

Academic Specialist Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

Room 155 HAB

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Agenda

PRESENT: M. Brock; N. Imbrascio; M. Wallace; M. Everett; T. Curry; J. Jagger; C. Poitra; J. St. Charles

ABSENT: Y. Anderson; K. Pavangadkar; K. Janka; K. Kammel; D. Handspike; S. Hession; M. Trowbridge

Guests: 6 (1 via Zoom)

Call to order: 1105

Welcome (M Everett)

-Amendments and approval of Agenda:

- Provost presentation pushed to next meeting
- Motion to approve agenda by M. Brock; seconded by J. St. Charles. Unanimous approval.

-Approval of February 2018 meeting minutes

- Motion to approve February minutes: motion to approve C. Poitra; seconded by M. Brock. Unanimous approval

-Terry Curry Report and Updates:

1. Addressing the “questions on the table”
 - a. “With the impending budget cuts, what can we anticipate as the impact on the Specialist community?” A: Not sure but referring to recent public statements by interim president, the goal is to identify potential sources for payment, including:
 - i. Insurance carriers.
 1. In an attempt to differentiate from the response at PSU (paying and then unable to collect); MSU is currently attempting to acquire money up front
 - ii. Reallocation of investment and enrollment income.
 1. These funds are typically used to pay for campus repair/improvement projects.
 - iii. Endowments
 1. Cannot be considered based on agreements in place.
 - iv. State appropriation funds and/or Tuition.
 1. In light of current state legislative events, tuition and state appropriation may be considered as a source of funds. It was reported that at the Faculty Senate meeting yesterday, interim-President Engler stated that the potential liability that MSU is incredibly high (up to \$1Bn).

- b. It was reiterated that all previous commitments will be honored and that recalling an issue (approximately 2008-2009) when state appropriation was cut by ~18-20%, the university coordinated budget adjustments through informed decisions within the academic governance process. This budgetary constraint planning at the Deans/Colleges level may allow for appropriate funding adjustments for underused/underperforming programs/degrees.
 - c. It was noted that with this new administration may be alternative views/solutions in how to accomplish this.
 - d. It was also noted that regardless of where the money comes from, the long term viability and future of MSU will always be the first priority.
 - i. It was noted that historically, seniority, has not been a factor in decision related to cutting. Moreover, the focus will be on the program's relevance.
 - ii. It is also worth noting that, historically, Continuing-Status appointments would likely have been provided a greater security versus that of Fixed Term status specialists.
 - e. It was also noted that interim-President Engler has publicly stated the university's desire to make every effort to settle lawsuits in order to additional costs related to trial. Goal is to know by end of academic year if settlements can be reached.
 - i. It was noted that MSU's annual budget is approximately \$2.5 Bn however many of those funds are earmarked or designated for specific use (as noted above).
- 2. Regarding mandatory reporting from OIE. It was discussed what the requirements are as a mandatory reporter on campus related to RVSM. It was urged to go to OIE website <https://oie.msu.edu/> and file report which will be reviewed by both OIE and police to determine course of action.
 - a. It was noted that filing complaints should NOT be viewed as an expression of opinion.
 - b. It was also noted by guest that quick reference cards are available from OIE.
- 3. Board of Trustees (BOT) are always open with the next meeting on April 13th 9 a.m. in Hannah boardroom. It is recommended to get there early and noted that you will need to go through metal detector. It was also noted that public comment is welcomed at the end of each meeting with 3 min max. Be sure to inform the secretary of BOT to know of interest.
- 4. Leadership updates; Candidates for Lyman Briggs and for College of Vet Med and are currently being screened with on-campus visits likely occurring in April. College of Nat Sci and Director of Libraries should have candidates by end of semester and the goal of having them in place by beginning of next academic year.
- 5. Brief discussion regarding "waivers"; it was noted that when attempting to fill a vacancy, MSU is dedicated to core values of quality and inclusion and thus, if a vacancy is to be filled, there must be an open period/search. MSU is considered a federal contractor and due to Vietnam Era Veterans Adjustment Act, must post all job openings with appropriate state employment agencies with the exception of executive, temporary or internal positions. Otherwise, a waiver could be submitted. For last year have had a compliance review with Dept. of Labor and it was deemed that in previous situations in which waivers were submitted, they would no longer be necessary in cases of internal promotion.

M. Everett clarified that the “questions on the table” were submitted by ASAC members and reviewed by TC. As Dr. Youatt’s presentation to ASAC has been pushed to next month, additional questions may be submitted to M. Everett for review with an April 6th deadline.

Old Business

- Survey Letter Update (Kari) N. Imbrascio as proxy reported that the subcommittee had drafted a response letter to the February specialist survey. It was suggested that all members of the committee review the letter immediately so that it could be sent to the at-large specialist community as soon as possible.
 - ME opened a motion for the letter to be sent and reviewed electronically so that it could likely be included with the planned newsletter. It was agreed that this letter would be addressed to the at-large specialist community.
- Elections Update (Kari) N. Imbrascio as proxy reported that a call for nominations in the election process has been sent and encouraged all members of ASAC to informally invite members of the specialist community to self-nominate.
- Academic Governance Update (Nicolas); No report as no meeting yet with G. Hoppenstein from the Steering Committee. It was also reported by TC that he had no feedback regarding from the Steering Committee regarding ASAC’s proposed changes to academic governance by-laws.
- Raise Letter Discussion (Mike);
 - ME referenced the letter template sent to the committee where input regarding specific merit and salary percentage increases would be sent to the Provost’s office. It was discussed that in previous years, this letter would be sent with an attempt to coincide with a similar letter relating to faculty merit and salary increase. It was noted (JJ) that it could be possible to include within this recommendation letter a mention of academic governance concerns of ASAC. Discussion and general acceptance was that these were two separate issues within ASAC and should not be combined.
 - Clarification of “raise” letter is that it is a recommendation for all specialists, across the university to administrative unit heads. Previous letters highlighted information through the use of a graph to demonstrate growing wage disparity between faculty and specialists. It was noted that previous letters attempted to decrease this disparity demonstrated. It was asked if faculty have same considerations (MW).
 - It was noted that ME will reach out to T. Tomlinson (chair of UFCA).
 - C. Poitra suggested using data recently presented which highlights functions and importance of specialists to the MSU community. CP agreed to assist in crafting language that could be included in the recommendation letter.
 - It was noted at this point that tenure approved or tenure stream faculty would likely have precedence over fixed term faculty if/when budget cuts at the department level became necessary as discussed in TC’s original comments addressing question #1 above (section 1.f.ii)
 - TC mentioned that tenure can be denied for financial reasons however said this was not a likely course of action.
- Engagement (Kari) It was noted that the latest newsletter was ready to be sent to soon (upon approval of the outreach letter described previously).

- Handbook (Dwight Handspike) emailed that this subcommittee is continuing its comparison of the faculty handbook to the specialist handbook with nothing official to report.

Comments from the public

--One question from the public regarding specialist designations up for election (two positions are up for election, 1 from advising and 1 in teaching). ME described that ASAC usually consists of 11 members, with each member elected to a 3 year term with elections being staggered ("rotational elections") so that the entire committee will never be up for simultaneous reelection. It was mentioned also that should interested specialist who do not meet the functional requirement, should still self-nominate for a one year volunteer position on the committee.

Motion to adjourn by M. Wallace; seconded by M. Brock. Unanimous approval.

Adjourn Time: 1150

Dutifully submitted,

JLJ