senate meeting. It mostly centered around the continuing crisis in the Education School, where the faculty and dean were squared off and glaring at each other from opposite corners of the ring.*

The Education School dean wanted to appoint a division chair that the division faculty rejected by a vote of 13 to 0 with one abstention. She claimed the legal power to do so and said she had a mandate to reshape the school. The faculty claimed it was both a bad appointment and a bad model of governance. The overwhelming majority of the Senate thought the dean's governance model was inappropriate, and said that if the central administration supported it their advocacy of the participatory model embodied in the BluePrint process would be discredited. Both the faculty and the dean thought the other side was unreasonable, and the dean and (sometimes) the central administration claimed access to information unavailable to the Senate and faculty. In other words, everybody knew the truth, but there were different truths. A classic post-modern situation. :-)

The Chancellor said she had not been directly involved in the Education School situation, though she thought the current crisis was

symptomatic of serious underlying problems that were best dealt with at a retreat. The Senate agreed that a retreat was a good idea, but thought that the concrete, present crisis needed to be dealt with first. A retreat after a chair was appointed would be of little value.

Though the Chancellor expressed a general dislike of fact finding committees, the Senate thought one was necessary, since everybody claimed that they were the ones who really knew what was happening. The Interim Provost was open to a committee, though he did ask that it include at least one administrator. We all agreed that the committee would have to do its work and report quickly.

There was some question about whether the central administration would wait for the report of the fact finding committee before appointing a chair. The committee involved an immense amount of work, and everyone was busy. There would be ill-will if the administration acted before the report was made. The Senate decided to trust in the good will of the administration, and the Interim Provost (who was still at the meeting) indicated he would wait for the report before recommending any appointments to the Chancellor.

The Senate adopted a resolution creating a fact finding committee, and directed the committee to report to the Senate, the Interim Provost and to the Chancellor. We recognized that committee members had to be respected by both faculty and administration. After some discussion Ellen Suni (Law), Linda Voigts (English), Jakob Waterborg (SBS) and Thad Wilson (Nursing) were appointed. The administrative member hasn't yet been decided upon.

Senators thought the report would help clarify the issues and positions at the Education School, and would provide a useful basis for a retreat. The Chancellor had already indicated she would like a retreat and said that she and other members of the administration would attend. The Education faculty had claimed that administrators sometimes filibustered at their meetings, but the Chancellor said that was not her style or intention. She listened. Some Senators questioned whether the Senate had the authority to suggest a retreat, but others argued that the Senate could suggest or recommend anything it deemed appropriate, and the issue involved all faculty. A Senate resolution recommending a retreat passed unanimously.

## Appointment of Bill Scott as Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services

The Chancellor thought that Bill Scott was doing an excellent job as Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services, and spoke with the Senate about the possibility of bypassing a normal national search.

The Senators familiar with Scott's work were also impressed, and Gary Ebersole (Religious Studies) and Ellen Suni (Law) were appointed to a committee to see whether there were any problems involved in the appointment. The committee decided that a slightly more formal process than the Senate had originally talked about would be appropriate. They didn't think that the first step of the search process, which

Resolved: The Faculty Senate is concerned about bypassing the regular search process, but we are willing to take some shortcuts in regard to the possible hiring of Bill Scott.

The normal search process for an important administrative position has two steps. The first involves forming a search committee and meeting with the Chancellor to develop a detailed job description and a statement of priorities. A candidate's Vita, recommendations and performance are then measured against these criteria. There is also an interview. We do not think that this step of the process should be short-circuited.

The second step of the normal search process involves a national search for appropriate candidates. If, after the first step of the process is completed, the committee finds the current incumbent meets the articulated criteria and is doing a good job, the Senate agrees that a national search is not necessary.

involved a job description and a study of whether a candidate is appropriate for the job, should be short-circuited. If Bill Scott passed this step they were willing to forgo a national search, but the committee was concerned lest this action become a precedent for future actions.

The recommendation was transmitted to Vice Provost Agipito Mendoza, with a note from the committee that "the resolution... reflects action taken by the Senate

yesterday on the question of hiring Bill Scott without a full search process and should be taken as the Senate's official position on the issue. I believe the previously expressed view that there should be a formal evaluation process involving faculty and staff within 1-2 years if Bill Scott is hired without a full search is part of the recommendation, although not formally discussed yesterday or part of the resolution."

## The Chancellor on budget issues

At one time there was talk of a 4% salary increase. That assumed a 2% increase in the state budget and a 2% reallocation. At this point the Governor's recommended budget (normally the best the University can get) provides for no increase in university funds, and deep cuts for some of the other state agencies. The Chancellor noted that the consequences of this depend on enrollment, which supplies half of our budget. We might still be able to get a 4% increase, though the 3% range seems more likely. The enrollment increases haven't developed yet, so there might have to be some shifting of other funds, including VERIP money. The Chancellor said she intends to restore the borrowed money in the future.

The Chancellor also spoke briefly about the smart (high tech, redecorated) classrooms that are slated to be in place by the fall. She hoped that these would provide some evidence to people in the community that UMKC was on the move, and therefore would help attract money. When asked where the money to build the classrooms came from she said that the students had voted \$150,000, a donor had given \$150,000. End-of-the-year one-time money would be used to pay the rest of the cost.

Respectfully submitted,

Harris Mirkin, Faculty Secretary