

On Nov 11, 2019, at 11:34 AM, Guzzetta, Juliet <guzzetta@msu.edu> wrote:

Dear Members of the Steering Committee:

We kindly request that the steering committee put the OCR report on the agenda for the January meeting of faculty senate. Indeed, we request that we dedicate the entire meeting to discussing this report.

Those of us who have read the report recognize its unique position to depict the unfolding of egregious acts at our institution that occurred over decades. While it only investigates the history of how the university handled cases regarding two individuals (even if it acknowledges other investigations), it depicts the structural and cultural practices and environment that resulted in not only continued harm by these individuals, but eroding trust and confidence in the administration. We believe that discussing this report as faculty representatives will demonstrate one step in our own need to take some responsibility for the culture at MSU. Only when we articulate our institutional history and culture, may we work to change it.

We will ask that faculty senators read the report in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, we will consider such questions as: What kind of culture does this document describe? What are the specific practices and patterns that this document reveals that result in such a culture? Finally, what kind-of systemic changes will shift this culture? We believe it is important to have the meeting facilitated by someone with significant knowledge of RVSM issues and the difficult often triggering conversations that result in confronting them. We also believe it is important to have trained counselors on site during the January session, for those who may need support.

A further goal of this meeting is to discuss whether or not we as faculty senators would like to commit to performing a similar discussion-based exercise with our colleagues in each of our colleges. We see these meetings as one concrete step towards understanding and changing university culture.

We acknowledge that the community should soon have access to the campus-wide survey and believe this will also be an important tool in identifying harmful structures and cultural practices. We suggest that we discuss this document at the January University Council meeting in which administrators and students are also present. Meanwhile, we ask that the entire January meeting be devoted to discussion of the OCR report. We would like to announce this at the November meeting, so that senators might use their break to read and absorb the report. We note there is a full agenda for tomorrow and that this is coming late in the day, so if you have time, please advise on how best to bring this up. Can we make a motion at the beginning of the meeting to add this to the agenda? Should we announce this during item eight, comments from the floor?

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Galia Benitez, JMC  
Andaluna Borcila, JMC  
Laura Cloud, CAL  
Alyssa Dunn, CoEd  
Stephen Gasteyer, CSS  
Juliet Guzzetta, CAL  
Sandra Logan, CAL  
Joyce Meier, CAL  
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