MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL APPROVED MINUTES
NOVEMBER 28, 2017 3:15 PM
115 INTERNATIONAL CENTER


1. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda for November 28, 2017
The agenda for November 28, 2017 was approved as amended, switching order of items.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes for October 17, 2017
The minutes for October 17, 2017 were approved as distributed.

4. President’s Remarks: Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon
President Simon reported that, regarding the issue of tuition numbers increasing, public polls indicate that there is skepticism about the value of higher education. She notes that part of what is a counter message to this public perception is all of the good work that MSU faculty does, as well as the fact that when MSU students leave the University, they are prepared not simply for their first job, but for many other opportunities in their career. The focus at Michigan State, she adds, has always been on tuition costs.
President Simon stated that the reason the tuition increases exists is because the dollars from the State have gone down. That's really the message as you think about the disruptive force. The other thing that you should all be proud of, she said, is that about 15% of MSU’s total student credit hours are mediated: 13% are all online, and 2% are hybrid. There are also 37 degree programs that are entirely online all at the graduate level. While many Universities have transitioned to online instruction, MSU has done it carefully, through the hard work of individual academic units.

Regarding the various legal actions against the University, President Simon urged people to go to MSU’s “Commitment Website” to read about the report on the Title IX program, the report on the review of the health team, and the report on athletics. She noted that MSU conducted another Title IX review in 2014. Also, as a part of the MSU’s Commitment Website, President Simon urged people to look at the history of the changes Michigan State has made over time.

President Simon said that the Commitment Website provides a way of keeping track of statements and other issues that are related to Doctor Nassar. She said that MSU will move forward in good faith any litigation that goes with this matter, and what might be an institutional responsibility for an individual who acted in a horrific fashion.

President Simon reported that the list of effects of the Federal tax law on higher education is very long and constantly changing, and in a number of cases will have a negative impact on higher education. She notes that the one issue that is receiving the most attention is the taxing of educational benefits that would encompass graduate students.

5. **Provost’s Remarks:** Dr. June Youatt (Out of town)

6. **Chairperson’s Remarks:** Professor Deborah Moriarty, Vice Chairperson

Vice Chairperson Deborah Moriarty reported that Chairperson Laura McCabe is currently in Hong Kong. She wished Happy Holidays to everyone, and for those who celebrate Christmas, several music events are available. One is Handel’s Messiah on December 9th, and the other one is A Jazzy Little Christmas with the Professors of Jazz on December 16th.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

7.1. **General Student Regulation**, Lorenzo Santavicca, ASMSU President

Lorenzo Santavicca presented the General Student Regulation Report for vote.

Mr. Santavicca reported that placed in front of the membership of the University Council was a copy of the General Student Regulations. He noted that a few amendments to this document are being proposed. The most notable amendment, he stated, involves the regulations related to the protection of individuals without reference to where the alleged activity occurs, or when the alleged misconduct involves hazing or acts causing or explicitly threatening to cause serious bodily harm to other individuals. He said that amendment was one of the most notable changes that is being proposed in the General Student Regulations, in an effort to be more proactive with issues of concern.

Mr. Santavicca stated that MSU students wanted to make the concerns involving hazing at the forefront of how we at MSU be more active in policy procedures involving events relating to hazing, or any actions explicitly threatening to cause
serious bodily harm. I will note that one of the conversations that we had in UCSA was about to what extent we talk about acts causing or explicitly threatening to cause serious bodily harm. Other major amendment changes, he noted, involved possession or use of any drug prohibited by Federal or State laws.

In addition, he reported on the amendment involving production and commercialization of intellectual property, as well as the amendments regarding academic misconduct and student plagiarism. A motion was made to approve the amended General Student Regulations and was first and seconded. Discussion ensued. The motion carried.

The General Student Regulation can be viewed on the Academic Governance Website.

7.2. University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) Report, Professor Marci Mechtel, UCC Chairperson (Long Report, click on link)

UCC Chairperson Marci Mechtel presented the UCC Report. She stated that there were nine program changes, and no program deletions. She also stated that the UCC approved 17 new courses, 35 course changes, and 2 course deletions.

A motion was made to approve the Report and was first and seconded. The motion carried.

7.3. Possible Future Plans to Address Course Scheduling Issues, Professor R. Sekhar Chivukula, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Sekhar presented on Future Plans to Address Course Scheduling Issues at MSU. He began by defining the context for student success at MSU broadly. Noting that MSU admits its students on the basis that the University believes they can succeed. MSU believes all students have the ability to learn, persist and graduate in a timely fashion, he added. Dr. Sekhar reported that one measure of how MSU is doing in terms of student success is the graduation rate. He said that the standard federally reported graduation rate is the six-year graduation rate, adding that regarding MSU’s entering cohorts between 2007 and 2011, the overall graduation rate has stayed around 80%, which is a success story. This level is about 8% higher than might be expected when compared to other institutions.

Dr. Sekhar noted that the graduation rate for African-American students at MSU is almost 20 percentage points less in some years, and MSU’s graduate rate for Hispanic students tends to be 10 percentage points less. He stated that MSU is interested in raising the graduation rate overall, and closing those graduation gaps. MSU is interested in making sure everyone does better, drawing attention to the significant change and the significant increase in the graduation rate for African-American students from the Fall Semester of 2010 cohort to the Fall Semester of 2011 cohort, from 59% to 65%.

Dr. Sekhar discussed “Spartan Identity,” an attempt to create a coherent vision of what an MSU undergraduate education involves, so that MSU can align its undergraduate education efforts. He then went on to briefly explain the initiatives of “Go Green, Go 15,” MSU’s credit momentum campaign and its implications for course scheduling.
and “Spartan Pathways”. These involve building a cohesive integrated framework for students, from the time they apply to Michigan State University to the time they are admitted to Michigan State University, to their bridge and orientation programs in the summer, to their first year and into the second year, in order to make sure that MSU effectively deals with that transition from high school to college.

The Presentation can be viewed on the Academic Governance Website.

7.4. **Behavioral Threat Assessment Team Report**, Amy Ray, Investigative Division, MSU Police Department

Amy Ray presented the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team Report. She reported that her team basically deals any report of threat, odd behavior, violent ideology, expressed violent ideas, suicidal ideation, odd and erratic behaviors. She noted that BTAT is housed with the University, and that BTAU is housed with the Police Department specifically. The unit is comprised of herself, Detective Sergeant Kennedy Parker and Detective Ryan Staffer. They receive daily reports of threat from our patrol officers who may have encountered situations on the road or interactions with students or interactions with employees that they feel the BTA unit needs to know about for discussion. I have people directly contact me through phone calls or emails with a referral.

She said that basically any report of threat, odd behavior, violent ideology, expressed violent ideas, suicidal ideation, or odd erratic behaviors get reported to MSU Police Department BTAU, which is the Behavioral Threat Assessment Unit. The unit, she states, is comprised of herself, Detective Sergeant Kennedy Parker, and Detective Ryan Staffer. She added that BTAU receives daily reports of threat from MSU’s patrol officers who may have encountered situations on the road, or interactions with students, or interactions with employees who feel that the BTAU unit needs to be involved.

The purpose of BTAT (the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team), Officer Ray stated, is to assess the referral, talk about or identify risks, and how the BTAT can intervene, in order to be proactive to try to mitigate those risks that are presented. She noted that the BTAT has an online referral form: BTAT.MSU.EDU, and that meetings with individuals are conducted in confidential settings.

She noted that the BTAT can talk with the student about different concerns, such as medical withdrawal, or how can student stress loads be reduced, or how a safety plan can be created. If the situation also warrants, while the BTAT is talking with the person, they may take them directly to the hospital, or have them talk directly with a doctor on certain cases.

Officer Ray concluded her remarks by providing a quick summary, stating that the BTAT exists to mitigate the risk of threat or violence, and to provide a safe and productive learning and working environment at MSU.

8. **Comments from the floor**

None
9. **ADJOURNMENT**
   A motion was made to adjourn and was first and seconded. **The motion carried.**
   4:11 pm.