



## Academic Specialist Advisory Committee Meeting

March 2, 2023

Minutes

I. Call to Order: Aaron Reifler, Chair, call to order 11:31am

II. Attendees:

Committee Members (P=present, A=absent)

Ann Austin	Ex Officio Member	A
Kathy Charles	Ex Officio Member	P
Nicolas Gisholt	Sergeant at Arms	P
Erin Hill	Secretary	P
Bethany Judge	Member	P
Karen Kangas-Preston	Member	P
Ashley Maloff	Vice Chair	P
Molly Polverento	Member	P
Jennifer Petzko	Member	P
Grace Pregent	University Council	P
Aaron Reifler	Chair	P
Bonnie Russell	Member	P
Debjani Sarkar	Member	A
Megan Stevenson	Faculty Senate	P
Debra Thornton-Fitzpatrick	Member	P
Mary Anne Walker	Member	P
Sarah Whitaker	Member	P

Other: Emily Abell, Melanie Barts, Jessica Bilodeau, Nikki English, Diana Haggerty, Jonglim Han, Danielle Flores Lopez, Consuelo Morales, Marisa Rinkus, Janelle Slavey, Liberty Torrence, Sarah Ward, Rachel Whitesell

III. Acceptance of Minutes for February 2, 2023. Motion by Bonnie Russell, second by Megan Stevenson. Accepted by all, passed.

III. Associate Provost & Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs (FASA) Report (Kathy Charles)

A. Ann Austin sends her remarks relating to the Feb. 13 violence on campus, echoing sentiments of other central administration. For full remarks, [please see below](#).

B. Current cycle for continuing system specialist packets- These are due May 2<sup>nd</sup>. There is now a standardized process in the event an

extension is needed. Extension request seeds to be submitted from local HR to FASA by April 2. All packets with accepted extensions will be due in October. Action would then be effective January of the following year.

#### IV. Report of Officers

- A. Chair Report (Aaron Reifler)- Shared sentiments on importance of communication and support and sense of community amongst specialists in the wake of the tragedy.
- B. Vice Chair Report (Ashley Maloff)- Elections pushed back, fill out??
- C. Faculty Senate Representatives Report (Megan Stevenson)- February 21 meeting
  - 1. Full minutes pending at <https://acadgov.msu.edu/facultysenate>
  - 2. Focused on shooting incident, campus healing, and safety
- D. University Council Representative Report (Grace Pregent)
  - 1. January 31 meeting:
    - a) Full minutes pending at <https://acadgov.msu.edu/universitycouncil#minutes>
    - b) Update on new University Health and Wellbeing division
    - c) Discussion of safety concerns at East Lansing High School & frustration regarding murder of Tyre Nichols
    - d) Ethics of university investments and sustainability and APPROVED a resolution asking for more transparency and faculty engagement regarding MSU investments
    - e) Faculty and student involvement in the Presidential Search, Council recommended that the Steering Committee develop approaches
  - 2. February 28 meeting: Altered format (roundtable) with leaders responding to traumatic events of Feb. 13. Speakers underscored how they are consulting with experts ranging from mental health professionals to multiple universities that have experienced similar violent tragedies
    - a) Full minutes pending at <https://acadgov.msu.edu/universitycouncil#minutes>

- b) Change in the university's COVID 19 vaccine policy to 'no longer required'
- c) 4 components of safety plan for moving forward:  
change building access, provide securing devices in classrooms/other rooms, expand cameras, develop active violent intruder training
- d) 'Modified ops' policy discussed (originally written for weather)
- e) Unfinished business- Faculty and student involvement in the Presidential Search, this is an on-going effort
  - (1) ASAC Comments- Time line not established yet, will be looking for opportunities for ASAC to participate in any listening sessions

## V. Reports of Committees

### A. Elections (Ashley Maloff)

- 1. Timeline- Call of member nominations is open and will close March 3. After spring break the ballot will be sent out and open for 2 weeks
- 2. Nominations call for ASAC board positions will be sent out between member ballot close & May meeting
- 3. May ASAC meeting
  - a) Newly elected members will attend
  - b) ASAC board positions will also be elected in May

### B. Outreach (Bonnie Russell)- Check out the following & we can discuss ASACs possible participation at the next meeting

- 1. Mastodon- Social networking service (similar to Twitter)-  
<https://hcommons.social/about>
- 2. MSU Commons- Social network for MSU community with goal of supporting and sharing scholarly activities-  
<https://commons.msu.edu/>
- 3. Any questions, contact Bonnie (bonnie@msu.edu)

### C. Promotion & Compensation (Jenn Petzko)

- 1. When will the Academic Specialist handbook changes be published? Kathy Charles' response- The office is close to releasing the updates, delayed by recent events, developing

communications plan for rollout. The goal is to have the changes published by early to mid-April. This will be a pdf version until HR can set up the handbook as a web-based document

2. Promotion process concern- It has been communicated in some circles that there is an 85 page limit to dossier submitted for promotion (including the Form of Progress and Excellence). The subcommittee will discuss further with Kathy Charles and Office of FASA
3. ASAC Question: Regarding the use of years of service towards probation and promotion timelines, will this be advertised with unit HR personnel. This does not appear to be commonly known. Kathy Charles response- This information will be shared with specialists, unit administrators, and HR specialists; desire to ensure understanding and equity.

D. Bylaws (Karen Kangas-Preston)- Karen plans draft a new version of the bylaws with the proposed DEI changes. Will distribute ahead of next meeting, allowing time to review so it can be put forward for a vote

E. DEI- No updates

VI. Unfinished Business- None

VII. New Business- None

VIII. Announcements-

A. Submit nominations for ASAC members!

IX. Comments from the Public

A. Three new senior academic specialists in the College of Arts and Letters

XI. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn from Ashley Maloff, seconded by Molly Polverento. Meeting adjourned at 12:10pm

## ASAC March 2 Meeting – Ann Austin's Remarks

Dear ASAC, I apologize for being absent from today's meeting. I am in Washington, DC, to lead a meeting of colleagues assembled from around the country on how organizational networks can contribute to efforts to improve STEM undergraduate education.

Our hearts remain broken from the senseless violence that occurred on our campus only two weeks ago. It is hard to believe it has been two weeks. It feels like it was yesterday and at the same time it feels like a lifetime ago. You may have seen the sentiment that Interim Provost Jeitschko wrote in his message on Saturday, and I will echo it here – the past two weeks have been difficult weeks for the whole Spartan community, including last week, as we returned to classes and started to recreate our lives together. Those of us working in the central administration appreciate each of you deeply, and we appreciate all the ways you have supported your students, colleagues, and staff with compassion and flexibility.

While I know each of you is continuously thinking about how best to support your students, it is equally important that you also remember to show yourself compassion and flexibility. This moment in time is not normal and it's all right not to be OK. Please avail yourself of all resources that have been highlighted in MSU communications.

The Provost's Office is committed to supporting you. We are committed to continuing to work with each of you to identify and provide opportunities and resources to assist our faculty and academic staff in the challenging and deeply important work they are doing. We've been checking in with the faculty governance leaders, to ask what support is needed, and how the Provost's Office can best partner with them to take action. To that end, I'd like each of you to feel free to contact myself or the Provost with thoughts or needs that you'd like to share, or that you learn as you talk with your colleagues.

We know that issues of safety are one topic on the minds of our colleagues, as well as our students. Interim President Woodruff and Chief Lynch have each mentioned that, as we move forward, we will need to talk together as a community to review safety issues and options in the context of our specific culture. This will be an important topic for all of us.

As Interim Provost Jeitschko recently said, none of us knows exactly what will unfold in the weeks ahead and beyond, and there will continue to be challenges. But we will move forward together as a community. We may not get everything right, but we will try and we will make adjustments. Our roles require continuous learning and improvements. As we go through the next several weeks together, I hope that all of us will continue to extend compassion and kindness to one another.

It is such a privilege to work closely with each of you. Thank you for being such wonderful colleagues.