EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES

January 10, 2006


Chairperson Sticklen called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. with a quorum being present.

The Agenda was amended deleting item #10 Responses to Report of Working Group to Improve Undergraduate Education and adding the item of Conflict of Interest Policy. The agenda was approved as amended.

The minutes for November 8, 2006 were approved as distributed. The minutes for the special meeting of November 22, 2006 were amended clarifying Bob Murphy as Chairperson of Academic Assembly and the Academic Assembly Bills to read 14-24 and 14-25. The minutes were approved as amended.

Provost’s Remarks:
Provost Wilcox thanked the members of ECAC for helping him through the Fall Semester with their guidance. Provost Wilcox reflected on some of the activities for Fall Semester including looking at the Provost’s Office and plans for some change. Currently there are some changes being made for the budget request processes that come from the Provost’s Office to the Units with the intent of streamlining and simplifying what was the APP&R process. The Provost indicated he plans to turn more attention to undergraduate education this semester.

Provost Wilcox discussed the North Central Accreditation (NCA) scheduled for February, 2006. The NCA Self-Study materials are organized according to NC criteria and were distributed to members. The materials also include a CD that is interactive with the links throughout the document. An outline of the meeting times for the Review Team was also distributed. The Provost noted how important the Accreditation process is to the University. The review process provides opportunity to reflect on where MSU is institutionally in terms of the quality of support and the chance to collectively have a conversation with others. The accreditation process provides the minimum criterion for an institution to receive federal support. In order for an institution to receive federal support the institution must be accredited.

A question was raised on the status of the Dean’s Search for Arts & Letters. Dr. Banks reported the search is up and running and they have reached an agreement on the posting and set of criteria. A search firm has been recruited. The tentative plan includes having off-campus interviews in April with recommendations from the Search Committee by the end of the academic year.
Conflict of Interest Policy:
Professor Emmett, Chairperson of UCFA, reported that the committee had endorsed a proposed Conflict of Interest Policy. Professor Emmett requested the proposed policy be distributed to the entire faculty through governance for feedback and commentary providing one month response time. This will then provide time for the UCFA to discuss and make changes in order to return to ECAC in March or April, 2006. A motion passed for the Governance Office to distribute the proposed policy to faculty requesting commentary with the timeline of one month.

Name Change for the Department of Audiology and Speech Sciences:
The Provost reported the Department of Audiology and Speech Sciences of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences has requested a proposed name change for the department to the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders. This name change brings the department title more in line with disciplinary trends across the nation. A motion was passed to refer the proposed name change to UGC, UCAP and UCSA for commentary back to ECAC for the meeting on February 7, 2006.

Report on the December 14, 2005 meeting with the President and Faculty Liaison Group to the Board of Trustees:
Professor Potchen, ECAC At-Large Faculty Member, reported on the meeting with President Simon. The meetings with the President occur bimonthly and have been very positive. The President presented much information from budget to community relations, etc. Professor Potchen noted the meetings and process has gone very satisfactory.

IRB (Human Subjects) – Use of Student Data for Accreditation:
Professor Sticklen received requests to address the issue around the IRB approval that is necessary for use of data collected from students. Following discussion, members agreed to ask the Provost to request a ruling from IRB on this issue. The Provost did agree to take the issue to IRB.

Level 3 Appointment Policy for RA and TE Graduate Assistants:
Professor Wurst, Chairperson of UGC, presented the proposed recommendation from the UGC regarding the Level 3 Appointment Policy for RA and TE Graduate Assistants:

1. Six semesters of experience as a graduate RA/TE at Michigan State University, or equivalent. The definition of equivalent experience as an RA/TE should be left to the discretion of the chairperson of the appointing unit, but it is expected that only experience in research-oriented assignments would count toward the six semesters of experience as an RA. (Consistent with current practice, ¼ time and ¾ time appointments count the same as ½ time appointments, and Summer Semesters count the same as Fall and Spring Semesters.)
2. Successful completion of doctoral comprehensive exams, as defined by the department in which the student is enrolled.

Following discussion it was suggested that an “and” be placed between #1 and #2 and Professor Wurst indicated that was the original intention of the UGC. A motion was passed to send the proposed recommendation, with the inclusion of “and” between #1 and #2, to Academic Council.
Maximum Course Load Policy:
Professor Putnam, Chairperson of UCAP, reported the committee’s response to the ECAC request regarding the Summer Semester and the maximum course load policy. The committee concluded that it is the responsibility of course instructors to specify and enforce attendance policies and requirements for the completion of course work and assignments, as indicated in the Code of Teaching Responsibility. Furthermore, the complexity of the summer schedule, with courses offered in many different time blocks and sessions (including online offerings) makes monitoring student course loads for any particular period of time during the summer impractical. It was pointed out that there is a limit for total credits for the whole summer session. Professor Youatt noted that it is possible to track the number of credits between May and August. The recommendation of UCAP was that no further action was needed.

Athletics and Athletic Council Procedures:
Professor Wright reported that the commentary from members regarding the issues around athletics and the Athletic Council were summarized. Members were asked to identify the focus and issues on the topic for the ECAC meeting in February. After some discussion it was determined that a subcommittee should be formed to frame the issues for discussion. A subcommittee was formed, namely Professors Abeles, Schechter and Andre to prepare a framework for discussion and to distributed to ECAC members for feedback.

Setting of Faculty Council agenda for January 17, 2006:
There were no agenda items for the Faculty Council meeting scheduled for January 17, 2006. A motion was passed to cancel the meeting. There was discussion about future meetings and the identification of issues and topics warranting a discussion by the community of faculty in Faculty Council. Professor Wright will begin to generate a list of topics and members were requested to send ideas to the Governance Office. Professor Banks proposed the members may wish to consider having a block of Faculty Council meetings at the beginning of the academic year and then at the end of the year. This approach may better meet the needs.

Setting of Academic Council Agenda for January 24, 2006:
The agenda for the Academic Council meeting on January 24, 2006 is as follows:
- University Committee on Curriculum Report – (Action Item)
- Level 3 Appointment Policy for RA and TE Graduate Assistants
- Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Wright
Secretary for Academic Governance