FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, January 22, 2008
Radiology Building Auditorium


The meeting began at 3:20 p.m. with full quorum.

Approval of Agenda:
The agenda was approved as distributed.

Public Comments (2 minute time limit per speaker; 10 minutes total):
The President introduced the public comments period and noted the time limit for speaking. There were no comments.

Approval of Minutes:
The minutes of November 13, 2007 were approved as distributed

President’s Remarks:
The President welcomed faculty members back to Spring Semester. President Simon began by indicating she would answer any questions from the members. A member requested a brief update on the Medical School in regards to Grand Rapids. President Simon reported the planning for the work in Grand Rapids was in the hands of the College of Human Medicine. All of the contracts have been signed with all of the partners, St. Mary’s, Spectrum, and Van Andel, which provide commitments of funding as well as the structure for the relationship. In terms of the facility, the cost of the facility is estimated prior to bids to be approximately $90 million dollars and $35 million dollars of that amount was provided through arrangements with Spectrum Health. The remaining $55 million dollars had to be raised and $40 million dollars has been raised to-date. President Simon’s expectation is that the cost of the building will decline because this is a cost of all furniture and fees. The fifty students that were part of the
first initiative have been recruited and are on campus and will move to west Michigan for the second year next year.

**Provost’s Remarks:**
Provost Wilcox complimented the President and the entire campus on the announcement of the new Art Museum and the architect, Zaha Hadid from London, England. The Provost also complimented everyone who participated in the Martin Luther Celebration and events. The Provost referred faculty to two reports. One report is the Health Care Concerns, Policies and Future Options which can be found on the web and will be addressed in this meeting. The other report to investigate is the Report from the Environmental Stewardship Team which includes 25 to 30 faculty, students and staff from across the campus who spent the past year looking at the campus in terms of what could be done that could make MSU a model in terms of environmental stewardship. This report can be found on the web.

**Executive Committee Chairperson’s Remarks:**
Professor Potchen reported that the at-large members of ECAC have had some meetings to define how to get the job done on the issues at hand. One issue identified was to complete the work on Faculty Voice and the other issue was to begin to address the Health Concerns, Policies and Future Options. The UCFA Chairperson will be making comments today but Professor Potchen urged all members to read the report. This is not an issue of benefits but rather an issue of how to obtain better health care without increasing costs.

Professor Potchen reported that Professor John Beck, School of Labor and Industrial Relations, is serving as a process consultant to ECAC and offering ideas to help move the faculty to resolution on issues. It is the intent to go as far as possible with the Task Force 1 discussion today and it may be necessary to have additional times identified for continuing debate and resolution. There may be a Faculty Council meeting next week following Academic Council meeting.

**Request to Change the Minimum Number of Credits in a Minor:**
Professor Bice, Chairperson of UCC, proposed the following motion that the minimum number of credits required for a minor to be 15. The motion was supported. Currently the guideline states that minors “require no less than one-third and no more that two-thirds the number if credits required for its major”. The guideline was seen as ambiguous and the proposed change eliminates this confusion according to UCC. A motion passed to approve proposed change.

**Faculty Voice Task Force 2 (Administrative Review):**
Professor Potchen summarized the Task Force 2 recommendations (Administrative Review) progress through governance. President Simon presented a response to Faculty Council 3-13-07 regarding Task Force 2. Provost Wilcox presented a document that laid out a set of commitments by the President and Provost’s office on 4-24-07. A motion was then passed to refer the set of commitments by the President and the Provost’s office to UCFA to sort through the issues and report back to Faculty Council. Professor Powell, Chairperson of UCFA, reported that the UCFA report was introduced at the November 13 Faculty Council meeting. Professor Powell summarized the report by UCFA. A motion was passed that the UCFA report be
approved.

**UCFA Task Force Report on Health Care Concerns, Policies and Future Options:**
Professor Powell, Chairperson of UCFA, wanted to clarify any misconception and stressed that the UCFA and its charge to evaluate the budgetary aspects of the University, has no intent to cut Health care benefits related to the faculty. There is no intent on anyone’s part to reduce benefits. The intent of UCFA was to look at medical care in this country and look at the items to see what can be done as a faculty to look at the following: 1) improve the health care of our members and family members; 2) continue to provide high quality health care services for our employees and members and 3) consider the fiscal responsibility facing the University over the next decades. The UCFA report outlines a number of issues that the committee discussed over a period of 12 to 14 months with experts. Materials are available on the UCFA web site. UCFA is seeking faculty input. There will be a second forum to discuss the Report on January 31 @ 10:30 a.m., in the Radiology Auditorium. Anyone can send comments. The committee will report back to Faculty Council in February. President Simon commended the UCFA on their work.

**Faculty Opinion Survey Report (Task Force 4):**
Professor Potchen presented an overview of the Faculty Opinion Survey. The Survey response rate was 30.2% and showed that the faculty were generally satisfied with the amount of information they receive on matters of academic governance. The most preferred method of communication was email. Most respondents read governance reports and/or meeting minutes, while fewer than half attend meetings. The Survey will be posted on the Governance web site. A motion was passed to direct ECAC to establish a subcommittee of Faculty Council, with the approval of Council, to develop concrete recommendations for implementing the findings in the survey. Professor Morash noted it would be helpful if people with expertise in communications and interpretation of surveys would make that known to ECAC so as to consider them in establishing the subcommittee.

**Faculty Voice Task Force 1 Report: Section III – Proposed Steering Committee:**
President Simon passed the gavel to Provost Wilcox to assume the Chairperson position. Professor Hughes, Chairperson of the Rules Committee, assumed a place at the table. Professor Hughes reviewed the status of the debate on Task Force 1. There was a motion on the floor, the yellow pages and an amendment to the yellow pages to institute a recall procedure, when the last meeting was to end on November 13, 2007. However a motion to postpone consideration of the motion was passed.

Professor Hughes proposed a motion to set aside previous action for a period of time to get a sense of the body on the concept of a TSC and then return to the previous debate. The motion was supported. Professor Potchen noted that one of the issues is to discuss a recall procedure for members of the TSC before deciding if this is the decision, does not appear to be a way to proceed. There was discussion pro and con regarding the process proposed. The motion to set aside previous action for discussion passed.

Professor Bice proposed a motion to change the structure of academic governance. The motion was supported. Professor Bice acknowledged the work of the Task Force 1 group and noted that the motions being proposed were not intended to negate or undermine important
successes of all of the Task Forces. It would be helpful to ascertain the majority of opinion. Professor Bice provided the following information. A Yes vote on this motion signifies that major changes in the structure of Academic Governance are needed at this time, and that Faculty Council should proceed with the consideration of the recommendations made by Task Force 1 either as presented in the report or as modified by this body. A NO vote on this motion signifies that the basic structure of Academic Governance should remain intact, and at this time precludes any major action by this body. A NO vote does not preclude making other minor changes at this time and does not preclude changes in the future. A NO vote signifies that this body is essentially satisfied with the current structure of Academic Governance. There was discussion including favorable comments and opposing comments. The motion to amend, inserting the word “consider” was passed. The motion to consider changing the structure of academic governance passed.

A second motion was proposed to eliminate ECAC and replace with The Steering Committee (TSC) as identified by the Task Force 1 report. The motion was supported. Professor Bice explained that a YES vote on this motion signifies that this body should proceed with the consideration of the Task Force 1 recommendations to replace ECAC with the TSC. A NO vote on this motion signifies that, at this time, no major action should be taken by this body to change ECAC. The motion to amend, inserting consider eliminating was passed. The motion to consider eliminating ECAC and replace with the Steering Committee as identified by the Task Force 1 report was passed.

Following some discussion to clarify, a motion was proposed to resume consideration of the amendment to the main motion, the “yellow pages”, on the process of recall for TSC members. The motion was supported. The purpose of a recall process is to give faculty the assurance that a faculty sitting on the TSC is fulfilling that role. Professor Sticklen voiced that a procedure is needed to recall if necessary. There was question regarding what criteria are to be used for determining if someone should be recalled. Professor Powell noted this amendment is proposed to be added to the main motion and then when discussed, can be altered. The question was called and the motion to amend the main motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm due to lack of a quorum.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Wright
Secretary for Academic Governance