The meeting began at 3:20 p.m. with a Bass quorum. President Simon requested Professor Wright to review the Rules and Procedures of the Faculty Council regarding the Bass Quorum.

Approval of Agenda:
The agenda was amended, adding the item Consideration of a Slate for the Five Task Force Groups. A motion passed to approve the amended agenda.

A full quorum was reached at this point.

Approval of Minutes:
The minutes of April 12, 2005 were approved as distributed.

President’s Remarks:
President Simon welcomed members to the new academic year. President Simon expressed her delight that Provost Wilcox has joined MSU and that the opening of the school year has gone smoothly with his participation. The University does not have a budget from the State at this time. The Board of Trustee’s has approved a budget based on the assumption of the Governor’s recommendation. It is unusual for the University to be at this point without an approved budget from the State. Budget discussions are continuing at the Capitol and are being monitored. The Board of Trustees action taken with respect to tuition included a provision that if an appropriation was received that was higher than the appropriation that was recommended by the Governor; the additional money would be returned to the students.

Provost’s Remarks:
Provost Wilcox acknowledged he was excited to be at MSU, particularly at this time at the first Faculty Council meeting which is focused on issues of faculty voice. The Provost noted he sees faculty voice as being the role of faculty in shaping, guiding and nurturing the future of the University. An effective administration needs an effective faculty voice and an effective Board of Trustees needs an effective administration, faculty voice and student voice. The Provost indicated he would like to focus on the reality that the campus has identified an opportunity to
realize the role of faculty voice more fully. The Provost noted he was looking forward to the discussion of faculty voice at this meeting.

Executive Committee Chairperson’s Remarks:
Professor Sticklen welcomed the members and thanked them for coming to this early and special meeting of Council. The summer committee of ECAC considered Voice matters and Faculty Voice recommendations and recommended to the full ECAC that an early meeting occur for discussion.

Discussion of Faculty Council Role in Governance:
Professor Sticklen briefly reviewed the role of Faculty Council members in governance using the organizational chart of the governance system noting the three levels, Departmental, College and University at MSU. Professor Sticklen called attention to the revamped Academic Governance web site www.msu.edu/~acadgov. Professor Sticklen stressed that the governance system is the whole community including faculty, administrators and students (See power point on Academic Governance Structure on the governance web site). The message to members of Faculty Council was that each member plays a critical role in the governance system. The representatives are the link between College level and University level governance informing the constituents of each respective College. It is important that one of the designated College representatives on Faculty Council must be an ex-officio member of the College Advisory Council.

Brief Background on Faculty Voice Committee:
Professor Moch, member of the Faculty Voice Committee, presented a brief background of the Faculty Voice Committee’s work. The Committee was formed as a result of an Academic Senate meeting, April, 2004, when faculty expressed the opinion that faculty had not been adequately consulted about major decisions. A motion was passed at this Senate meeting to establish a Faculty Voice Committee to inquire of faculty participation and, if appropriate, recommendations to improve the participation. The Faculty Voice Committee began meeting in October, 2005 with many members of the MSU community completing the final Report at the end of April, 2005. Professor Moch urged members to read the Report and/or the executive summary of the Report. Committee members found considerable concern about the lack of faculty voice and input concluding that much could be done. There were five recommendations made which will be discussed in the next agenda item.

ECAC Subgroup on Faculty Voice Report:
President Simon requested permission for Professor Larabee to address the Council, permission was given. Professor Larabee, Chairperson of the ECAC Subgroup on Faculty Voice, thanked members for coming to this early meeting of Faculty Council. Professor Larabee expressed hope for richer discussions and lively meetings on the issues in Faculty Council this year. The faculty orientation given today was one of the first recommendations of the Subgroup to inform faculty to enhance participation.

Professor Larabee explained that ECAC formed the Subgroup on Faculty Voice as the first response of academic governance to the Faculty Voice Report. The responsibility of the Subgroup was to frame the Faculty Voice Report for faculty governance and devise a process for moving it through the governance system. The composition of the subgroup included ECAC
members from 2004-05, new members from 2005-06, undergraduate student and graduate student representatives. In addition, a representative from Administration and several members from the original Faculty Voice Committee attended the meetings. The Subgroup established two basic principles, one that the process needed to get moving as quickly as possible so as not to lose momentum and to have increased faculty involvement encouraging better and frequent communication. The initial recommendation was to have an early Faculty Council meeting to orient members, introduce the specific proposals and encourage representatives to begin College and Department level discussions. A communication went to all faculty notifying them of the coming discussions on Faculty Voice. A pool of volunteers from the Subgroup was formed to be available to present the issues at College and or Departmental meetings. The Subgroup envisioned the Faculty Council representatives taking the issues to their respective Colleges for conversations about the Faculty Voice Report and bring the feedback to Council. The idea is to hear from as many faculty voices as possible. Professor Larabee noted the Faculty Voice Report recommended the formation of task force groups and after careful deliberation the summer Subgroup concluded with five task force proposals as outlined in their response:

- Reorganization of the academic governance structure
- Review of administrators
- Review of academic programs
- Communication and transparency
- Fixed-term faculty’s role in governance

Professor Larabee presented a number of questions to be addressed in the discussions about the task force groups. For additional information go to the academic governance web site at www.msu.edu/~acadgov and look at “ECAC Subgroup on Faculty Voice - Power Point Presentation to Faculty Council 8/30/05”.

A question arose regarding the proposed task force composition which specifies faculty from the tenure stream and whether this includes non-college faculty who have continuous appointments? President Simon clarified that historically the phrase “tenure system faculty” has referred to those individuals who are appointed in the tenure system. The term “regular faculty” as in the Bylaws has included tenure system faculty as well as individuals, particularly Librarians, who are in the continuous appointment system under the phrase “regular faculty”. President Simon suggested a clarification in the document as to whether the intent is tenure system faculty as defined by the tenure system or “regular faculty” as defined in the Bylaws. Professor Larabee stated it should be as defined using the term “regular faculty”. There was also some discussion regarding fixed term faculty. The fixed term faculty would make up the composition on the task force dealing with fixed term but would not be members of the other task force groups.

Professor Link thanked the Subgroup for their work. Professor Link expressed the view that other voices that are not part of governance are being excluded, for example, staff and specialists. Professor Potchen agreed that others should be included i.e. Specialists and that it is important to have as many as possible be involved in the deliberations. Professor Rosser noted another category of faculty, the Health Professions faculty in COM, CHM and CVM would be left out. Professor Sticklen acknowledged the comments but felt the four task force groups should be those faculty who would be eligible as members of Faculty Council. Professor Sticklen noted that the suggestion of broadening the membership on the task force
groups should be brought to the next Faculty Council meeting as an amendment to the proposal by the Subgroup. President Simon again clarified that for the present discussions of the Subgroup proposal, the term “tenure system faculty” is to be defined as “regular faculty” which includes tenure system faculty and Librarians with continuous appointment and who are eligible to participate in Faculty Council.

It was noted by a member that if the Council was proceeding with a nomination process, it is not clear that a vote has taken place to establish the task force groups. A sense of the body resolution to include representation of fixed term faculty which includes HHP and other forms of faculty and regular faculty on the task forces was requested. The resolution failed, No 12, Yes 11 and Abstention 12.

Faculty Voice: Specific Charge to Faculty Council Members re: ECAC Recommendations:
Professor Sticklen noted the first charge to Council is to read and understand the five recommended task forces from the summer Subgroup as distributed. Any questions can be sent to acadgov@msu.edu which will be forwarded to the Subgroup. The second charge to Council is to promote and engage in conversations and deliberations within your Colleges. Professor Sticklen indicated the discussions could be taken in many formats such as talking with the CAC or arranging for a College meeting. It is important to engage in the discussions and come with views on the five task force groups by the September 13 Faculty Council meeting. Professor Sticklen presented the proposed timeframe and requested nominations by September 2. There were questions regarding the nomination process occurring before the task force groups were established as well as the short timeline. Members did not feel this timeline was possible. A sense of the body resolution was proposed to extend the timeline process for one month, the October Faculty Council meeting. The discussions and actions regarding the proposed task force groups would occur on September 13 and a vote on membership would occur at the October Council meeting. The resolution passed. A revised timeline will be posted on the web site.

President Simon thanked Professor Potchen for his hospitality and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Wright
Secretary for Academic Governance

Tapes of complete meetings for the Academic Council are available for review in the Secretary for Academic Governance office, 308 Olds Hall, 355-2337.