CALL TO ORDER

2. No Quorum at 3:15 – Begin General Discussion with the President’s remarks. A Bass Quorum was reached at 3:40 and the meeting was called to order.

3. Approval of Agenda for November 10, 2015: APPROVED.

4. Public Comments (2 minute time limit per speaker; 10 minutes total for comments) NONE

5. Approval of Draft Minutes for October 13, 2015 (Attachment #1): APPROVED.

6. President’s Remarks – Lou Anna K. Simon

The Road Funding Bill in Michigan was recently released. One of the important pieces of the bill that is different from the original is the change for the 800/400 model to a 600/600 model. These changes put more pressures on General Fund revenue and cuts moving forward. The second piece of the legislation has downstream reductions in income tax if the rate of growth is 1.4 times the rate of inflation. If the rate is more than 1.4 it will automatically create a decrease in income tax and thus create a loss of revenue for the State. This goes along with moving some funding cuts to fiscal year 2017. This allows the State budget to handle some of the decisions that have been made for ACA features of health care and some other major credit decisions that have been made this year. There is also pressure to do something to commit some revenue to bonds in order to address the problems with Michigan roads before the changes take place. The impact on higher education of these decisions will hinge on the governor’s recommendations in January. He has indicated a top priority for education in Michigan in the 21st century. Our planning will continue to be consistent with our goals.
Among higher education institutions in Michigan there is concern about the huge decline in the K-12 population with no increase in the number of students attending college. The enrollment question will be a major issue in our planning. We are in a reasonable position as we plan for the future.

On the national scene there is dialogue on the inclusion and diversity issues that face the higher education community. I recommend to you an Inside Higher Education essay that Dean Elizabeth Simmons wrote that tries to think about both our rights and responsibilities to develop a learning environment where ideas can have rough edges but people should not. Part of the discourse is the capacity to be able to learn and grow through encountering ideas that are somewhat jarring, but doing so in an environment where you are respected and people care about your education. We will continue to have dialogue and discussions on how we can address these issues in our community. I am working with the students on developing a culture that encourages students support other students that will create a stronger community.

7. Provost’s Remarks – June Youatt

The leadership of ASMSU is working very hard to develop an honor code for MSU. This is coming from the student body and is very important to them. I hope that you will encourage and provide support for the students as they face the challenge of putting together a set out recommendations that will work for us. Another issue they are supporting is encouraging a mid-semester formative evaluation of courses to help them in their learning.

Our enrollment applications are up about 5,000 over this time last year. The interest in the science, technology, engineering and math are continuing to be the most sought after areas.

Our dean searches are moving along; and we will be starting a search for a new dean in the College of Education. Dean Don Heller has accepted a position as Provost at the University of San Francisco. There will be an interim Dean named; and the formal search will begin in late spring.

8. The Steering Committee Chairperson’s Remarks – Professor Mary Noel

This is the last Faculty Senate meeting of this semester. We are announcing the cancellation of the University Council meeting for November. Also, the position announcement for the Secretary for Academic Governance has been posted and you are encouraged to review the notice and either put your name in the hat or recommend colleagues for the position.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Annual Academic Governance Conference 2016, Professor Martin Crimp, Vice Chair

The Committee on Institutional Cooperation annual Academic Governance Conference was held at the University of Illinois in September. This conference brings together representatives of the institutions in the Big Ten Conference and the University of Illinois-Chicago. The meeting allows for conversations on a number of issues that are on
the agendas of the different institutions. For me, it was interesting to learn how the different institutions’ shared academic governance programs operate, and how they interact with their administrations and governing bodies. At this year’s meeting both the Interim Chancellor and Interim Provost met with the group and discussed the area of college affordability and accessibility. Additionally, we discussed issues of disability resources; academic freedom, and its relationship to tenure, and the effect of non-tenure-track faculty on the Academy; open-access to research articles; and faculty salaries and benefits. Among the institutions represented, there were a number of important issues identified as active on their campuses. For example, Purdue has a new president who has declared that this is the year that the faculty find out who runs the University; the University of Wisconsin faces proposed changes in the tenure determination that will shift control from the university to state legislature; Iowa’s Board of Regents hired a new president with no experience of university leadership, following a search with little faculty input; and the University of Illinois has nearly all new upper administrators. For the future, Michigan State was identified as the host for the 2016 conference.

10. NEW BUSINESS

University Committee on Curriculum October Report, Professor Gerald Urquhart, Chair.

Professor Urquhart moved for the Faculty Senate’s approval of actions taken by the Committee in October. The changes include two new programs, a Bachelor’s Degree in Economic Geography, and a minor in Sports Business Management along with 8 program changes. There were 10 new courses, 32 course changes, and 17 courses were deleted.

Motion was APPROVED.

Revisions to the Faculty Handbook, Professor John Bell, Chair, University Committee on Faculty Affairs and Professor Debra Nails, Chair, University Committee on Academic Governance

Professor Nails presented the background and the current proposals for revisions to the Discipline and Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause Policy and the Faculty Grievance Policy. These policies have been under review going back a number of years. Different Standing Committees in Academic Governance have worked on different parts of these two policies and presented their findings. This past summer, a working group representing the University Committee on Faculty Affairs, University Committee on Faculty Tenure, selected Department Chairs, the Office of the Provost, the Office of General Counsel, and the Faculty Grievance Office met to consolidate and complete the process. The group examined policies from other CIC institutions and compared them with the jointly authored recommendations from the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the American Association of University Professors. The working group reviewed a number of issues from other universities that had both negative and positive outcomes and examined a number of different scenarios in an attempt to make their recommendations reflect best practices. The group
continued the discussions until all were in agreement with the final recommendations.

Professor Nails moved, with a second by Professor Bell, to approve the Revised Discipline and Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause Policy.

The key features of the revised policy include the formal requirement that the administrator meet with the faculty member to discuss the issue before discipline is imposed. The new policy provides a mechanism for, and encourages, early and informal resolution; it makes explicit the faculty member’s right to have an observer or advisor present at meetings and reinforces the iterative character of discipline. The new policy identifies two different categories for discipline and imposes additional procedural protections before discipline can be imposed. Minor discipline for cause requires consultation at the faculty member’s discretion with the departmental advisory committee or the chair of the University-level Faculty Affairs Committee’s Personnel Subcommittee before the discipline process can be initiated. Serious discipline for cause prompts the meeting of an annual three person standing review panel from the University Committee on Faculty Affairs to review the issues before the discipline process is initiated. The new policy establishes an annual standing three person review panel from the University Committee on Faculty Tenure to hear dismissal for cause cases. It requires the Provost’s office to arrange training for the applicable panel members, and stipulates alternative means of communication, and specific deadlines to prevent intentional delays in the process.

Motion was APPROVED.

Professor Bell moved, with a second by Professor Nails, to approve the Revised Faculty Grievance Policy.

Professor Bell described the background for the proposed revisions to the Faculty Grievance Policy from the University Committee on Faculty Affairs to make it consistent with the Discipline and Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause Policy. The revision provides that appeals will be decided upon the written appeal of the record of the grievance hearing, responses to the appeal, and the Faculty Grievance Officer’s recommendations. An appeal is based on the record of the grievance hearing and is not intended to be a second hearing. It permits the Appeal Panel to make a decision regarding whether the appeal jurisdictional procedures requirements have been met, and whether the appeal can go forward. The new policy also permits the appeals panel to recommend that the appeal be re-heard if there was a prejudicial violation of the procedures during the initial hearing.

Motion was APPROVED.

11. Comments from the Floor

12. ADJOURNMENT: 5:05