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Faculty Council Minutes, December 3, 2008

Faculty Council
Eastern Michigan University

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UNIVERSITY FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES – MEETING FIVE

December 3, 2008, 3 – 5 p.m.

310 Student Center

www.emich.edu/facultycouncil

rlarson@emich.edu

487-0196

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

III. Approval of the Minutes of November 19, 2008

The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. President's Report – Russ Larson

1. Canceled Searches

Most likely the 13 canceled searches will stay canceled. It is not clear how the searches to be canceled were chosen. It seems likely that fewer faculty will retire or leave due to the current economic situation in Michigan and the U.S.

2. Budget

Most likely the state will order a 2% budget cut later on in this academic year.

The number of FTIAC applications (First Time in Any College) for next Fall is up significantly. EMU is well positioned to deal with economic hard times. It is expected that parents who would send their children to private schools will send them to tier 1 institutions, such as the U of M, whereas parents who would send their children to the U of M will opt for cheaper schools, such as Eastern Michigan University and Michigan State University.

3. The Faculty Council Resolution to Delay Late Fees

Russ Larson communicated with Bernice Lindke, and she agreed to a delay from Jan 5 to Jan 7. Both University Faculty Council representatives to Budget Council are still pushing for a delay until January 10.

V. Observations from Faculty Council Representatives

1. Students are Hungry

Many part-time jobs are being cut, and many positions are becoming part-time. As a result, many students are hungry. Please consider having some granola bars on hand. Also www.foodgatherers.org lists places where students can obtain food. S.O.S. (Students Offering Services) on River street in Ypsilanti and the Salvation Army at 9 South Park in Ypsilanti are other places where help is available.

2. Posters in Pray-Harrold Advocate that Students Take More than 15 Hours

Posters in Pray-Harrold advocate to students that they should take more than 15 credit hours this Winter term. This is disconcerting, because students may not be able to handle so many hours, especially if they also are working.

VI. Budget – Mark Higbee and Mahmud Rahman

The budget process is much more open than it was during the past administration. Suggestions and comments are taken seriously. CE revenue which was to go to departments will be sent to the departments. Bob Neely added that the money already is on the way.

Budget Council is energized to help. The budget is not yet as transparent as it will be, because many elements have been moved from one category to another, but once there is stability in the categories, the budget will be very clear. The decreased

cost of energy is financially helpful to EMU, but the market volatility is not. There also is concern about the lack of availability of loans for students.

VII. Facilities Committee – David Crary

A representative is still needed from COB and from COT.

If all goes well, the renovation of Pray-Harrold will begin a year from now. There is concern about classroom availability if both Pray-Harrold and Mark Jefferson are renovated during overlapping time periods. In response to the question whether McKinny could be available for classes, Bette Warren indicated that it is scheduled for advising and other purposes.

With respect to central scheduling, Bette Warren indicated that the software was bought about 2 years ago, but it was not implemented, because the individuals in IT who were to implement it left. A person from the software company will come in early February to get the software uploaded and ready for pilot testing. A classroom inventory has been done. Assignment of classes will use the same priorities as are currently being used. Wade Tornquist is the point person on this. Bette Warren is on the implementation committee, and she invites questions if people have any.

VIII. General Education Feedback Committee – Mark Higbee and Matt Evett

The name is meant to point out what the committee is trying to do. The intent is to find out what works well and what needs to be changed. Faculty and department heads will be asked for feedback.

The concerns include (1) the very large set of options in any category which makes choice difficult for students and recommendations problematic for advisors, (2) the distortion of classes to make them fit the criteria of a Gen Ed category, (3) departments offering courses in many different categories, thereby limiting breadth of exposure for some students, (4) offering the same course in different categories when the category at the very least should dictate a different focus of the course, (5) vetting usually done without vote, so that any objection by anyone sends the course back to be changed unless a representative for the department is present and asks for a vote, (6) an inadequate number of courses for the intensive writing requirement, (7) needing to keep courses with low enrollment, for example, for transfer students to meet the Intensive Writing requirement, (8) teachers who have no skills to teach Intensive Writing, and (9) confusion about the categories under Learning Beyond the Classroom and different amounts of activity required by students to fulfill the requirement, and (10) the addition of requirements to some classes which already are very difficult for students. Until all students need to satisfy the new Gen Ed requirements, some classes need to be taught with two syllabi or one syllabus which indicates different requirements as a function of whether a student is trying to satisfy the Old or New Gen Ed requirements.

Suggestions include making sure that (1) the Writing Center has adequate resources, (2) the English Department offers ENG 324, Technical Writing, to help satisfy the intensive writing requirement, (3) clusters of Gen Ed courses are pointed out for students with specific goals, and (4) students are told that requirements for graduation are minima for graduation. The graduation requirements may not be adequate for individuals with particular goals, and each student should clarify his or her goals and use these to guide course selection.

If people have concerns or suggestions, please pass them on to Mark Higbee or Matt Evett.

IX. Program Review – Lidia Lee

Program Review is about implementing the criteria of the Higher Education Commission, so that EMU stays accredited by the North Central Association. The administration sees it as open to revision to make it as effective as possible.

The concerns frequently mentioned include inadequate data, a lack of equity in course release from department to department for writing the report, lack of clarity about where interdepartmental programs fit, a process which takes up too much faculty time, and the difficulty of creating a mission statement for departments with heterogeneous programs. The format is inconsistent with the format for external accreditation and other reviews, because additional goals need to be addressed, such as the university's mission. Analysis by department may be a better strategy than analysis by program, because evaluation by program has led to the elimination of programs which had no faculty assigned to them, so that enrollment in courses offered actually decreased.

Brian Hoxie and Dondi Goerlitz handle the technical aspects and Bette Warren deals with the implementation. Depending on the nature of people's questions and comments, please send them to the appropriate person.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alida Westman

Present: M. Rahman (ACC); M. Peters (AFS); D. Pancioli (ART); B. Winning (BIO); L. Kolopajlo (CHEM); S. McCracken (CMTA); D. Chou (CIS); M. Evett (COSC); D. Crary (ECON); J. Stein (ENGIN TECH); R. Larson (ENG); C. Mayda (GEO/GEOL); V. Howells (Health Sci); M. Higbee (HIS/PHIL); B. Riemer (HPHP); E. Zamani-Gallaher (L & C); J. Nims (Library); D. Barton (MKT); M. Al-Khafaji (MTH); K. Banerji (MGMT); J. R. Smith (MUSIC & DANCE); S. Nelson (NURS); M. Thomsen (PHY/AST); E. Martin (PLS); A. Westman (PSY); R. Orrange (SAC); L. Lee (SPED); M. Bombyk (SWK); P. Becker (TECH STUDIES); P. Williams-Boyd (TED); J. Thomas (WGST); M. Zinggeler (WORLD LANGUAGES)

Ex-Officio: Bob Neely (ASSOC PROVOST AND ASSOCIATE VP FOR RESEARCH);

Bette Warren (INTERIM ASSOC VP FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING)

Absent: None