Approved

Faculty Senate Minutes
Tuesday, March 3, 2009
Plaza room, Administration Center, 3-5pm


Visitors: Sullivan Reed

Excused: Stanley, Madison-Cannon
Absent: Knoff, Potts, Yang

Welcome-3.05pm and call to order, Chair Ebersole.

Information items:

a) Chair Ebersole reminded that the next meeting would be in Rm 217B in the School of Dentistry and that Parking Lot 28 on 25th and Campbell before the HSB is available.

b) A request for a change in the order of agenda was made to allow Chancellor Morton to attend another meeting (unanimously approved).

Chancellor Morton report:
Chancellor Morton provided an update on the expected federal stimulus package. He said that it was not clear yet as to how large the funds would be or how they would be handled except that it would be through established MO State channels (it’s also true that some funds will come through other traditional channels like NSF and NIH). He reminded that Vice Provost Bill Morgan would be guiding our applications through ORS to avert redundancy and that we should not miss anything. A very large document of this solicitation is available on-line and he encouraged all to review it and make suggestions regarding unique ways we might apply. It might be possible to modify a program or idea we already have into something sustainable which could be funded via this one time application. Chancellor Morton asked for ideas from faculty and Chair Ebersole reminded that it focuses on jobs and economic development. Senator Luppino remarked that we should have the budget soon.

Senator Fieldman suggested reviewing the strategic plan, especially the urban mission initiatives, to evaluate how sustainability might fit appropriately, while Senator Honigberg added that it was important to get faculty involved early with the committee. One Senator suggested that co-ordination by Bill Morgan might over-emphasize the traditional basic sciences, when, to be competitive, we need to be thinking “out of the box”. Several other Senators agreed about the need to identify
unique interdisciplinary niches and Senator Davies added that we are the only campus in the system teaching “Sustainability”. Chair Ebersole said this fits very well into our mission because it brings in A&S and other units. Senator Schubert expressed interest in campus wide energy transformation. Chair Ebersole agreed that there were opportunities in the area of wind, solar, and other mechanisms of obtaining energy. Chancellor Morton stated that he had recently given a presentation on the kinds of energy saving strategies we have been undertaking and that the figures indicating a $1.6 million in savings were impressive. He added that he hoped the information he had received which formed the basis for this was correct.

Senator Ziskin reminded the Senate that UMKC is the "Visual and Performing Arts Campus" of the University of Missouri system and strongly aligned with neighboring institutions in our "arts corridor" (the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the Kemper Museum of Art, the KC Art Institute with its Bloch Space, etc.). Federal stimulus funds directed toward enhancement of education in performing and visual arts at UMKC could help to stimulate the local economy by attracting tourism. The Chancellor noted that a degree from UMKC, the designated Art & performing Arts Campus, should mean something for every one of our graduates. There should be more exposure and entrepreneurship in this area.

There was a question to the Chancellor about the status of “Decision Theatre”. He responded that this was still a priority, but that he had backed off this in the interim in lieu of the economic concerns and the need to gain funding for other priority capital projects first. He added that the key to decision theatre is the team work which occurs around the data room. Senator Williams remarked that there are huge needs in the KC community and there is also the unique composition of professional schools with which to interact. Discussion followed about the possibility of putting a bunch of economists in a room and asking them to come up with a plan. Someone added, in jest, the idea of throwing away the key.

Chancellor Morton went on to discuss his role as Chair of Prep KC and his personal desire to increase graduation rates in MO. He said there are 3 prongs to the strategy. Small learning centers, parental advocacy, and the improvement of instruction. He said that the Gates Foundation which provides 6.5 of 15 million dollars towards this community, was rethinking how they support these issues. He reminded all that the issue of urban education in KC is unique. The Chancellor said he had met with Chancellor Hemmingway from KU and discussed bi-state collaboration recently. He learned that KU has abandoned its plan for a Dental School in Wichita and that the State Line is a big issue.

At this point a request was made for Senator Price to add a resolution to the agenda as an item for discussion the resolution passed by UMSL faculty. This addition was approved unanimously, as were the previous Senate minutes.

**Provost Report:** Vice-Provost Ron MacQuarrie reported in lieu of the Provost that there was nothing urgent to report on. There was a question about the strategic plan
and when this would be rolled out and progress with searches for several Deans. Dr MacQuarrie said that 3 candidates had been interviewed for the Bloch school and the search committee had made a recommendation to the Provost. The search for the Dean of the Dental School was underway and would be completed this week. In regard to the Education School Dean, Senator Williams stated that 3 good candidates had been identified and would be interviewed before and after the upcoming break.

**Motion for Establishing a Nominations Committee:**
Senator Stancel briefly pointed out the revisions from our previous discussion, which included increasing the number of elected representatives on this committee to broaden it. Chair Ebersole said that, if approved, this committee would utilize in the April campus-wide election cycle. The resolution was moved by Honigberg and seconded by Krause, with all voting in favor.

**Facilities Advisory Committee:**
Senator Honigberg said he had recently joined this committee as an alternate and had become aware of the need for oversight surrounding some of the space issues. Chair Ebersole said this is an important committee which should be in regular communication with the University Budget Committee and Faculty Senate. We are told the charge of the committee is two-fold. First, there are space assignments to various units; second, capital projects in terms of maintenance, repairs, and planning new buildings. Senator Honigberg provided a document with prioritized building targets for the campus and it was noted that the Oak Street car parking structure was still on this list as priority #3, even though the Faculty Senate had moved to put this project on hold until a full study of alternatives had been undertaken, reported on, and debated. Chair Ebersole requested a rationale for the priorities listed and thanked Honigberg for bringing this to the attention of the Senate. Senator Luppino suggested that the FAC do a presentation on what spending was planned to the UBC, and that the FSBC and FAC be linked by having at least one member in common. It was agreed that this committee could not be a rubber stamp exemplified by what occurred with the parking garage currently “on hold”.

Sullivan Read, a faculty member on FAC, reiterated the functions and points of contention of this committee, as well as described in outline how space would be requested and allocated. In the past the committee was not consulted before vacant space was assigned (e.g. the space in Katz), and Dr. Read hoped this will change. Chair Ebersole suggested we should revisit the constitution of the committee and ensure it has a faculty co-chair—for one thing, that can help ensure that the committee meets regularly. Senator Krause said the composition needs to reflect all the units. Honigberg reported that vacant space is documented, but not space which is under-utilized. Senator Hopkins added that there may be space assigned but not, in fact, used. There was a short commentary on the cost of student housing and that the new Oak Street housing was very expensive, driving students away. Senator Ziskin suggested that there should be a study of this model of funding buildings.
before we conclude it is successful. Related to this, several senators commented that they thought that the new dorm was not at capacity, probably because of the high cost of rent. Senator Davies noted that there is a crunch in low-cost housing in nearby residential neighborhoods because of the conversion of UMKC dorms to a higher-rent option, causing frustration among students who cannot afford to live in the new dorm.

Academic Issues Committee:
There was no further update on the academic amnesty issue for undergraduates. There was a question by Senator Ward Smith as to why this applied to undergraduates only. Senator Price suggested that, in the case of graduate students, it is more of a faculty issue within each unit. The motion regarding academic amnesty for undergraduates was moved, accepted, and unanimously approved.

Evaluation of Deans:
Chair Ebersole informed the Senate that the Executive Committee had discussed possible changes with the Provost, who is in the process of establishing her own annual review process. Senator Sykes Berry said that the 3-year informal and 5-year formal review is too long; others added some deans came and went before they could even be reviewed. Senator Beard asked if there was a campus-wide evaluation of chairs and was informed that there was not.

UMSL Resolution:
A resolution made by UMSL in response to President Forsee’s changes to the benefit plan was discussed. Several senators felt the response was “over the top” and protracted and did not foster good relationships with Forsee. Senator Luppino updated his discussions with Betsy Rodrigues and shared the concern that there were other alternatives to this method of strengthening the benefits account. He felt the plan invoked was not the only place to come up with the $12 million required to strengthen the plan. He felt that they had looked at the retirement plan in a vacuum, although they were very good at their jobs. He added that some employees were still very unhappy and that they wanted to look at other options. Chair Ebersole reminded everyone that Forsee had been clearly told by all IFC representatives that faculty and staff members were either scared (staff) or angry (faculty), but that Forsee had believed he had consulted with the requisite committee—the system-level Benefits committee. The President now understood that this was inadequate consultation for such a major decision. Officers on all campuses had been very disturbed by the way this issue had evolved, but Forsee has formally committed to engaging with faculty & staff in the future.

There was discussion of monies paid by employees who left before being vested at 5 years. Under the previous plan, such contributions were lost. Now, the employees can request reimbursement with interest of the amount they contribute. Senator Schubert stated how important it was for faculty and staff to participate in this process from the point of view of sustaining morale. Others agreed with this. Sullivan Reed
said the actuarial predictions of the benefit plans are very good, but the predictions surrounding the stock market yields are certainly not. Chair Ebersole informed the group that the BOC decides and votes on what investments are made and where all the funds go. The question of what amount President Forsee’s retirement benefit was based was addressed since the salary cap for contributions is $250,000; he earns much more than this.

Further comments were made about UMSL being too harsh in their resolution. Ebersole reminded Senators that all increases required annually need to be found in the units by the Deans and come out of schools’ operating budgets, thus taking away funds that could be used for other purposes. It was made clear by many Senators that there should be a specific process to govern future changes to compensation and benefits. Senator Price read a rough draft of a proposed resolution and plans to circulate a revised copy based upon joint input from the Senate. Chair Ebersole said we need to be vigilant and vocal, proactive rather than reactive. Senator Hopkins suggested expanding and broadening the message discussed without losing the sentiment conveyed by this resolution.

Senator Davies report on sustainability issues on campus will be moved to an early place on the next meeting agenda, since we had twice run out of time before she could report. She mentioned, as we went over time, that UMKC now has a minor in sustainability—the first in the UM System.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5.05pm