



Academic Specialist Advisory Committee Meeting

November 4th, 2021

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** Danielle Flores Lopez (chair), 11:31
- II. **Roll Call:** Danielle Flores Lopez (chair), Debra Thornton Fitzpatrick (Vice Chair), Karen Kangas-Preston (Secretary), Aaron Reifler (Sergeant at Arms), Kathy Lewless (AHR), Grace Pregent (FS), Debjani Sarkar, Sarah Whitaker, Devon Akmon, Danielle Whittaker, Jenn Petzko, Bryan Beverly; Kari Kammel
- III. **Acceptance of Minutes for October 7th, 2021** motion to approve Bryan Beverly. 2nd Aaron Reifler; approved as submitted.
- IV. **Associate Provost & Associate Vice President for Academic Human Resources Report** Kathy Lewless (AHR),
 - A. Updates: it is the beginning of review cycle for AS in continuing system or promotion to senior status; Form C will change name to Form on Progress and Excellence for Academic Specialists; final edits to form will be finished by next week—the new form will be included in packets sent to units
 - B. Dean Searches: College of Ag and Natural Resources (position description written); Graduate School (committee has been charged); Human Medicine Dean has left—Lee Smalls will be interim Dean, search process will start in January; College of Education (committee reviewing second set of candidates);
- V. **Report of Officers**
 - A. **Chair Report** Danielle Flores Lopez
 1. Please share information from other meetings to ASAC and ASAC info to your other groups as appropriate
 2. Approved Minutes are shared on Teams and D2L
 3. Merit raise information may not have been widely shared; Danielle shared the HR document regarding no raises for 2021-22 AY; have heard questions regarding transparency of merit raise vs. market pool and when notification should be happening;
 - a) Will next year be a 'double raise' year since this year had none? Taking into consideration two years' worth of performance?

- b) Not all units have been notifying FAS consistently; memo from HR was dated in August and sent to unit administration;
- c) Promotion raises were still given

B. Vice Chair Report Debra Thornton Fitzpatrick

- 1. First table talk with Jonathan Novello was October 27; PowerPoint slides will be shared; next Table Talk is November 17 with RCPD
- 2. Request to look at vacation policy for new hires (policy states one must wait six months for any vacation time); seems to be inconsistency in following the policy; will follow up with Kathy and Suzanne

C. Faculty Senate Representatives Report Grace Pregent

- 1. Met October 12, Strategic plan 2030 was shared from Provost Woodruff <https://strategicplan.msu.edu/-/media/assets/strategicplan/docs/msu-2030-strategic-plan.pdf>
- 2. Vaccination rate 90.2%; 4300 vaccination exemption requests (3000+ approved)
- 3. Concerns w/ quarantine housing on campus
- 4. Booster requirement will only be changed w/ CDC definition of "fully vaccinated"
- 5. Junior faculty support conversations
- 6. Next meeting November 16

D. University Council Representative Report Ashley Maloff (report attached below)

- 1. Resolution did not go forward (re: Thanksgiving and Election day holidays) as Provost Woodruff had noted these days would not be approved

VI. Reports of Committees

A. Elections Danielle Flores Lopez

- 1. Work will commence in spring

B. Outreach Sarah Whitaker;

- 1. minutes from September posted on website; working on other website updates—watch for an email requesting information on ASAC members;
- 2. discussed plans for social gathering for January/February;
- 3. question: vision for outreach committee—what would people like to see beyond website and social media? Should outreach be the place that AS across campus go to for questions/concerns?

C. Promotion & Compensation Karen Kangas-Preston & Jenn Petzko;

- 1. put together working group for Onboarding using data from previous committee;
- 2. will also look at clearer guidelines for annual review;

D. Bylaws Karen Kangas-Preston;

1. will look at in spring after working group recommendations

E. Specialists Forum (every other year)

1. No report

F. DEI Ashley Maloff & Grace Pregent;

1. recruiting new members;
2. creating DEI panel for Thrive session in spring;

VII. Unfinished Business none

VIII. New Business

Nicolas Gisholt (Advisor in Soc Science; member of Univ. Council on Student Affairs) Presenting Proposal for adding Specialists in Standing Committees (see attachment)

1. To add one specialist in every advisory committee at the University level (exception: Faculty Tenure) to share importance of Specialist contributions across campus; especially in light of Strategic Plan 2030; currently only 5% specialist representation in Academic Governance;
 2. Send resolution to Univ Committee in Academic Governance for upcoming meetings in November; hope that resolution would be granted and in place for next year;
 3. Details of elections and terms to be worked out by ASAC and Academic Governance
 4. Recommend ASAC send forward to be processed by UCAG;
 5. Would be great if more than one specialist would be added to each committee, but requirement of adding one to each is a start
 6. Question: Qualifications for seating questions: where did this recommendation come from? (3 years of service; involvement in ASAC at same time);
 - a) was joint conversation;
 7. Recommendation to add reporting back to ASAC as a responsibility of the AS seated on each committee.
 8. **MOTION** Bryan Beverly to move this resolution forward as presented (with addition of reports to ASAC); 2nd Devon Akmon; motion approved.
- B. Email received from Dr. Christie M. Poitra regarding the LSJ article detailing treatment at the University; request that ASAC discuss and write statement in solidarity;
1. Question: is this a common process/request? Are there standards for this type of statement?
 - a) Nothing that Chair/Vice Chair knows of; should we create a process?

- (1) Define guidelines for solidarity statements when requested
 - b) Have there been other statements ASAC has made?
 - (1) Some precedence for unified statements (Nassar, COVID)—statement was sent out to Specialist ListServe;
 - 2. What actions could/should ASAC take?
 - a) Statement that Specialists expect equitable treatment;
 - 3. Next steps: small group to draft a statement in support of this and all experiences of inequity (compensation, status, safe work spaces) toward specialists over the years: Devon Akmon, Bryan Beverly, Debra Thornton Fitzpatrick, Danielle Flores-Lopez will draft and send to ASAC for review
- IX. **Announcements** none
- X. **Comments from the Public** none
- XI. **Adjournment:** 12: 34pm

Attachments:

10/19 University Council Meeting Notes:

President Stanley:

- The Division of Student Life and Engagement was created and The Division of Student Affairs was dissolved.
 - The new Division will be led by Vennie Gore – pending BOT approval
- New Apple Academy of Detroit is a transformative program between Apple, MSU, and Rocket Companies
 - President Stanley recently visited Grand Rapids and had a chance to meet with leaders, students, and donors as well as visit campus spaces
- 99.3 percent vaccination rate out of 64,000 total (students, faculty, and staff)
 - This week there have been 55 cases connected to MSU
 - President Stanley encourages the booster shot for those who are eligible and the flu shot

Provost Woodruff:

- Thanks to faculty senators there were elected to special committees (congrats to Jason Almerigi on ASAC!)
- 2 million dollars has been established for an Ethics Institute at MSU
- 10 Undergraduate students and four alumni students have been nominated by MSU for nationally competitive graduate school scholarships: the Churchill Scholarship, the Marshall Scholarship, the Mitchell Scholarship, and the Rhodes Scholarship

- MSU has produced 16 Churchill Scholars, 20 Marshall Scholars, five Mitchell Scholars, and 20 Rhodes Scholars.

Norm Beauchamp:

- Echoed President Stanley in that the GR event went really well.
 - We have 2.5 acres in GR available – working to establish a public/private partnership
- Randy Rasch, Dean of Nursing will not be seeking a second term as Dean – he will be moving to Health Sciences to work with NB.
 - There will be an interim appointment and then a national search for a new Dean.

Kelly Blake:

- There will be monthly communications from UC
- Seven day turn around on transcription/video recording of meetings (thanks Tyler)

University Investment Presentation:

- Lisa Frace and Philip Zecher
- Office was created in 2016
- FY21
 - Tuition 853 million
 - State Allocation 321 million
 - Investment 229 million
 - Dept. Income 207 million
 - Donor Gifts 229 million
- 50 percent of endowments are restricted funds (scholarships, institutes etc..) the rest is long term investment to the University (covers debt and new construction etc..)
 - Over the last 5 years the endowment has returned over 1 billion to the University.
 - Single greatest impact is to recognize returns that allow for growth of faculty, staff, and students
 - Many legal requirements.
- Will share slides once they are sent out.

Ashley Maloff

Proposal for Addition of 1 Specialist seat in every Standing University Academic Governance Committee, except UCFT (University Committee on Faculty Tenure)

Justification

In 2016, for the first time in the University's history of Academic Governance, 1 Specialist was added to Faculty Senate and 1 to University Council. With University Council having approximately 120 members, the unique perspective Specialists can provide is difficult to share and discuss with long agendas to meet.

As a result, this proposal's objective is to solve that challenge by adding 1 Specialist seat in every Academic Governance Standing University Committee, except UCFT. With University standing committees ranging in size from 13 and 24 members, the opportunity for Specialists to engage with other Tenure and Fixed – Term Faculty becomes much easier.

The Specialist community think it is necessary for the change in the Bylaws for several reasons:

1. Specialists' roles, initiatives and policies impact the work of many areas of the university.
2. Since the 1970's Specialists unique roles and responsibilities have been meeting an increased need for faculty that didn't fit the typical definition.
3. Stronger ties between Academic Specialists and tenure system and fixed-term faculty members are important to the cohesiveness of the University. Cross-collaboration in governance between Specialists and Faculty, will only enhance the community's openness to diverse points of view and inclusion.
4. Less than 5% of the members in Academic Governance committees were in the category of Academic Staff. (Faculty Senate's Governance Diversity Survey Apr. 20, 2021) Sample of 124 responses.
5. A recurrent theme throughout the report was the lack of diversity in Academic Governance as a whole – racial; status at the university; eligibility criteria – a hole that could be met with the addition of Specialists.
6. Based on the DEI report by the university, "to ensure greater diversity among Faculty, academic staff and administrators", Academic Governance should reflect the values the university is advancing as part of the short and long term plan (p. 50 – DEI report)
7. With committees ranging from 13 seats (UCSA – University Committee on Student Affairs) to 24 seats (UCC - University Committee on Curriculum and UCUE – University Committee on Undergraduate Education), Specialists will have an opportunity to share their unique perspective more easily.

Background information:

1. Specialists are classified as Senior Specialists or Specialists. Their appointment is either on a Continuing or Fixed – Term basis, and Full-time or Part time; Annual (12 months and Academic Year (9 months).
2. Their 5 functional roles are: 1. Advising; 2. Outreach; 3. Teaching; 4. Research; Curriculum.

3. Academic Specialists are normally identified with the one functional area into which the majority of duties fall. Characteristically, Academic Specialists perform activities in one or more functional areas in addition to the primary area. (Academic Specialist Handbook).
4. The participation of Specialists in Academic Governance is contingent on each specific College's Bylaws. From the 17 existing colleges, Specialists are eligible to participate only in 7 of the 17 colleges, based on their Bylaws; in the remaining 10 colleges, Specialists are either not eligible, or partly eligible depending on their appointment or functional role.
This is despite section 1.1.2.5. of the Bylaws for Academic Governance, which says, "a full-time specialist who has served at least three consecutive years may be elected to an academic governance body, with the exception of the University Committee on Faculty Tenure, as a representative of any unit in which the person holds faculty status."
5. ASAC's configuration has traditionally been more representative of the university in terms of diversity – Colleges, departments and in terms of racial and ethnic diversity.
6. An on-going theme at the Specialists' meetings is the need for more representation in Academic Governance, in order to advocate for more equitable resources and policies, as Specialists are treated as Faculty in some cases, but historically there have been differences in issues like compensation, benefits, retirement, etc.
7. Currently, there are no seats solely for Specialists in any university Standing Committee (UCAG – University Committee on Academic Governance; UCUE - University Committee on Undergraduate Education; UCC - University Committee on Curriculum; UCFA - University Committee on Faculty Affairs; UCGS - University Committee on Graduate Studies; UCSA - University Committee on Student Affairs; UCL - University Committee on Libraries; UCFT - University Committee on Faculty Tenure).
8. Historically, not much recruiting has been done by Colleges or Academic Governance to attract more diverse candidates for Academic Governance – position or racial/ethnic.

Administrative Support

This resolution will be consulted and discussed with ASAC members

Academic Governance Bylaws

- Specialists have 1 voting seat in Faculty Senate and 1 in University Council; members for those committees are nominated and voted internally by ASAC.
- Specialists can run for positions for which they shall be elected by the Faculty Senate votes on the list of nominees chosen by faculty of the UCAG (4.2.19).
- Specialists can run for At-Large Member of the Steering Committee (3.4.1.1).

- Specialists can be nominated by their CAC – (College Advisory Committee) if their College's Bylaws include Specialists as eligible to be part of Academic Governance committees. (4.2.1.10)

Goal: Add 1 seat to every Standing Committee except UCFT

- The vote would be in At-Large format and organized by the Secretary of Academic Governance, in 3 year cycles.
- Each Specialist will be added to each of the six current committees, and UCL when approved, except UCFT.
- A Specialist needs to have at least 3 consecutive years of service, be involved in academic activities, and can be in the Continuing or Fixed-Term basis.
- Specialists will not be able to represent a Standing Committee and be part of ASAC
- Specialists will be able to represent Faculty Senate and University Council if they are part of ASAC as they are nominated internally

Submitted by: Nicolas Gisholt, MSW

Academic Advisor

Member, University Committee on Student Affairs