



Academic Specialist Advisory Committee Meeting

December 2nd, 2021

Minutes

- I. **Call to Order: 11:30 am**
- II. **Roll Call** Danielle Flores Lopez (chair), Debra Thornton Fitzpatrick (Vice Chair), Karen Kangas-Preston (Secretary), Suzanne Lang (AHR), Kathy Lewless (AHR), Grace Pregent (FS), Ashley Maloff (UC), Jason Almerigi, Bryan Beverly; Beth Judge, Jenn Petzko, Debjani Sarkar, Sarah Whitaker, Danielle Whittaker,
- III. **Acceptance of Minutes for November 4th, 2021;** Motion B. Beverly, 2nd D. Thornton Fitzpatrick to approved as submitted; approved.
- IV. **Associate Provost & Associate Vice President for Academic Human Resources Report** Suzanne Lang
 - A. Administrative searches:
 1. College of Education is in interview phase for semifinalists; hope to complete next week for finalist on-campus visits;
 2. College of Ag and Natural Resources—completing slate for committee members to send forward to provost; have reps from each unit in college; faculty, specialist, post doc, and grad reps are all represented on committee;
 3. internal search for Associate Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and Dean of the Graduate School-posting went out before thanksgiving; accelerated timeline since current dean is serving in multiple areas; committee will review applications on December 15 for presentations at beginning of spring semester;
 4. Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development (formerly AAN) was posted Monday; committee is charged; will

- review applications in early spring semester; search is internal and external;
- 5. Wharton Center search for director; committee is seated; working on position description;
- 6. Position in Provost office for Honorifics; to use current internal awards to move towards external awards to enhance the University's profile in excellence in scholarship and teaching;
- 7. Chief Vice President in Human Resources—committee has been seated; working with search firm; working on position description to post after January 1;
- B. Effective January 1 a 2% merit raise will be in effect for all faculty and academic staff across university; merit recognition for service during COVID pandemic;
- C. Effective January 1 the university will restore the 2:1 retirement match;
- D. DEI guidelines are being worked on across the university to recognize the work in annual reviews and promotion dossiers; Provost has established the need for inclusion and wants colleges to define for each what the guidelines should be; Diversity Deans have created a list of DEI guidelines that are currently being reviewed; will be shared soon;
- E. Thrive Sessions for Specialists coming February 9
- F. New Form on Progress and Excellence for Academic Specialists is live for use (formerly Form C)

V. Report of Officers

- A. **Chair Report** Danielle Flores Lopez:
 - 1. Resolution was submitted to University Committee on Academic Policy, have not gotten response;
 - 2. ASAC was invited to speak to new specialists, Danielle joined on Nov. 12 and shared information for getting involved;
 - 3. ASAC will also represent at new faculty orientation;
 - 4. will present at Thriving Session in Feb;
 - 5. no meeting in January; subcommittees should continue work;
- B. **Vice Chair Report:** Debra Thornton-Fitzpatrick
 - 1. November table talk, Darryl Steele from RCPD shared tips on self-care; working on plans for spring table talks;
- C. **Faculty Senate Representative Report** Grace Pregent
 - 1. See attachment below for full report
 - 2. reports on merit raise and retirement reinstatement;
 - 3. MSU is top 60% of universities in the world;
 - 4. will continue vaccination and masking mandates into spring semester;

5. multiple resolutions: employee support for undocumented students, academic freedom in teaching about race/religion; no classes day before Thanksgiving (defeated); request for retroactive merit raises and retirement match;

a) petition is circulating for retroactive salary/retirement;

D. University Council Representative Report Ashley Maloff

1. See attachment below for full report
2. Nov. 23 new student life and engagement division
3. addressed campus safety—increase in campus monitoring systems;
4. COVID—Michigan is #1; MSU has 90% vaccination rate; will need to document vaccination soon;
5. updated calendar for students—fall break is a permanent part of the academic calendar; fall will begin on a Monday in 2023; in 2024 spring will shorten by one week to align with fall; spring break will be earlier;
6. Norm Beauchamp spoke about primary care and lack of access across American; working with College of Nursing to ensure nurse practitioners are able to provide primary care;
7. Karen Kelly Blake addressed petition shared re: salary retroactive reinstatement;
8. Mark Largent spoke on student success—more first year students, graduation rates up; campus is under-advised and need to invest in more advisors; hope for 60 more advising positions to be posted;

VI. Reports of Committees

- A. **Elections:** Danielle Flores Lopez: will meet in January
- B. **Outreach:** Sarah Whitaker—sent survey for information to include on the website; check to be sure your info is correct; will reactive social media with meeting info and table talk invites; discussing social event in spring, possibly outdoor setting; campaign for messaging what ASAC is and how we support specialists—how to get the message out that ASAC is here to support and types of things that ASAC can be a resource for;
- C. **Promotion & Compensation:** Jenn Petzko —two goals: working group for onboarding based on past data (Kari, Aaron, Danielle); clear guidelines for annual review process; will send a survey to fixed term specialists to see how long they have been FT and gather questions/concerns from them so we can look at a promotion plan for FT specialists
- D. **Bylaws:** Karen Kangas-Preston—will meet in spring
- E. **Specialists Forum** (every other year)
- F. **DEI:** Ashley Maloff—working on a speaker's series of administration for the spring (Dr. Bennett, President Stanley, Dean of Students Anthony Williams) will reach out to them to see if we can get conversations scheduled

VII. Unfinished Business

- A. Solidarity letter (see attached for draft language) was emailed to committee yesterday; send questions/concerns to Danielle; addressed support for Dr. Poitra and specialists at large; concerns speak to specialists across campus; letter will go to president and provost once ASAC approves;
 - 1. Discussion on language used and whether data was gathered or commentary is based only on Dr. Poitra's reporting? Can language be adapted to be more inclusive? Suggest: Solidarity with Dr. Poitra, and that her experience is not dissimilar to others across campus;
 - 2. Will revise draft; submit to ASAC for comments and send to President and Provost;

VIII. New Business

- A. Pete Johnston: question of whether ASAC would consider a similar resolution that faculty senate suggested regarding retroactive restoration of salary cuts and retirement match (see google link in attachments);
 - 1. Question: was the resolution/petition created by faculty senate or union organizers? Was drafted cooperatively with faculty senate support;
 - 2. Would add weight of ASAC in support; FS passed their version; requesting that ASAC do the same;
 - 3. 1200 people have signed the petition; out of approximately 5000 faculty/academic staff/staff on campus; is there any sense of why others haven't signed?
 - a) Anecdotal some are afraid to sign because of FT status; also survey fatigue means some will have ignored it;
 - b) Provost is aware of resolution and is prepared to speak with chair of Faculty Senate and Chair of Univ. Committee on Faculty Affairs and chair of subcommittee that works with admin on budgets;
 - 4. **Move to approve the resolution, B. Judge, Second D. Whittaker.**
 - a) discussion
 - (1) Question: How is the merit raise on this resolution different than the one just approved? The merit raise starts in January, the fiscal year started in July.
 - (2) fixed-term specialists feel that there is there another motive to this petition.
 - (3) More communication from leadership would be nice
 - (4) ASAC requests more time to discuss, Beth withdrew motion**

- IX. **Announcements** None
- X. **Comments from the Public** None
- XI. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 12:36pm, B. Judge, seconded by J. Almerigi

Attachments:

Faculty Senate Meeting November 16, 2021

- I. Remarks
 - a. Provost Woodruff
 - i. President Stanley's email to faculty and academic staff on Friday shares that effective January 1, 2022, non-unionized faculty and academic staff hired on or before June 30, 2021 will receive a 2% merit raise to their base salary
 - ii. Goal to put ethics in the intellectual life of the university - emerging university-wide initiative in ethics that focuses in three broad areas, namely in curriculum, in research and in institutional transformation
 - iii. *Times* Higher Education Report listed MSU in the top six percent of universities in the world. *Times* Higher Ed also recently released its reputation ranking - our new reputation rank is within the top 60 institutions in the world, which is a jump from the top 80 last year. And it's the highest that has ever been scored in that reputational rank by MSU
 - iv. Launched an enhanced version of our undocumented student's website that's dedicated to supporting undocumented deferred action for childhood arrivals or DACA, and mixed immigration status students
 - v. \$6.5 million NIH grant was received to build a new facility in new imaging agents
 - b. Vice President Beauchamp
 - i. For spring 2022, we will continue the COVID-19 vaccine mandate and face covering mandates
 - ii. Leigh Small, PhD, RN, the associate dean of academic affairs and professor in the College of Nursing will serve as the interim dean of the College of Nursing, and a national search for the dean of the College of Nursing will launch in January
- II. Resolutions
 - a. Three resolutions resoundingly passed:

- i. Resolution on hiring an employee to support undocumented students
 - ii. Resolution supporting academic freedom in teaching about race and racism
 - iii. Resolution endorsing that President Stanley and the Board of Trustees initiate a retroactive restoration of merit raises, and salary and fringe benefit reductions to faculty and academic staff (98%)
 - 1. Senator Jack Lipton did background research on the current state of MSU's budget based off of public information and the comparison of pandemic cuts at peer institutions, and the consequences of these cuts over the long term.
 - 2. Senator Lipton's presentation slides have been made available
- b. One resolution was defeated
 - i. Resolution on not having classes the day before Thanksgiving

Grace Pregent, FS Representative

University Council Meeting Notes 11/23/2021

President Stanley:

- The new Student Life and Engagement Division under Vennie Gore will provide holistic academic, financial, and social wellness (which is what we are aiming to do at MSU)
- The graduation rate is up for the 7th straight year (to 82.1%) and this year we made progress on closing some of our most persistent opportunity gaps. 55 more students graduated this year than last.
- Campus safety: There is no evidence of foul play in the Brendan Santo case. There is an increase in campus monitoring systems underway.
- Covid19: Michigan is #1 in the US for covid19 numbers. MSU has a 90% vaccination rate.
- Employees will need to provide documentation of their Covid19 vaccination to comply with the new federal mandate and are encouraged to find their cards

Provost Woodruff:

- Fall break will become permanent and will occur in the middle of the term
- Fall semester will begin on a Monday beginning in 2023
- In 2024, SS will be shortened by one week to even out the calendar to align more with fall term.
- Spring break will occur in late February or early March
- Other schools may not match our spring break.
- Ethics study: please complete this. MSU is looking to establish an ethics institute.

Norm Beauchamp:

- 83 million Americans lack access to primary care.
- Denise Hershey is working in the College of Nursing to ensure that NPs can provide
- Spartan PA Medicine Program will be starting in COM to increase Primary Care providers

Karen Kelly Blake:

- Faculty and Academic Staff have shown hardship throughout the pandemic
- New data has shed light and a resolution was passed along with a petition with over 1000 signatures
- Transparency and trust aren't apparent when the facts remain opaque.

Mark Largent:

- Applications are up for FITIAC students
- Graduation rates are up.
- We are under advised and need to invest more here
- For every 1 Spartan grad there are 5 or 6 more that began college and did not finish
- Conversation and questions about RCPD resources (Ashley addressed and provided contact info)

New Business:

- Resolution on Investment: passed

Vennie Gore:

- Will move to next meeting due to time

Ashley Maloff,

DRAFT Letter of Solidarity regarding Dr. Christie Poitra's formal complaints against her supervisors

11/29/2021

The Academic Specialist Advisory Committee (ASAC) acknowledges Dr. Christie Poitra's formal complaints against her superiors at Michigan State University. Dr. Poitra is an academic specialist. We stand in solidarity with Dr. Poitra's inequitable compensation, workplace harassment, discrimination, and retaliation while employed with the university, as well as all of our Spartan colleagues who have endured similar behavior.

ASAC calls for the university to do several things. First, ASAC calls MSU to respond to complaints of harassment in a timely and appropriate manner. Second, we call upon

the university to examine compensation structures for Academic Specialists, with a specific lens focused on inequitable practices towards underrepresented and marginalized groups. More specifically, in addition to salary minimums for all Academic Specialists, appropriate similar pay for specialist who do the same work, if not the same exact position, as faculty, could be an effective mechanism to help mitigate current salary inequities at MSU.

The Academic Specialist Advisory Committee takes this matter very seriously and believes that increasing transparency around these issues could improve timeliness and outcomes for all parties involved. To that end, ASAC would appreciate an update on the situation with Dr. Poitra for our February 3rd, 2022, meeting and look forward to an equitable resolution to this matter.

Proposal:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WI7925_I109zziV2eSbcuI5ZXPYyRdPc/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109614195772078240528&rtpof=true&sd=true