MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
THE STEERING COMMITTEE APPROVED MINUTES
OCTOBER 2, 2018 3:15 PM
ROOM 443, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING


Absent: Interim President Engler, B. Burke, R. LaDuca, D. Moriarty, D. Straiton

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

2. Approval of Agenda for October 2, 2018
The agenda for October 2, 2018 was approved as presented. A friendly motion was made to move 9.2 (President and Provost Membership) to end and remove Item 7, Introductions. The friendly amendment was seconded. The motion carried.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes for September 4, 2018
The minutes for September 4, 2018 was approved as distributed.

4. President’s Remarks: Interim President John Engler (out of town)

Provost’s Remarks: Dr. June Youatt
Provost Youatt reported that a proposal to create a new academic department, a joint department between Human Medicine and Osteopathic Medicine, to be named the Department of Orthopedics, will be introduced soon to Academic Governance and the various relevant standing committees for review and approval.

Provost Youatt also noted her recommendation for a change in the procedures for reviewing Deans at MSU. Her recommendation includes a one year review, a three year review, and a five year review (that must lead to a decision for reappointment or not) for all Deans at the University. Provost Youatt stated that this new set of procedures allows for the use of an external group to collect information (through interviews from faculty, staff, students), so that the Administration can retain the importance of unanimity, but at the same time have some level of personal responsibility. She said that her office will continue to do broad surveys, but that these surveys will be balanced by some other ways to collect feedback. Provost Youatt thus asks for faculty feedback, but she would like to implement this by the second semester of this academic year, because MSU currently has several first-year Deans.

Provost Youatt said that all MSU Colleges (and their Advisory Committees) need to continue to be part of this process. She added that she wants to move to a review process that is more standardized. She stated: “I think we need some bench marks in this role, that there are
common expectations across the entire University for academic leaders; and so being able to ask questions, and do some assessments, based on those expectations, and then, certainly if colleges have additional interest or expectations or questions, I think that's great. But I think we need to have some agreed upon standard set of expectation, and then colleges can wrap some other things around it.” Discussion ensued.

A motion to move to University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA), University Committee on Student Affairs (UCSA) and University Committee on Graduate Studies (UCGS) was made and seconded. The motion carried.

A discussion ensued on the various investigations into MSU, following the wake of the Larry Nassar crimes.

5. Chairperson’s Remark: Dr. Rob LaDuca (out of town).

Dr. Jennifer Johnson, as Acting Chair for the Steering Committee, substituted for Dr. Laduca. In her opening statement, she said that effective communication and transparency, across all academic leadership levels of the University, is paramount.

6. Committee Reports

University Committee on Academic Governance (UCAG), Dr. Amanda Tickner

Dr. Tickner reported that the University Committee on Academic Governance elected a Chair in its first meeting, as well as a Vice-Chair. She added that Tyler Silvestri agreed to be Secretary for the Committee. She noted that discussions were conducted about the summer Ad Hoc committee recommendations regarding University By-Laws reform recommendations. She also stated that UCAG made several nominations to the University-wide Naming Committee, to fill that empty space. In addition, she said that UCAG voted to start reviewing the College By-Laws once again, which had been put on hold last year in favor of getting the University By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee established.

University Committee on Graduate Studies (UCGS), Dr. Gwen Wittenbaum

Dr. Wittenbaum reported that the University Committee on Graduate Studies conducted its first meeting, and conducted a great discussion about the new Strategic Plan for the Graduate School, which is now posted on the Graduate School website. She said that the vision being developed by UCGS involves providing strategic leadership for Graduate Education that advances humanity, and furthers knowledge to shape the future. She noted that there are three goals with this initiative, and they are 1) student success, 2) diverse and inclusive communities, and 3) inter-connectedness.

University Committee on Curriculum (UCC), Dr. Marci Mechtel

Dr. Mechtel reported that the University Committee on Curriculum met at the end of September and approved the following: no new Programs approved; 18 program changes approved; and no program deletions. She also said that 51 new courses were approved; 66 course changes were approved; and 33 course deletions were approved. Regarding course moratoriums, she stated that moratoriums were approved for the Creative Writing Minor, effective Fall Semester of 2017 through Summer Semester of 2020; the Food Safety and
Toxicology Graduate Certificate, effective Spring Semester of 2019; the Extension in Quantitative Biology, effective Spring Semester of 2018 through Spring Semester of 2020; and the Religion in the Americas Minor, effective Fall Semester of 2018 through Fall Semester of 2019. Discussion ensued about the UCC looking at Freshman Seminars.

**UCUE – Rich Bellon**

Dr. Bellon reported that in the University Committee on Undergraduate Committee’s first meeting standards of the curricular issues were dealt with that do not have any larger implications for the University as a whole. He also noted that UCUE’s second meeting was canceled, because of the lack of agenda items. He added that UCUE is anticipating the review of tuitions issues, the review of new computer systems for the evaluation of teaching, and the review of new student information systems. Discussion ensued.

**University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA), Dr. Mark Waddell**

Dr. Mark Waddell reported that UCFA is running a search for a new Faculty Grievance Official (FGO). He noted that UCFA proposed the appointment of an Acting FGO, and that the position will be posted online soon. He also reported that UCFA has been discussing the changes made to the Discipline and Dismissal of Tenure Faculty for Cause Policy, made by the Board of Trustees over the summer. He noted that UCFA has drafted a letter to the Board expressing serious reservations about what they did and how they did it; the letter will be sent to the Board of Trustees this week. Discussion ensued.

**University Committee on Faculty Tenure, Dr. Len Fleck**

Dr. Fleck reported that the University Committee on Faculty Tenure were also asked to weigh in on the Discipline and Dismissal of Tenure Faculty Policy. He noted that the UCFT is concerned that one of the things the President of the University could do is decide whether a faculty member will be able to receive pay through the dismissal process. He added that there were no criteria laid out for this new Policy, and it seemed entirely arbitrary in nature. Discussion ensued.

**University Committee on Student Affairs (UCSA), Katherine (Cookie) Rifiotis and President of ASMSU**

Katherine Rifiotis reported that issues revolving around activism and engagement will be addressed, as will discussions around free speech. She noted that, in addition, discussions about off-campus versus on-campus policies will be reviewed, and how they are different. She noted that a conversation is being conducted with Provost Youatt regarding the implementation of the Dean of Students office. Also under discussion, she said, are issues involving student homelessness and food insecurity, as costs of tuition increase. Students are making radical sacrifices, she stated, that are not sustainable in any means, or conducive to their academic success. She added that general education classes and freshmen seminars are being reviewed to examine their impacts on student success. She addressed concerns about leadership development in the Division of Student Affairs, student mental health issues, and safety and mobility problems on campus.
7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1. Faculty Senate Work Session on October 9, with John Beck, Setting Priorities and Approaches for the Coming Year, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
A motion was made to invite John Beck to Faculty Senate in November. The motion carried.

7.2. Academic Specialists and FRIB Election Process, Amanda Tickner, University Committee on Academic Governance (UCAG) Chairperson
It was noted that FRIB and Academic Specialists at MSU received seats in various Academic Governance bodies, and that they placed representatives in those seats, but, unfortunately, their By-Laws do not specify how they elected those people to those seats. Because there is no official procedure for these units to hold elections, UCAG would like to make a formal request to FRIB and the Academic Specialists that they put language in their By-Laws to specify how they are electing their representatives in Academic Governance.

A motion was made and seconded to take this issue to the Academic Specialists Advisory Committee. The motion carried.

7.3. MSU Candidacy for the MSU Board of Trustees
A motion was made and seconded to invite candidates for the two open MSU Board of Trustees seats, to speak to the University Council. Discussion ensued.
The motion carried.

7.4. Block Tuition, Katherine Rifiotis, ASMSU
Concerns were raised about the implementation of Block Tuition at MSU. Discussion ensued.

7.5. Mandatory Healthcare for Students Policy, Katherine Rifiotis, ASMSU
Concerns were raised about the Mandatory Healthcare Policy for Students at MSU. Discussion ensued.

7.6. Search Committee Listening Session Meeting Notes, Request to Make Them Widely Available ASAP, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
A discussion was held regarding the request that the Presidential Search Committee Listening Session meeting notes be made widely available. The proposal states: "we would like to respectfully request that such notes be made available to all MSU stakeholders, making these notes available via the search committees website or otherwise would signal the committees or the boards desire to be transparent and collaborative in the presidential search process. Furthermore, doing so will eliminate the need for internal and external parties to use FOYA mechanisms to make available the notes in the public forms conducted by the search committee. Most importantly, doing so will
allow campus community members to benefit from insights gained at meetings with diverse audiences across campus and elsewhere." Discussion ensued.

A motion was made and seconded to bring this issue before the Faculty Senate. Motion passed.

7.7. University Council or Faculty Senate Proposal for Faculty and Student Representatives on BOT Subcommittees, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
The issue was raised as to whether the MSU Faculty Senate and or University Council should make a request of the Board of Trustees for faculty and student representation on sub-committees that would report to the Board. Such a structure would not violate the State of Michigan Constitution.

A motion was made and seconded to bring this request to the Board of Trustees. Motion Carried.

7.8. Invite Chairs of BOT Subcommittees to University Council or Faculty Senate Annually for Discussion and Input, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
A motion was made that the Steering Committee regularly invite the Board of Trustees’ Committee Chairs to report to the University Council once a semester. The motion was seconded. The motion carried. This initiative will begin in Spring Semester of 2019.

7.9. University Council Presidential Search Committee Proposal, Accepted MSU Practice, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member (Appendix C)
Dr. Johnson stated that, given that the Board is developing sub-committees, does it make sense to invite a representative of the sub-committees to University Council or Faculty Senate annually for discussion and input on whatever they are doing, as a method of communication with the wider University?

It was moved and seconded to put this issue on the University Council agenda for discussion to move forward. The motion was seconded. Discussion ensued. A friendly amendment was made to put this issue on the Faculty Senate’s agenda first, for faculty voice, and then move it to the University Council. The motion passed.

7.10. Mayor Mark Meadows Speaking at University Council in October, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
A Motion was made to place this agenda item on the University Council’s agenda, and seconded. The motion passed.

7.11. Greg Koerner from MSU IT Digital Classroom Services Group to Faculty Senate to Request Feedback, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
A motion was made to place this item on the November Faculty Senate meeting, and seconded. The motion carried.

7.12. President and Provost Membership on Faculty Senate, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member
It was noted that it was important to be more civil with each other, especially during more difficult discussions, that faculty should build bridges instead of fracturing relationships. A motion was made to table the request to exclude the President and
8. Draft Agenda for Faculty Senate for October 9, 2018

8.1. University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) Report, Professor Marci Mechtel, UCC Chairperson (Action Item) (Short Report, Appendix) (Long Report, click on link)

8.2. Search Committee Listening Session Meeting Notes, Request to Make Them Widely Available ASAP, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member and Chairperson Sub (Appendix B) – Cookie Rifiotis will let Sherry Lott know if this will be on or not.

8.3. University Council Presidential Search Committee Proposal, Accepted MSU Practice, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member (Appendix C)

8.4. John Beck Working Session

A motion to approve the agenda for October 9, 2018 was made and seconded. The motion carried.

9. Draft Agenda for University Council for October 16, 2018

9.1. University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) Report, Professor Marci Mechtel, UCC Chairperson (Information Item) (Short Report, Appendix) (Long Report, click on link)

9.2. MSU Candidacy for the MSU Board of Trustees, Candidates Brianna Scott (D), Kelly Tebay (D) and Mike Miller (R) (Information Item)

9.3. Mayor Mark Meadows, (Information Item) – Slated for November

9.4. University Council Presidential Search Committee Proposal, Accepted MSU Practice, Moriarty Proposal, Dr. Jennifer Johnson, At-Large Member and Chairperson Sub (Appendix)

A motion to approve the agenda for October 16, 2018 was made and seconded. The motion carried.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion carried. 5:04 pm.