Approved: October 17, 2017
2017-2018: Meeting # 1

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL APPROVED MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 19, 2017 3:15 PM
115 INTERNATIONAL CENTER


1. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 3:20 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda for September 19, 2017
The agenda for September 29, 2017 was approved as presented.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes for April 25, 2017
The minutes for April 25, 2017 were approved as distributed.

4. President’s Remarks: Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon (Out of Town)

5. Provost’s Remarks: Dr. June Youatt
Provost Youatt reported that MSU had 8,000 first-time students that joined the University this Fall Semester, and another 1,600 undergraduate transfer students. She added that MSU’s
graduate student enrollment was up about 100 students, which is very positive news. She noted that the student organization, COGS (Council of Graduate Students), did a fantastic job in welcoming graduate students back to campus.

Provost Youatt stated that the undergraduate students enjoyed a full week of activities. She said that Student Affairs did their usual excellent work in encouraging students in the planned activities. She also said that about 100 new tenure stream faculty members joined the University this year, as well as others in various academic roles beyond tenure steam.

Provost Youatt reported that the new Integrated Science Building is well underway with its construction, and that the Michigan State Legislature did approve some funding for a new STEM education building, which will be a space that will be built to teach science and mathematics in the 21st century.

She stated that the MSU Board of Trustees approved moving ahead with the Healthy Campus Initiative. Provost Youatt noted that she is determined to make MSU a healthier place for students, staff, and faculty to work and live. She noted that the Board of Trustees had previously approved a set of funds for projects that would be appropriate to develop the assets on campus for recreation, fitness and movement, adding that Dr. Maybank and Greg Ianni (along with others on campus, including Barb Kranz), convened a group that worked through a set of recommendations and established a set of priorities that will be reported to the University Council in the near future.

Barb Kranz then reported on MSU’s efforts at developing programs and facilities that support a culture of health and wellness. As part of these efforts, Kranz stated that plans were made to develop a framework and provide guidance on concepts where MSU could make investments in areas using our existing campus resources to support fitness and recreation. She said that, during the summer, Dr. Maybank was instrumental in undertaking improvements at MSU’s existing facilities. She added that there are five projects that MSU will be focusing on, including a review of the condition of facilities and a study of the impact to student groups, faculty and staff that use the facilities. Kranz noted that MSU will soon engage in a selection process to hire the architectural and engineering firms that will help MSU develop the plans for these projects. Discussion ensued following Kranz’s presentation.

6. Chairperson’s Remark: Dr. Laura McCabe

Dr. McCabe welcomed members of the University Council to the new academic year. She offered a discussion of the role and responsibilities of University Council, including the composition of its attending members. She added that the primary focus of discussion in the University Council will be on issues that would not be the core responsibility of the Faculty Senate.

Dr. McCabe stated that she wants to have members of the Steering Committee (and perhaps other members in Academic Governance) to attend the various MSU College advisory groups in order to share ideas about Academic Governance, as well as receive input about what Academic Governance can do to address their concerns.

Dr. McCabe also noted that one of the issues that was of interest to the Steering Committee was the proposed City of East Lansing income tax hike; the Steering Committee felt that this is an important situation for the University, and how its employees can voice their concerns.
NEW BUSINESS


Professor Marci Mechtel presented the UCC report as an information item only. She stated that, as approved by Faculty Senate on September 12th, there are four new programs, including a Bachelor of Arts degree in Global History, as well as two new Minors in International Development, and in Environment and Health. A Graduate Certificate in American Studies was approved as well. In addition, 45 program changes were approved, with no program deletions. Regarding course approvals, 23 new courses were approved, 46 course changes were approved, and four course deletions were approved.

The report was approved at the Faculty Senate Meeting on September 9th.

6.2. Proposed East Lansing Income Tax and How Faculty can Respond, Mark Burnham, Vice President, Governmental Affairs, and Janet Lillie, Assistant Vice President, Governmental Affairs (click on: https://cabs.msu.edu/news/key-issues/issue-docs/EL-income-tax.html)

Assistant Vice President Janet Lillie offered background information on the proposed City of East Lansing income tax. She stated that East Lansing, like many cities in the state of Michigan, does have legitimate financial troubles. Over a year ago, she reported, the city of East Lansing formed a Financial Health Team, tasked with reviewing the City’s finances. One of the subgroups focused was then asked to focus on how to generate new moneys for the City of East Lansing.

She stated that they concluded their analysis in December of 2016, and their set of recommendations included five recommendations, one of which was the proposal of an income tax to be coupled with property tax deductions. Thus, in the June quarterly meeting, the City of East Lansing Financial Health Team approached the University with the possibility of making a contribution to the city. Later that month, she said that the City of East Lansing moved forward with their ballot language for the new income tax proposal.

This proposal involves a one percent income tax hike for those living in the City of East Lansing, and a .5 percent (or half percent) tax hike for those not living in the City of East Lansing; these new taxes would be coupled with property tax reductions. She stated that there will be two separate ballot initiatives that voters in the City of East Lansing will see on November 7th, and that these initiatives are inseparable, so voters cannot vote to decrease their property taxes and not support an income tax.

Assistant Vice President Lillie reported that MSU employees, collectively, would be contributing towards this income tax, which would generate roughly 4.9 million dollars. The City of East Lansing, with its analysis, shows that they will raise approximately 10 million dollars, with approximately five million dollars returned to City residents in property taxes. She said that the City of East Lansing is looking to raise a total of five million dollars, with 4.9 million dollars generated from University employees.
Provost Youatt stated that there are still questions to be answered about the proposed City of East Lansing income tax hike, such as what will the exemptions look like. In addition, she noted that how much an individual could earn, before it is taxed, is yet unknown. Provost Youatt added that MSU cares about this city that we live in. MSU cares about the health of our city. MSU cares about our community, and MSU also cares about one another, thus thinking about how the University balances those concerns is a very personal decision, but one that people need to be informed about in making a decision. Discussion ensued following Assistant Vice President Janet Lillie’s presentation.

The Presentation can be viewed on the Academic Governance Website.

7. Comments from the floor

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and was first and seconded. The motion carried.

4:07pm.

Standing Committees Reporting to the University Council for 2016-2017:
*Academic Governance has not received report at present.

University Committee on Academic Governance (UCAG)*
University Committee on Undergraduate Education (UCUE)
University Committee on Graduate Studies (UCGS)*
University Committee on Student Affairs (UCSA)*

Other Committees Reporting to the University Council for 2016-2017:

Athletic Council
University Committee on Honors Program (UCHP)
University Committee on International Studies and Programs (UCISP)*
University Committee for the Library (UCL)*
University Military Education Advisory Committee (UMEAC)