MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007
3:15 p.m., Radiology Building Auditorium


The meeting began at 3:15 p.m. with a Bass quorum. A full quorum was reached at 3:20 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:
The agenda was approved as distributed.

Approval of Minutes:
The minutes of April 10, 2007 were approved as distributed.

Provost’s Remarks:
Provost Wilcox noted the President was in Washington, D.C. at the AAU President’s meeting where the discussion is focused on the Federal oversight of Higher Education. The President will also be meeting with the Research University Association and delegates from Michigan. President Simon regrets not being able to attend this meeting but has worked with the Provost and Professors Youatt and Potchen on her response to Task Force 2 Report which is on the agenda.

Provost Wilcox reported that a web site has been created on campus that is a central repository of a series of information and advice as a follow up to the incident at Virginia Tech. This site brings together resources for special challenges on campus for students and faculty.

The Provost reported, as a follow up to earlier discussion, that a planning meeting has taken place for a system to recognize faculty who have served twenty-five years. This recognition will take place in the fall, 2007. There are also a series of planning meetings which will take place over the summer on the issue of Program Review, a Task Force 3 recommendation. It is hoped that a Program Review system is fully up and running by fall.

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Executive Committee Chairperson’s Remarks:
Professor Potchen noted that much had been done this year. At this time we are trying to move Task Force 1 Report forward. Professor Potchen reviewed the work on the other Task Force Reports. We now have a College of Music and action has been taken on Lyman Briggs to become a College. Over the summer work will be done on the areas of the task force recommendations that need further work, for example Task Force 4 and Task Force 2. We will continue discussion on Task Force 1 at this meeting and over the summer. There are also two initiatives which will be discussed today that will need work this summer, the Civility Task Force and the Faculty Committee to Study Rules for Discussion.

Faculty Leadership in Civility Issues:
Professor Potchen referred to Professor Tims to present a proposal to members. Professor Tims noted that faculty have been silent and it is the time to discuss the issue of civility. The following motion was presented: That the Faculty Council resolves to support and formally endorse the efforts of the “I Stop Hate: MSU United” initiative to foster a more inclusive environment on campus and to promote better understanding of diverse viewpoints. The motion was seconded and discussion ensued. A member spoke in favor of the motion but was questioning the interpretation that certain kinds of events could be precluded. For example, someone coming to campus to speak on an issue that some members of the community might see as unacceptable. The statement has to make very clear what is being implied. We do not mean to exclude contrary or unpopular voices. Another member noted that a hallmark of academia is the opportunity to have freedom of speech on any issue at any time.

A motion to give voice to the student representatives was granted to discuss the “I Stop Hate United” initiative. Eric Hinojosa, ASMSU Chairperson of Academic Assembly, explained the “I Stop Hate” initiative is a student led initiative to get behind the President’s statement on inclusion which asks all members of the MSU community to be respectful of each others views and to do things that would create a more diverse and inclusive community. The Initiative has been supported by 60 student groups on campus from different backgrounds, including ASMSU. Lauren Beech, student member of Academic Council, explained the purpose of the Initiative is to promote an atmosphere on campus where people feel safe and comfortable. The group has developed some visible signs for the Initiative which includes shirts, wrist bands and banners. All freshmen will receive the I Stop Hate wrist bands in the fall. Students are asking Faculty Council to get behind the Initiative and provide a visible push to say that inclusion is important to all on campus. A question was asked, if a group was deemed by a meaningful segment of the MSU community as a hate group, would the I Stop Hate United support their exclusion from campus? Lauren responded that the I Stop Hate group would not support exclusion of any group from campus and that free speech and academic discourse is accepted. There was further discussion clarifying the support of free speech and the intention of the Initiative. The following amendment was proposed to the proposed motion: The sentence be added at the end of the motion, “The faculty in no way supports exclusion of any viewpoints from campus.”

Discussion continued regarding the application and formally endorsing something where the
understandings of the implications are not clear. The question was called on the amendment and
the amendment passed.

Another amendment to the original motion was proposed: “That the Faculty Council resolves
to support efforts to foster a more inclusive environment on campus and promote better
understanding of diverse viewpoints. The faculty in no way supports exclusion of any
viewpoints from campus.” This deletes “formally endorse the efforts of the “I Stop Hate: MSU
United” initiative”. Following discussion there was a motion to table the original motion and
amendment. The motion failed. Discussion continued and the question was called on the
amendment. The amendment passed. The question was called on the original motion as
amended, the motion passed.

The following motion was proposed: That in order to promote faculty involvement in finding
ways to educate the MSU community in how to create and maintain an inclusive
environment of civility on campus and how to reach out to individuals having symptoms
suggesting trouble, we create a Faculty Council Civility Task Force to begin discussions on
this matter over the summer and to report back to the Faculty Council on their findings
and recommendations at the first Faculty Council meeting of the Fall 2007 Semester. This
Civility Task Force should be composed of at least three Faculty Council members who
volunteer for this important work. The motion was seconded. Clarification was requested
related to “how to reach out to individuals having symptoms suggesting trouble”. The Council
member noted this is a much broader discussion of civil rights on our campus and that this is a
very different issue than civility and inclusiveness. The following amendment was proposed:
Delete the words “how to reach out to individuals having symptoms suggesting trouble”. A
question was asked as to what the Administration is doing in this regard? Provost Wilcox
indicated MSU is well positioned in this regard. MSU has a host of expertise from the Student
Health Center, Counseling Center, Psychological Center, the Medical Colleges and the Health
Team. The Provost also noted the highly integrated group in DPPS that works with the groups
mentioned. One of the most important groups is the Resident Hall Staff and the training that is
done with the mentors on the floors to help identify the students who are struggling in one way
or another and provide resources for them. There was a sense from the group the University was
doing what was needed. A member then noted that the goal of the Task Force appears to be to
find ways to educate in how to create and maintain an inclusive environment in the community.
The amendment to the motion was passed. There was no further discussion on the amended
motion. The motion was passed.

Faculty Committee to Study Rules for Discussion in Faculty Council:
Professor Hughes, member of ECAC, raised a number of questions related to the previous
discussion and our knowledge, like granting voice, etc. Professor Hughes noted it would be
desirable to know what the rules are for conducting Council meetings and attempt to abide by the
rules. The most commonly used guide for conducting meetings is Robert’s Rules of Order which
is used at MSU. There are other rules that may be adopted for example, the Bass Quorum used
by Faculty Council. When a motion is made comments should be directed to the Chairperson
rather than members engaging in across the room arguments. Professor Hughes proposed that
Faculty Council appoint an Ad Hoc committee of three or more members to study and
evaluate the existing rules which regulate discussion and other matters in Faculty Council.
The information developed by the committee should be used by Faculty Council, along
with the information gained from the upcoming faculty survey (the result of Task Force 4),
to ensure that members are encouraged and enabled to discuss matters brought before the
Council. The motion was supported. A member noted that there seems to be multiple purposes
behind the motion. One, that people be informed of the rules and second, to have a mechanism
to change rules that may depart from Robert’s Rules if decided. Some concern was expressed
about departing from Robert’s Rules and that there did not seem to be a time when Robert’ Rules
had been violated. A question was asked if there is a problem. The purpose of the motion is to
take a look at what we have been doing but at times we have deviated and particularly with the
issue of granting voice. This year we have been trying to get as much input as possible from
many sources but the result has been much of the meeting time has been taken by non-members
which has slowed the ability of the body to get things done. For example, today, one of the
reasons for this meeting was to discuss Task Force 1 Report and we have run out of time.
Professor Hughes noted an example of not following Robert’s is the use of friendly amendments,
according to Robert’s there is no such thing. Professor Potchen noted if we had a clear
understanding of the rules we need to follow we can function more effectively. One of the
associated issues identified with the proposed motion was the idea of considering a time for
“public access” where non-members of Council may comment on issues. Following this
discussion the motion was passed.

President Simon’s Response re: Task Force 2 Report Tabled Item at Faculty Council
3/13/07:
Professor Potchen referred the item to the Provost. A motion to remove the item from the table
for discussion was passed. Provost Wilcox presented a document (attached) that lays out a set of
commitments by the President and Provost’s office (distributed to members). In review, the
Task Force 2 Report proposed a system of Administrator review which was viewed by the
President and Provost as important in eliminating concerns but at the same time proposed a
parallel system that was in place. This was discussed with ECAC and Professors Potchen, Youatt
and the Provost worked with the President to create a plan which was brought for discussion to
Faculty Council which was tabled after some discussion. The Provost met with ECAC and has
identified some elimination of existing policies along with some implementation commitments.
The Provost reviewed the set of commitments regarding the Administrator review.

A motion passed to give voice to Professor Teahan who noted that the commitments presented
were good but that the Task Force 2 Report proposed a web based faculty evaluation of
administrators and urged Faculty Council to consider. A Council member suggested a step be
added for faculty to be directly consulted for opinions on the operations of the unit and direct
faculty involvement in any review. A motion to refer the set of commitments and the Task

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Force 2 Report to UCFA to sort through the issues and report back to Faculty Council in fall semester 2007 was moved. The motion passed.

Faculty Voice Task Force 1 Report
The Provost noted the time was 5:00 p.m. and the next agenda item was to address the Faculty Voice Task Force 1 Report and go to the Committee of the Whole. Professor Weber requested members who have input from their constituency to send these to the Chairperson of ECAC. Professor DeJong reported that an ANGEL site is being set up for continued discussion during the summer. A motion passed to not go into a Committee of the Whole. A motion passed to continue to gather commentary from faculty over the summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Wright
Secretary for Academic Governance

Attachment:

Task Force Two – Administrator Review - Response from President Simon