MEMORANDUM

To: The University Steering Committee
Copied: ASMSU, UCGS, UCFA, Academic Governance
From: University Committee on Undergraduate Education,
Richard J. Miksicek (Ph.D.), Chair
Date: January 5, 2018

Feedback was requested from the ASMSU on their proposal to implement a mid-
semester feedback process. The ASMSU proposal was reviewed and discussed by
the full UCUE committee on November 17, 2017 after circulation of the ASMSU
Executive Summary containing information about the survey instrument and
feedback from the Spring 2016 pilot undertaken by Lyman Briggs College. A
variety of issues were discussed:

• pros and cons of an additional, broader follow-up study, expand to include
  the other residential colleges (RCAH, James Madison) in addition to LBC
• recommended timeline for broader implementation
• preferred feedback platforms (D2L, Qualtrix, etc.)
• importance of anonymity and challenges to maintaining anonymity in
certain course formats (e.g., small enrollment courses, recitation sessions,
one-on-one instructional situations in music, performance, and studio arts).
• issues with pseudo-quantitative ratings based on use of Leikert scales
• difficulty in crafting standardized questions applicable to different course
  formats, large vs small enrollment courses, lecture vs lab, etc
• inability to determine whether or not collecting mid-semester feedback
  actually improves course and teaching outcomes; should an additional pilot
  be run in which parallel sections (with and without mid-semester feedback)
  are compared using end-of-semester SIRS results as an outcome measure
• formal or informal mid-semester feedback efforts already exist in some
  colleges, especially the professional colleges undergoing curricular revision
• potential value of using faculty liaisons within programs and departments
to “champion” use of mid-semester feedback
Based on these discussions, UCUE voted to endorse the following consensus recommendations:

1) Mid-Semester Feedback represents a “best practice” that is already being utilized voluntarily by many units; adoption by other units should be encouraged, but not required
2) Rather than imposing an institutionalized, one-size-fits-all solution to implement Mid-Semester Feedback for all types of instruction, this should be a voluntary practice, with specifics (including questions and platforms) that are left to the discretion of the individual instructor
3) The institutional goal should be to build and foster a culture among MSU faculty for soliciting student feedback early in the semester when there remains sufficient time to implement corrective measures
4) The best way to encourage broader adoption of this practice may be to develop one or two easy-to-adopt templates to anonymously solicit mid-semester feedback
5) UCUE suggests scaling down the questions from five to two, and possibly to solicit only open-ended feedback and forgo a system for quantitatively or qualitatively rating courses and instructions. The focus should be on improving student learning:

- As a student, what could you do in the remainder of the semester to help you learn more effectively?
- As an instructor, what could I do in the remainder of the semester to help you learn more effectively?

The following motion was proposed, seconded, and endorsed by the full UCUE committee:

“UCUE has reviewed and supports the program that ASMSU is promoting and suggests that it be expanded University wide, with the creation of a sample template of feedback questions suitable for large and small class settings.”