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February 2015 Minutes

USM Council of Chairs

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Council of Chairs
February 20, 2015, noon-2 p.m.
Chain Technology Center, Room 102
Minutes

Attending: Steve Cloud, Liz Haynes, Sabine Heinhorst, Wayne Kelly, Anne Marie Kinnell, Ray Newman, Gwen Pate, Bill Powell, Thelma Roberson, Bill Smith, Eric Tribunella, and Tisha Zelner.

- 1.0 Call to order – Tisha Zelner, chair
The meeting was called to order.
- 2.0 Approval of Agenda
The amended agenda was approved (amended to add 5% pay increase proposal from MS legislature and new Graduate School form). Roberson moved, Kelly seconded.
- 3.0 Guest Speaker: Jon Mark Weathers, General Counsel, and Subrina Cooper, Associate General Counsel - process for immigration issues related to faculty hires who are foreign nationals
 - Outside attorneys and their fees must be approved by the Attorney General and IHL. We had been using outside attorneys for immigration issues related to faculty hires without approval, but that problem has been rectified.
 - Immigration law is a specialty area. Subrina Cooper is being tasked with learning more.
 - The first step in hiring an international candidate is to talk with Daniel Norton, Associate Vice President of International Programs, so international candidates can be vetted.
 - We need to clarify the budget and who will pay for expenses related to hiring an international candidate.
 - A conversation has begun through the Provost's office for clarifying this process.
 - University Counsel is involved once the candidate is hired.
 - The University must pay the labor certification process, filing fee, and premium processing fees. Other costs are optional for the university and may need to be covered by the candidate. If we agree to pay for certain costs, Ms. Cooper must be notified.
 - CoC: can hiring department decline to make an offer because of the costs associated with hiring an international candidate? Clarification on this will be sought.
 - CoC: can we get a list of fees? SC: yes, she will work on that.
- 4.0 Approval of Minutes from Jan. 23, 2015 meeting – Eric Tribunella, secretary
Kelly moved. Heinhorst seconded. The minutes were approved.
- 5.0 Executive Committee Reports
 - 5.1 Academic Leadership Council – report of Feb. 2nd meeting – Tisha Zelner
 - Packages for lecture capture software are being considered from CISCO Show and Share, Panopto. Classrooms will be equipped with this technology. (CoC: consider software that links camera to mic so camera can follow lapel mic). This software can do transcription and captioning. We might contract out with a service to clean up imperfect transcripts. OMH 102 might be outfitted as pilot.

- Rooms that are IVN capable should be listed as such in Ad Astra.
- The University received a report from [who?] about our ability to run a capital campaign. We cannot do so at this time.
- There are some changes of staffing in the Provost's office. Cynthia Easterling is retiring at the end of the year, June 30. Her position will be repurposed as an Associate Provost for Academic Excellence. There will be a national search with a July 1 target date. A staff position will be added to the Provost's office to take over some of Dr. Easterling's former duties. This new position will be housed on the first floor of Cook Library. The Writing Center and Speaking Center will be under this person's supervision.
- Chairs should encourage faculty to attend the Provost's teaching forum.

5.2 Executive Committee meeting with Provost - report of Feb. 12th meeting

- The Provost has had a conversation with the HR director about the discrepancy between the chair compensation policy and the Employee Handbook. Chairs will be kept in the administrative position while using leave time at the end of the summer in order to be able to use their leave time. Chairs can use up to 240 hours to bridge July 1-Aug. 15.
- The Provost is working with Enrollment Management and IR to synchronize student/applicant coding and data so information from these offices matches. Applications are down slightly but admissions are up because applications are being processed more efficiently.
- The administration is looking into making changes to how university scholarships are awarded by giving more consideration to the family's ability to pay (e.g. Presidential Scholarships).
- The Provost is still open to sponsoring chair development opportunities (e.g. American Council on Education). The University has paid for an AI Pro institutional membership. We can provide feedback on the Student Success website directly on the website.
- The Provost mentioned at the Coast meeting with chairs that a proposal is being considered to award funding based on enrollment increases in departments. We are not clear on what semester will be counted as the baseline.

6.0 Committee Reports, internal

6.1 Chair Development Committee – Wayne Kelly, chair-elect

- Wayne will be meeting with Kathy Yadrick and Lisa Nored after getting more feedback from new chairs who most recently went through new chair training.

7.0 Committee Reports, external / Liaisons to university committees

7.1 Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching – Ann Marie Kinnell

- The Committee created recommendations for chairs now that they will be receiving qualitative as well as quantitative evaluations. The committee has discussed an appeal process for faculty who want to contest the use of student comments. No faculty members supported the midterm faculty evaluations and so the committee does not recommend their implementation. The committee recommended that students who withdraw be excluded from faculty evaluations.
- CoC: The Faculty Handbook already has an appeal/grievance process for annual reviews, so it does not appear that a new or different process is needed specifically for the use of student teaching evaluations.
- BP: all instructors of record must be evaluated annually. SACS team, which will be here in March 2016, can ask to see them.

7.2 Faculty Handbook Committee

-The Faculty Handbook Committee is considering language for the use of two measures to be used in the evaluation of teaching. Departments must define in advance what should be included in the portfolio. CoC: The portfolio should be referred to as a “departmentally defined portfolio.” Anyone (?) can propose revisions to the Faculty Handbook to be considered by the Faculty Handbook Committee.

-The Faculty Handbook is considering a proposal that says a faculty member cannot be a member of the College Advisory Committee or University Advisory Committee the same year as going up for promotion. CoC: This would be a problem for smaller departments. One solution would be to apply this to the UAC and not the CAC. This problem could be addressed with a procedural change in the circulation of binders. Another alternative is to have the faculty member sit out the one promotion year, since CAC terms are for three years.

-In Chapter 9 on promotion and tenure, the Faculty Handbook allows up to 5 years of credit from another institution. The Handbook Committee is considering reducing the credit to 4 years. CoC: This would interfere with recruiting senior faculty. While a change might fix one problem, it creates another.

7.3 Strategic Planning Council – Tisha Zelner

-SPC is working with a March 2 deadline to present the report to the President. The report will be open for feedback at that time; committee members will bring back feedback from their constituencies.

7.4 University Assessment Committee – Susan Hart

-No report. There was no meeting last month.

8.0 Old Business

None.

9.0 New Business

9.1 Libraries budget cuts for FY 2015/16, especially proposed cancelation of RefWorks

-There are free alternatives to RefWorks.

-CoC: Is our Carnegie classification jeopardized by this round of budget cuts?

9.2 Interviews for Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admissions

-CoC is invited to participate in the interviews.

9.3 Proposed Raises

-The Mississippi legislature is considering a 5% pay increase for faculty. CoC: We need to consider both compression and merit. Does IHL require merit as a factor in raises?

9.4 New Graduate School Form

-CoC: We need clarification and consultation from the Graduate School about the new form.

10.0 Announcements

10.1 The Art of the Annual Evaluation, sponsored by the Office of the Provost, Feb. 25, 2-4 p.m., TCC 216

11.0 Adjourn
The meeting was adjourned.