Task Force 2 presented to Faculty Council 9-12-06. Faculty Council accepted Task Force 2 Report 9-12-06.

Memo sent to President Simon for advice and implementation suggestions 9-20-06.

Faculty Council discussion occurred with President Simon regarding Task Force 2 report 11-14-06.

President Simon presented a response to Faculty Council regarding Task Force 2 report. Task Force 2 was tabled 3-13-07.

It was noted in Faculty Council that President Simon Response to Task Force 2 will come back to Council and be “removed from the table” on 4-3-07.

4-24-07 Task Force 2 was removed from the table. Provost Wilcox presented a document that laid out a set of commitments by the President and the Provost’s office. A motion was passed to refer the set of commitments and the Task Force 2 Report to UCFA to sort through the issues and report back to Faculty Council in Fall 2007.
November 6, 2007

To: Executive Committee of Academic Council

From: Dr. John Powell, Chair

Subject: Task Force II Recommendations on Administrator Review

On April 24, 2007 the Faculty Council discussed the Faculty Voice Task Force II report regarding Administrator Review. At that meeting Provost Wilcox presented a series of commitments from the President and Provost regarding the review process. A motion was passed to refer these documents and this issue to the University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA) and request that UCFA report back to Faculty Council in fall 2007.

The UCFA appreciates the enormous amount of work and effort that Task Force II put into researching and formulating its recommendations. UCFA also would like to acknowledge the thoughtful responses to these recommendations crafted by the President and Provost.

The Faculty Voice Task Force II report recommends that an Administrator Review Committee (ARC) be formed to conduct a biennial evaluation of department chairs, school directors, deans, Director of Libraries, Provost, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, and President. The evaluation would take the form of soliciting feedback from faculty reporting to the administrator via Web-based evaluation forms. The results of the feedback with the exception of written comments would be accessible online to those eligible to review that particular administrator.

The Task Force's recommendations were in response to perceived problems with the current evaluation system:

1. The President and Provost are not reviewed by the faculty;
2. The review period of five years is too long;
3. Faculty often do not find out the results of reviews in which they participate;
4. Current practice is seen as inconsistent, varying from college to college.
Administrator Review
November 6, 2007

The President and Provost responded with recommendations for enhancing the current processes (LAKS Faculty Voice 2_23_07.doc - attached).

The Personnel Subcommittee of UCFA examined the documents and discussed the issues addressed by Taskforce II. We also contacted the Co-Chairperson of Taskforce II concerning their deliberations leading to the recommendations.

UCFA feels that instead of implementing new procedures, the university might be better served by enhancing the current processes as suggested by the President and Provost. UCFA would like to see the President and Provost’s suggestions implemented, and had additional suggestions they felt would further enhance the existing processes and address several concerns expressed by Task Force II:

1. UCFA would like to see the annual review process for MSU administrators strengthened.

2. UCFA members agreed that the current five-year review period is too long, especially because the five-year review focuses on whether a given administrator should continue in that post. Presently there is no formal mechanism for constructive feedback from faculty advisory committees to help beginning administrators better fulfill their duties. Therefore the UCFA recommends that during the middle year of the appointment term of Chairpersons and Directors (usually the third year), Deans meet with the FAC to provide and receive feedback concerning each Chairperson and Director. The committee emphasized that if the FAC chooses to collect feedback from faculty and others immediately under each Chair and Director, assurances of confidentiality will be critically important. This review will be designed to provide constructive feedback to the Chairperson or Director and will include questions suggested by the Chair or Director being reviewed.

3. The UCFA felt that the Provost should conduct a mid-period review of Deans that mirrors the one outlined above that includes feedback to the Dean and College Advisory Committee.

4. In addition to the written feedback provided in the five-year review, UCFA recommends a meeting and conversation between the administrator under review and his/her immediate superior to discuss the result of the review.
While UCFA agreed with the goals of the Task Force II report, members felt that certain recommendations may not be the best means of achieving these goals:

1. While UCFA agreed with the goal of conducting a “bottom up” review, it was concerned about the quality of data that could be gathered from asking all faculty under a given administrator to respond and felt that such data should be handled carefully.

2. The UCFA questioned the ability of a seven-person Administrator Review Committee (ARC), because of the time and effort involved, to review administrators across the entire campus, given the large number of reviews to conduct and the extensive differences in administrative responsibilities from unit to unit.

3. The UCFA did not feel that posting results of faculty feedback, even with limited access, would be productive. The potential misinterpretation of the results was felt to be a serious concern. The committee felt that using the FAC in the case of chairpersons or directors and the CAC in the case of Deans as a vehicle to disseminate the results of the administrator review back to the faculty they represent would be a more effective means of communication.

4. The UCFA supports Task Force II recommendation that the President and Provost should receive feedback on their performance by the constituencies they serve. UCFA encourages the Board of Trustees, as part of its annual evaluation, to create a mechanism for gathering constructive feedback from a variety of sources about the President and Provost including issues such as faculty involvement in the governance process; communication with faculty; strategic planning and the direction of the university; and the overall vision for the university.

In summary, the UCFA acknowledges and appreciates the work Task Force II invested in developing their recommendations. We feel the proposed modifications to Task Force II recommendations would be more effective in addressing the deficiencies in the current evaluation system for administrators.
February 23, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty Council

FROM: Lou Anna K. Simon, President

RE: Response to Faculty Voice Proposals
    Task Force II: Administrator Review
    Task Force III: Academic Program Review

I continue to appreciate the hard work and deliberation represented by each of the Faculty Voice Task Force reports. At the request of Faculty Council, I am providing a written response to Reports II and III. Provost Wilcox, ECAC Chairperson Potchen, and Senior Associate Provost Youatt have met to discuss these reports, and their conclusions have helped inform my comments.

Reports II and III each deal with a review process, and in each case, faculty assert that a more rigorous, systematic, and inclusive practice would better meet our goals.

The Academic Governance Program Review Task Force recommends a process and a rotation by which academic departments will be reviewed. I concur with the goals of the unit review as described in the Academic Program Review (guiding future directions and providing evidence for change), and I generally endorse the process described in the Academic Program Review (APR) report.

While the responsibility for determining the schedule and rotation of academic units to be reviewed within a college, is the responsibility of the College Advisory Committee in consultation with the Dean, the Provost should maintain the option of calling for an expedited review of any unit within the college. The Provost also needs the prerogative of requesting the review of a cross-college program (not accounted for in this proposal). It is understood that the metrics for the reviews are negotiated within the larger strategic plans of the University.

The Recommendations for Administrator Review similarly seeks to improve a University process, by endorsing a more inclusive and robust
process, by which administrators are regularly reviewed. The recommendations as proposed, however, raise a number of concerns which I mentioned to Faculty Council in October:

- The details of process by which any new tool would be developed and vetted
- the use of the feedback from the proposed system
- the relationship of the proposed process to other processes
- possible unintended consequences of the process

I reiterate my concern that inadequate consideration may have been given to the possible negative impacts of collecting and posting of administrator performance data on the recruitment of faculty to a unit, the recruitment of new administrators for a unit, or the influence the practice could have on an administrator’s decisions around a difficult change agenda, especially at the beginning of an administrative term. I believe it bears remembering that almost every department on campus has rejected the on-line completion of SIRS forms because of faculty concern of responder bias on the part of disgruntled students.

At the center of the Administrator Review proposal, however, rests the important and legitimate concerns of expanded faculty participation and timely review.

Academic Human Resource Policies (Section IV) currently describe the annual evaluation of chairpersons and directors. An assessment is to occur annually, with all aspects of performance evaluated. A copy of the evaluation instrument (criteria) used must be filed with the Office of the Provost prior to each annual cycle of evaluations, and the dean of each college must inform the Office of the Provost that the annual performance evaluation for each unit administrator has been completed.

Guidelines for the required five-year review of academic deans are also detailed in our Academic Governance By-Laws (2.1.4). Chairpersons, directors and deans are also subject to regular review at intervals not to exceed five years. The College Advisory Committee of each college has shared responsibility with the Provost to determine the procedures for the review of deans.

Given these guidelines for administrator review, it would appear that we have in place appropriate opportunities for feedback and input. We may well have been weak, however, in exercising the guidelines that are in place. Rather than create a second system, it seems prudent to work on our existing processes to see whether or not we could implement
changes that would make these more transparent and inclusive. After conferring with Provost Wilcox, we would like to offer the following recommendations:

- That the Office of the Provost post on the web the schedule for the five-year review for each Dean and Director, including the date by which the preparation of the review should commence so that the review can proceed within the five-year timeline
- That the Office of the Provost work with Deans and College Advisory Committees to determine the timeline for the review of each chairperson within the college, and that these be publicly posted on the web
- That the Associate Provost for Academic Human Resources (Office of Faculty and Organizational Development) provide at least one event annually that provides information to faculty and administrators on approaches to administrator performance review
- That, on the direction of Provost Wilcox, the Associate Provost for Academic Human Resources initiate an enhanced program of professional development support specifically tailored to the needs of department chairpersons
- That information on the shared responsibility for administrator reviews be an explicit part of the orientation program for new administrators
- That the Office of the Provost provide access to every academic unit on campus, an electronic survey tool which will allow the confidential collection of data from faculty for the purpose of dean, director or chair reviews

I welcome your response to these recommendations for enhancing administrator review and look forward to working toward implementation of the program review proposal.