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10-1-2010

October 2010 Minutes

USM Council of Chairs

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Recommended Citation

USM Council of Chairs, "October 2010 Minutes" (2010). *Council of Chairs*. 13.
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Council of Chairs

October 7, 2010

Minutes

Attendance: S. Dixon, L. Flynn, B. Bateman, M. Miles, L. Fonder-Solano, K. Yadrick, D. Duhon, S. Hughes, T. O'Brien, J. Norton, B. Powell, K. Reidenbach, J. Zhang

- 1.0 Call to Order: 12:15 PM
- 2.0 Approval of agenda: Approved.
- 3.0 Guest: Dr. Robert Lyman, Provost

Appeals Process for Budgetary Reductions: Provost Lyman discussed the appeals process for program reductions/personnel cuts. He contrasted the appeals process that would be followed this year to those followed last year. Last year, the process was more informal and appeals were made directly to the President's Cabinet. This year, a new body has been formed to hear appeals; this body is made up of five faculty members and four of the five deans, with the dean whose program/faculty member is being appealed not participating as an evaluator in the process (but who may participate on behalf of the department/faculty member). The Provost oversees the schedule of appeals; program appeals will be scheduled first, according to size, followed by personnel appeals. Some concern was voiced by David Duhon that personnel appeals might be better served if completed in a timelier manner, so that those affected could make necessary arrangements.

After discussing the appeals process, the Provost stated that the retirement incentive initiative was still active. Several chairs voiced their opinion that not many eligible faculty members would be opting for the incentive retirement. The Provost also said that furloughs were highly probable (1 day per month for staff which equates to a four percent pay reduction), and a four percent pay reduction for faculty.

Summer School: The Provost then discussed summer school funding, and related a discussion that took place with the deans on October 4, 2010. He stated that in the past, profits from summer school were used to fill deficiencies in the general fund. Using this past summer as a baseline, revenues earned in excess to costs that exceeded the baseline would be returned to colleges based upon credit hours taught. He hoped that the colleges would pass these returned funds on to departments, the idea

being those involved in summer school would receive some type of incentive award for their participation. There was discussion about the salary levels for those who taught summer school and also discussion on putting returned proceeds into individual faculty development accounts.

Misc: The Provost then briefly discussed RCM, and a meeting which Chris Campbell attended as a representative from the Council of Chairs. The Provost said his estimate regarding RCM implementation was July 1, 2012, or more conservatively, July 1, 2013. There was then discussion of the University's writing requirement, one aspect being a 2,500 word writing requirement. Bob Bateman raised the question of how to do this in large sections. In concert with this some discussion included the topic of writing-intensive courses. The Provost then announced that the National Research Council that ranks doctoral programs issued a report in which USM fares OK in within-state comparisons, but nationally are in the bottom half of the distribution.

Evaluating Teaching: We then discussed how teaching should be considered in the promotion/tenure decision, and more generally, how teaching should be evaluated. Provost Lyman gave his opinion of using student ratings in teaching evaluation; with all their disadvantages, student ratings are the only metric that we have. Skip Hughes provided an alternative that is currently being used in the School of Accountancy called the Teaching Balanced Scorecard (information on this alternative was subsequently emailed to department chairs).

- 4.0 **4.0 President meeting with departments:** After the Provost departed, there was some discussion about President Saunder's initiative to meet with departments. The President has announced that she would like to meet with faculty on a departmental basis, and she has met with several departments to date. During these visits, the President has discussed "points of pride" and student achievement; she uses these visits to get to know faculty on a personal basis. The President sets the schedule for when she wants to visit with the department. A two-page overview (i.e., points of pride, etc.) is provided to the President before her visit.
- 5.0 **November meeting:** We then discussed the November meeting being primarily a business meeting in which Council catches up on past business deferred because of the time allocated to the Provost in past meeting to discuss the latest budgetary reduction and the appeal process.
- 6.0 Adjourned 2:15 PM.