Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by Joy Landis at 11:03 AM.

Attending: Joy Landis, Carmellia Davis-King, Quinn Moreno, Mike Rich, Kristin Getter, Sarah Handspike, Elizabeth Webster, Paul Streng, Sandra Eagan-Hill, Michael Everett, Kristy Dumont and Mary Beth Graebert

Ex Officio: Terry Curry

Absent: Lucy Maillette and Donna Ullrich

Motion to accept the agenda: Motion to approve agenda by Mike Rich and seconded by Sandy Eagan-Hill; carried unanimously.

Motion to approve January minutes: Motion to approve minutes by Mike Everett and seconded by Paul Streng; carried unanimously.

Associate Provost/Associate Vice President for Academic Human Resources update (Terry Curry):

- Paying attention to all of the information that comes out from the Benefits Office in the next several weeks is important; the Affordable Care Act is going to create a lot of change.
- We may want to think about having Renee Rivard or someone from her office here more often to keep us up-to-date on changes.
- With right-to-work legislation that takes effect March 27th, the unions on campus have asked the university to engage in bargaining about the continuation of their contracts. If they sign new contracts before March 27th, they could potentially continue to collect dues.
- Everyone on campus, except tenure-system faculty and fixed term teaching faculty (including some specialists), is covered by a union (e.g. APA, APSA, CT, Police, etc.).

Old Business

- Evaluation of Specialist Forum (see handout):
  - One person did not attend because they thought that the forum was for beginning specialists.
  - Penny Foster-Fishman was ill and unable to speak at the forum.
  - There were a number of comments about the lack of food. It is a long time, and we didn’t mention the fact that there wasn’t any food. There was food last time, so they expected it. Even energy bars and fruit in the middle would be helpful. It would be difficult to shorten the program.
  - Keynote speakers were outstanding and well-received.
What was the final attendance number? It was probably close to the registration number: 127. (We have 650 specialists on campus.) Sandy Townsend did a great job with registration.

- Specialist handbook amendment to dismissal policy
  - There is language in the specialist handbook that provides a severance for specialists, which currently applies to people who are dismissed for misconduct.
  - This issue with the handbook was discovered because a person was hired and had been on the job for two days; this person had been engaged in a case of sexual misconduct in a previous position. Despite the fact that he/she had only worked here for two days, when they were dismissed, they received severance for two months.
  - ASAC provided a recommendation to Terry Curry to add language to limit severance for misconduct, rather than striking language from the handbook.
  - Section 6.2.2 is strictly for involuntary dismissal. What is not shown in the handout that was provided is that this section refers specifically to misconduct.
  - Why was 6.2.3 suggested for striking as well? It seems irrelevant if 6.2.2 is stricken.
  - Language that refers to “failure to carry out duties as a specialist,” is a bit concerning. It could be used to dismiss a specialist without due cause.
  - The system is set up to prevent that type of dismissal. If an administrator decides that he/she wants to discipline a specialist, they must consult with their Dean, the Provost and Academic Human Resources; then, they have to give a letter to the specialist regarding discipline (potentially dismissal), and the specialist is given a period of time to respond. AHR would check to make sure that the penalty meets the behavior. If it were the case of a specialist not meeting expectations, they would question whether evaluations were held and reflected any issues, etc. There is a panel of peers that can review the situation as well. The checks and balances are in place.
  - This policy change would not apply to situations that are beyond the control of the specialist (e.g. funding availability).
  - Motion to support the recommendation to strike 6.2.3 and the last three sentences in section 6.2.2 by Kristin Getter, seconded by Elizabeth Webster; carried unanimously.

- Raise recommendation for next budget year (update)
  - Dave Byelich offered to attend the March 21st ASAC meeting.
  - By recommending raises for specialists that are the same as faculty, we are in effect increasing the gap between these groups.
  - MSU seeks to be in the middle of the Big Ten in terms of overall compensation (salary and benefits). We were relatively rich on benefits and relatively poor on salary. Our health insurance can become “less rich” with the Affordable Care Act; ASAC may be well advised to consider a recommendation to augment salary.
• Subcommittee on salary structure (see handout)
  o Sarah Handspike, Elizabeth Webster and Kristin Getter met to develop a survey to Big Ten schools to collect similar data between these institutions focused on specialist-type positions, particularly advisors.
  o We should include a letter from Dr. Curry, or one of his senior staff, rather than from ASAC, in order to get a better response.
  o Modify question 5 to ask what percentage of specialists are annual versus academic year appointment.
  o MSU is able to break down their data to answer these questions, so hopefully the other schools will be able to provide it as well.
  o This survey could be sent out to all of the CIC, not just Big Ten schools.
  o Suggested changing the language from “temporary” and “hired with no end date,” to “continuing (with no end date)” and “fixed term (specified end date; option for reappointment).”
  o It might be helpful to have a template where they can add a value to make it easier to compile when we receive the data.

New Business:
• ASAC Election planning (form committee, begin process – see handout)
  o Kristy Dumont served as the election planning chair last time.
  o Handout shared with the process for the elections.
  o Committee: Paul Streng (chair), Sandy Eagan-Hill, and Carmellia Davis King.
  o Mike Rich’s appointment may be the only one coming open; Paul will email Donna Zischke to find out if that’s the case.
  o Please encourage people you know to nominate themselves, or have someone nominate them.

Motion to adjourn by Sandy Eagan-Hill, seconded by Paul Streng. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned: at 11:51am.

Next scheduled meeting: March 21st, 4th Floor Administration Building

Attachments:
• Forum Evaluation
• Big Ten Schools Survey
• ASAC Elections Process