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Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate
Tuesday, December 9, 2008
Meeting held in 209 Bryant

Senators in attendance: Robert Barnard, Mark Bing, Allison Burkette, Ricky Burkhead, Joe Turner Cantu, Bill Chappell, Yixin Chen, Donna Davis, Melissa Dennis, Charles Eagles, Allison Ford-Wade, Erin Holmes, Jason Klodt, P.T. Krantz, Joel Kuszmaul, Elise Lake, Laurel Lambert, John Lobur, Soumyajit Majumdar, Tyrus McCarty, Carmen Manning Miller, Jessica Minihan, Debra Moore-Shannon, Chris Mullen, Cesar Rego, Jason Ritchie, Paul Scovazzo, Zia Shariat-Madar, Ken Sufka, Laura Vaughn, Doug Vorhies, Mark Walker, Jay Watson, John Williamson

Senators absent with prior notification: Jesse Scott, Steve Brewer, Angela Rutherford, Thea Williams-Black, Deborah Barker, Jan Bounds, Lucien Cremaldi, Tim Nordstrom

Senators absent without notification: Karl Wang, Durant Thompson, Brad Jones, Rebecca Lowe, Elliot Hutchcraft, Mary Hayes, John Neff, Ben Cooper, Judy Greenwood, George Dor, Jordan Zjawiony

- Meeting opened by Chair Sufka at 7:00 p.m.
- First order of business: Approve November minutes
 - Motioned & seconded; approved with no abstentions
- Second order of business: Interim Provost Morris Stocks addressed the Senate
 - Campus update
 - Current enrollment is 15,289, a record for the university
 - Retention is 78.3%, down 2.2% from Fall 2007
 - 2/3 of students are state residents, almost 20% of students are minorities
 - In 1995, UM had 76% undergraduate enrollment (17th in the SUG)
 - In 2006, UM had 83% undergraduate enrollment (the lowest ranking in the SUG)
 - In 2007, UM had 84% undergraduate enrollment (again the lowest in the SUG)
 - Financial update
 - The largest portion of revenue is tuition (31%), the second is state appropriations (23%)
 - Salaries are just over half (51%) of expenditures, while contractual services—including scholarships—are 28%
 - Budget cuts
 - UM receives 20% of the total IHL appropriation
 - The governor proposed an additional cut for fiscal year 2010; UM's share of the reduction will be between \$3.8 million and \$4.5 million
 - How to deal with the cuts?

- From 2000 to 2006, state funding declined by \$6 million
- During the same period, enrollment increased by over 3000 students and tuition increased by approximately 35%
- In 2006, IHL funded UM at \$1,600 less per student than MSU
- Over the next six years, UM will receive a \$6 million increase in what IHL calls a “rebalancing” of funds
- Graduate education is weighted higher in IHL’s funding formula, thus increasing graduate education will be important in generating revenue
- UM has asked for permission to raise out-of-state tuition to the average of contiguous states; awaiting a response from IHL
- A 5% tuition increase or an increase in enrollment of 528 students would counteract the reduction in state funding
- Admissions applications appear to be up
- The endowment is \$472 million and pays out in a three year average; Provost Stocks remarked that at this time there is no reason to be concerned about the endowment’s ability to generate funds
- Current activities of Task Forces
 - Retention Task Force
 - Goal of 83% retention by 2012; the revenue implications are important
 - Honors College, Lucky Day Program, and Active Greek status help in student retention
 - Non-resident males are the least likely to return for their sophomore year
 - LIBA 102 produces 86% retention among enrollees
 - Graduate Education Task Force
 - Applications to graduate school are increasing (Fall 2008 applications are up 5%), but the four year trend is down by 6%
 - 20 of the 38 graduate programs could accept more applicants
 - UM has the lowest graduate student enrollment and the fewest MA and PhD programs in the SUG
 - The task force has requested \$500,000 over the next 5 years to increase graduate enrollment, which would produce a positive return on investment

- Provost Stocks said that increasing upper level undergraduate and graduate enrollments is the best way to increase revenue
 - Senator Scovazzo asked why not take advantage of the IHL formula by boosting graduate enrollment at the expense of undergraduate enrollment?
 - Provost Stocks responded that this solution runs counter to UM's mission and it is more costly to provide graduate education
- International Student Recruitment Task Force
 - No current efforts are underway
 - This task force needs to look at ways to recruit international students, such as through faculty and alumni groups
- Response to Faculty Senate Resolutions
 - Daycare Resolution
 - Jim Morrison and Allyson Best lead a task force that is conducting a comprehensive child care needs assessment study and will conclude in Spring 2009
 - UM already provides daycare for 3 to 5 year olds, and the task force is looking into early childhood daycare
 - Textbook Resolution
 - Dr. Maurice Eftink and Dr. Kathy Gates are leading the effort to make textbooks more affordable and accessible to students
 - DKE Incident
 - Committee met on November 14, 2007
 - Dr. Laura Johnson is conducting a study on racial relations and is working with Dr. Don Cole to determine the best outlet for the findings
 - Faculty Governance
 - UM has the fewest administrators per student in the IHL system
 - The Senate has expressed concerns about an underrepresentation of faculty in decision making bodies
 - Provost Stocks cited the widespread faculty input into planning decisions
 - Strategic Planning Council and university standing committees have faculty representation
 - The number of full time faculty increased while part-time faculty decreased over the last 3 years; hiring, tenure, and curriculum decisions continue to be handled at the department level
 - Faculty Governance was addressed in SACS Report 3.75

- Senator Davis expressed frustration that the administration has not communicated with nor respected the Senate governance committee
 - Senator Davis requested shared governance on the Faculty Governance Task Force
 - Provost Stocks is willing to create a task force to work in concert with the Senate governance committee
 - Senator Williamson asked about the Senate resolution on imposing a smoking ban on campus
 - Provost Stocks did not know if there is movement toward a total ban on smoking on campus, but in general administrators approve of a campus smoking ban
 - Provost Stocks explained that interim positions are filled with faculty representation on every committee
 - The Provost and Director of Population Studies positions are yet to be filled; the Chairs of Communicative Sciences and Pharmacology positions are not being filled at this time
 - Provost Stocks explained that to get faculty salaries to the SUG average would require \$4.3 million
 - If IHL's rebalancing plan occurs, UM will receive \$8 million, of which a portion will go to faculty salaries
 - Graduate enrollment will increase IHL funding
 - Bringing retention to 83% will result in 500 new students and \$3.8 million in new tuition
 - In summary, there are several ways to raise faculty salaries to the SUG average
 - A search for the Residential College senior fellow is underway
 - Senator Williamson observed that if a department chair returns to being teaching faculty, his/her salary decreases. Senator Williamson then asked that if an administrator changes to teaching faculty, would his/her salary similarly decrease?
 - Provost Stocks explained the policy of transitioning an administrator to 9 month faculty salary
 - Senator Williamson expressed concern that UM is paying two provost salaries (Stocks and Staton); Provost Stocks responded that he earns only one of these salaries
- Third order of business: Dr. Maurice Eftink addressed the Senate on SACS & QEP
 - Regarding the Senate's textbook resolution, Dr. Eftink explained that the university is now involved in and responsible for the textbook ordering process; UM has implemented a new online interface to manage book orders so as to keep textbook prices as low as possible for students
 - Update on SACS accreditation
 - SACS requested follow-up reports for 7 criteria, which is a relatively low number of requests

- The QEP plan of enhancing student writing will be submitted soon
 - The SACS review team will visit February 24-26, 2009, and will likely request meetings with certain entities
 - Reaffirmation will come in the December 2009 SACS meeting
 - Dr. Eftink expressed his thanks to the faculty for its participation in the SACS review
- Fourth order of business: Update on administrative searches
 - The Provost announcement will appear in “The Chronicle of Higher Education”
 - The committee is still fleshing out the criteria on deselection and ranking
- Fifth order of business: Website links
 - Chair Sufka encouraged senators to take advantage of the Policy Directory and Resources links on the Senate website
 - Chair Sufka will consult with Dr. Kathy Gates regarding including the Senate website on UM’s homepage drop-down menu or under the department directory
- Sixth order of business: Disaster planning survey
 - A survey will soon be sent to departments, who are encouraged to submit what kind of data they store, how they store it, and what is irreplaceable
- Seventh order of business: Standing committees
 - Senator Davis will look into Senate representation on university standing committees
 - Plus/minus grading
 - Chair Sufka asked senators to poll their departments for input
 - Chair Sufka explained that plus/minus grading would benefit 2/3 of students that could distinguish themselves from other students earning the same letter grade
 - Senator Lobur commented that under the current grading scale there is no distinction for students that perform better than their peers nor is there an incentive for them to do so
 - Strategic planning council membership
 - The composition of the council, which will include 12-15 members, is being decided
 - Chair Sufka showed a draft flow chart demonstrating lines of communication and how the strategic planning council would interact with departments
 - Senator Williamson expressed concerns that the council is mired in the process and is not taking action
- Eighth order of business: Items from the floor
 - Senator Williamson suggested that the Senate vote to reconfirm the smoking policy resolution; Chair Sufka recommended that senators first study data from the smoking survey
- Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.