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Consultative minutes 10/13/2010

Consultative Committee

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Consultative Committee Minutes

Wednesday, 13 October 2010

Present: Jim Barbour, Nancy Carpenter, Zak Forde, Jane Kill, Nic McPhee, Paula O'Loughlin, Mark Privratsky, Laura Thielke, Sharon Van Eps, Jen Zych Herrmann.

Agenda:

We approved the 29 Sep 2010 minutes with one minor correction.

The focus of the meeting was a visit from Jeff Ratliff-Crain to discuss the new assistant dean position that is due to be reviewed this year. Jeff started by passing out a *draft* Assistant Dean position description that he's put together based on his experience in the position; these notes are attached to these minutes.

People have expressed concerns to the Consultative Committee about how this position was created without broad consultation, how it was filled, and how the position has grown over the past two years. Jeff is very interested in working with the campus to assess the role and success of this position now that it's been in place for two years.

The current position is a 90% time position with connections to numerous campus offices (see his description below). He started in May 2008 (just before Cheryl Contant started as VC and Academic Dean) in a smaller time (40%) position that included student academic issues, and administrative authority over Academic Assistance and Disability Services. That was then expanded for Fall, 2009, to include FYS/First Year Experience. Leslie Meek had been doing a similar job at 40% before May 2008; interim Dean Roland Guyotte appointed Jeff to replace her when she had to step down. By Spring 2009 both the time and responsibilities had increased, so the position was adjusted to the current 90% time starting summer 2009. Many of the duties and offices Jeff serves had been scattered pieces handled in ad hoc ways; this position helps pull these together under one roof.

Jeff's term is over at the end of this year. When asked for his recommendation, Jeff stated that if configured as it currently is, he feels the position should continue, but that it should be 100% time for 12 months, not 90% time for 10. Jeff insisted on retaining two courses when he took the job to keep his foot in the door, but it's really too much work for that. The position also now oversees new student registration, which really means it needs to be a 12 month job. Jeff feels that the current responsibility list is already a full time job, and that there are things that aren't being addressed as well as they might because of the work load. The management of the six offices takes up the majority of the time. Second is the student academic issues (essentially a large part of the old job of Secretary to the Scholastic Committee). His recommendation is that this become an Associate Dean of Students under the current VC/Academic Dean. At the moment he has no budgetary control, so very little power. At the moment he's sometimes just a layer between the offices he works with and the administration, which is both frustrating and inefficient. Jeff wanted to retain his connection to students, which is why he wanted to keep some teaching responsibilities and have his office not be in Behmler (the new office will be in the basement of the Student Center when the remodel is done). In the future it might be useful

to have direct connections to things like MCSA. Jeff's wondered if these pieces can be divided differently, e.g., Dean of First Years.

Members of the committee raised questions about whether this really needs to be 100% position and whether we need another full-time administrative position, especially when money is tight. A position like this draws more consultative discussion out of the body of the campus and into an administrative position. Can staff and committees handle more of this workload instead of creating or expanding administrative positions? Jeff felt that there were things that were really falling apart for lack of supervision and management, and that this job is very important to help hold some of these things together. Members of the committee felt that at least part of the problem is that several offices have had their staffs cut, and people wondered if it would make more sense to put resources back into those offices instead of into a new administrative position. Jeff does feel that an alternative would be to move money and power back into the office staff, and have them report directly to the Dean. Some of this would have been handled by task forces or committees, but with fewer faculty that's harder to do that. Jeff feels, e.g., that the new FYE course should be managed by a committee (as was once the case for FYS) instead of the Assistant Dean. The current goal, however, is to try to pull these things together in an explicit way, and reduce the number of implicit connections that can be lost or misunderstood in times of change. The question was raised about splitting the job into three or four smaller positions to allow the people doing the work to keep a foot in teaching. Jeff feels that many of these logically and physically belong together to improve integration and improve services.

It's also important to realize that some things have changed over time. We're more intentional about our retention work, for example, the number of students in disabilities has grown enormously, and family and student expectations have changed

A committee member noted that there are concerns that this position is doing many things that arguably the Dean ought to be doing. Having a person to *coordinate* these efforts makes sense, but this person should *do* less (leaving that do the appropriate committees and offices) and focus on *coordination*. This position also does more to separate people from the Dean, which doesn't seem to be desirable.

Jeff will need to provide feedback to the Dean at some point this year on what he sees the future of this position. He'd like feedback from us, preferably sooner rather than later.

Respectfully submitted by Nic McPhee

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

ASSISTANT DEAN FOR STUDENT ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

This is a DRAFT compiled by Jeff Ratliff-Crain and shared with the Consultative Committee on 13 Oct 2010.

The Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean. The Assistant Dean provides leadership for the planning, development, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of programs and offices that affect academic development, enrichment, and success for UMM students.

Key offices that work with and report to the Assistant Dean are:

- Career Services
- Academic Advising
- Retention
- Academic Center for Enrichment
 - Study abroad
 - Honors
 - Undergraduate research
 - National scholarships
 - National Student Exchange
- Academic Assistance
- Disability Services

The collection of offices listed above are, together, dedicated to promoting academic development, enrichment, and success for UMM students beginning when students commit to UMM and continuing beyond graduation. Although each of the six offices has individual emphases and primary duties, the goal is to build synergy among these recognizing the ways in which students can gain through interactions with each. For each of these offices, the assistant dean is responsible for approving budgets and expenditures, handling personnel issues (from schedules to hiring), working with coordinators/directors for programming and planning, and addressing issues that may arise with faculty, parents, or others related to functions associated with these offices (e.g., complaints or to clarify roles and policies).

The office of the Assistant Dean for Student Academic Affairs, in addition to providing leadership and administrative oversight for these offices, is responsible for the coordination and development of the academic aspects of UMM's First Year Experience in cooperation with the Office of Student Activities, Office of Residential Life, and others on campus; coordination of the Intellectual Community courses; and various administrative duties related to student academic progress and success.

Other duties for the Assistant Dean include:

- First-year students:
 - FYE leadership and coordination
 - Work with Admissions, Advising, Student Activities, and the Registrar's office to coordinate incoming students' initial course registration

- Work with Student Activities and the Office of Residential Life for the academic aspects of New Student Orientation
 - Coordinate the Intellectual Community courses
 - Develop First Year and Parent web resources
 - Co-coordinate new student orientation for students entering mid-year
 - Send correspondence to all incoming students prior to registration and field questions about that event.
- Student academic issues
 - Act on student petitions to cancel courses for non-academic reasons
 - Counsel and evaluate petitions by students for withdrawal from courses after the 10th week and retroactive withdrawal after the term for non-academic reasons
 - Work with Student Affairs regarding withdrawal from courses for non-academic reasons and Financial Aid implications
 - Act as part of the Triage response team to proactively contact students, their parents, and/or faculty regarding student academic issues
 - Approve multi-U registrations
 - Evaluate and approve petitions by students to walk at graduation when requirements not complete
 - Serve on Scholastic Standing Committee to evaluate readmission applications after suspension
 - Provide input on other readmission applications
 - Work with Admissions to evaluate difficult applications
 - Coordinate registration for so-called ‘conditional admits;’ advise and register students admitted with the “conditions” flag during summer registration
 - With the Retention coordinator, identify and work with data related to student retention and success, using that information to evaluate programs, needs and to guide appropriate changes and innovations.
 - Be an additional contact and information provider for parents about student academics (without violating FERPA restrictions).
 - Participate in the following campus committees and groups:
 - Chair: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) appeal committee
 - “Triage” group
 - Academic Alert
 - Provide administrative support for academic integrity hearings and work with student in preparation and on sanctions
 - Ex-officio, Scholastic Committee
 - Ex-officio, Curriculum Committee
 - Dean’s representative on discussions related to SUFE arrangements

- Working with Retention office, Alert group and others to revise UMM's Academic and Midterm Alert systems
- Working with Advising office to move to effective electronic record keeping for advising
- Provide orientation session on academic policies and expectations for international students
- Work with international student support office on academic issues and support for international students
- Provide distance registration for transfer students during breaks and summer
- Revise transfer student initial registration and orientation
- Other duties as assigned

Actions so far

- Worked with Plant Services and architects to remodel spaces for the Career, Advising, Retention, ACE, Disability Services, Academic Assistance and Assistant Dean offices.
- Chaired the FYS revision to integrate first-year seminar courses into the Gen Ed.
- Worked to develop new study abroad procedures and relationship with Learning Abroad Center
- Devised study abroad emergency procedures and provided first-contact during UMM study abroad trip emergencies
- Working to further revise new student registration. Expected outcome: Better 'first impression' of the college, increased comfort level for students and their families, better use of resources, and increased satisfaction with course choices and placement.
 - Worked with Advising and Admissions to develop online pre-registration worksheet
 - Ongoing discussions with Math and Languages about placement testing procedures
 - Working to restructure registration days to make these a more interactive process for students.

Other activities—not necessarily Asst. Dean:

- Convene Bos and Tate Award committees
- URS committee
- IRB committee
- Grant-in-Aid review committee
- Conflict of Interest committee