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### UMM Constitution Revision Committee Minutes 03/13/2006

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Draft, March 21, 2006

Constitutional Revision Committee  
Meeting # 3: March 13, 2006  
Science 2555ã3:30-4:30 PM

Present: M.E. Bezanson (Chair), R. Heyman, M. Korth, T. Lindberg, T. McRoberts (Acting Secretary), J. Ratliff-Crain, G. Rudney, R. Wareham, and R. Webb

1. Meetings this springãthere was considerable discussion about how frequently the committee should meet. The general feeling was that we should meet only as often as we have business to conduct. The Chair noted that there are eight weeks remaining in the semester and if we have meetings bi-weekly, that would mean we have four meetings in which to get our collective work done. She proposed that we go to an every week meeting for the next two weeks and focus on the constitution. After that, assuming that we have finished with the review of the constitution, she suggested we go to every other week sessions. So, the committee will meet on March 20 and the 27<sup>th</sup>.
2. Forum this springãshould we have a campus forum this spring on the constitution? In response, the committee wondered what we want to accomplish with the forum. There was a general sense that we already have too many meeting at this time of year and we should probably put off having a forum until sometime in the fall. At the same time, there was the sense that we should say something to the campus community about the work of the Constitution Committee and to help set the stage for a forum that would come later.
3. Alternatives to a ForumãCommunication with the campusãthe committee decided that the chair should send out an email to the campus community in which she announces the regular meetings of the committee and then invites the campus community to respond to essentially two questions with regard to our constitution:
  - a. What is missing in our constitution?
  - b. How does practice diverge from policy as it relates to our constitution?

The Committee also agreed that each of the constituencies represented in the campus community should receive follow up notes from representatives of each constituency asking them to respond to the email from the Constitutional Revision Committee. Wareham would contact P&A; Rebecca Webb the USA staff and Tim Lindberg to students. As far as keeping the entire campus community informed of the work of the constitution committee, Wareham suggested that we use the Chancellor Search Committee's model with a website that keeps the campus community updated on our work (again as opposed to having any kind of meeting this spring).
4. Subcommittees and Progress on our Workãright now, it is premature to identify any subcommittees. We agreed that by the end of spring semester there should be a letter from the committee to the Chancellor and Campus Assembly outlining the progress of the work of the committee and setting the stage for the next steps in our work.

5. ≥Global≤ Discussions on the Constitution—the chair asked a committee member who was not able to comment at the last meeting about items that should be added to the (long) list of issues related to our current constitution. That person responded by suggesting that there should be a statement in the constitution that all meetings should be open—except for matters related to personnel. Further, the parliamentarian should be a member of the Executive Committee and the role of Consultative Committee should be clarified. And finally, the budgeting function of the Campus Resources and Planning Committee should be clearly stated or it should be clearly indicated whether or not this is a budget committee.
  
6. Continued Discussion of the UMM Constitution—the committee returned to the discussion of the constitution starting with Article 2—Divisions. There followed considerable discussion about every aspect of the divisional structure and the role of key officers of the division. For example, how one goes about appointing a temporary chair? There was also discussion about the divisions that have a vice chair or associate chair (or similar title) as does the Humanities and Social Sciences. It was clear from the discussions that there are variations across the campus as to the role (and existence) of vice chairs. It was also noted that some divisions (Humanities) have a constitution which describes the functions of the chair. Members felt that we should clearly indicate how far the campus constitution should go in describing the internal functions of the division. Perhaps something as simple as saying that each division should have its own constitution would be sufficient for the all campus constitution.

Under division chairs, there was a discussion about the role and responsibilities of the division chairs. One member commented that the chairs have responsibility for supplies, equipment and expense budgets, but little other budgetary authority. Chairs are consulted on salaries, but the decisions are made centrally. It was noted that there is a need for a new description of the division chairs roles and responsibilities and the existing description does not encompass the work of the chair.

There was a suggestion that we consider ≥chucking≤ the division model to be replaced by a departmental model. This suggestion came about because it has been an issue in the past, and also because it seems that more and more work has been assigned to discipline coordinators. The general response was that we should retain our divisional structure given the relatively small size of our disciplines and the resources available at the institution.

Under the division chairs there is no discussion of the relationship between the division chair and the Dean in matters of campus leadership. Further, the relationship of the division to the central (UMM) administration needs to be clarified. In essence, what is the role of the Dean in relation to the Division Chairs and the senior administrative leadership at UMM. There was a sense that the constitution should define jobs and responsibilities or enumerate the powers of senior administrative officers (i.e. Division Chairs, the Dean, perhaps various levels of Vice-Chancellors and the Chancellor).

There followed a discussion about how the Division Chairs are selected. It is clear that the division, usually through a committee, makes recommendations as to their choice of a chair to the Chancellor. The longstanding practice is that recommendations of the

division are accepted by the Chancellor. One member noted that the constitution should define the division chair selection process and make clear who actually decides. Another noted that the constitution has to delineate who makes appointments and what kind of consultative process should occur.

It should be noted that no senior administrative officers should be added unless found in our constitution.

It was noted that vice chairs in divisions are looked upon as the logical heirs to the chair, though this matter is not addressed in the constitution.

There followed a discussion about how the interim Dean got appointed. If there is a temporary appointment, with the chair or Dean returning to office, then it makes sense that there would be a short term appointment. Another member of the committee noted that there needs to be a defined consultative process in interim cases. In essence, there needs to be a defining policy for interim selections. The problem of interim appointments is that they have a tendency to go on and on and become permanent without searches.

Discussion then turned to a definition of institutional officers and their authority. The suggestion was made that the role, responsibilities and authority of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, the Dean and the Division Chairs be clearly spelled out in the constitution. On the matter of the selection of Directors, one view was that it's a Human Resource issue and should not be spelled out in our constitution.

There followed a discussion about the  $\geq$ tenure $\leq$  of a Division Chair. The question was the practice. It appears that the practice of evaluating and reviewing of division chairs is uneven. In one case a division chair was being reviewed and in another case there was none. We need to have a clear policy with regard to reviews of division chairs.

The committee discussed the role of the entire campus community in the governance processes. It seems that there has been erosion of  $\geq$ democracy $\leq$  in our governance system.

Article 3, Section 4 Grievance Committee—it was noted this is not in compliance with University policy. There is a UMM grievance officer, but this is not the same thing as a Grievance Committee. It was determined that the Grievance Committee should be struck from the constitution.

The committee agreed that the discipline coordinators play an important role in the divisions, but it seemed that many if not most committee members were not in favor of formalizing the role of the coordinators in our constitution.

There was concern that the constitution defines the division as the primary academic unit in the constitution, but shouldn't enumerate all of the details regarding the internal functioning of the division. The constitution might indicate that each division should have its own internal  $\geq$ constitution $\leq$  or policies.

The authority of the division chairs and how that has changed over time was next considered. There was one example cited where a key administrative appointment was made without consulting a division chair. There was a lengthy discussion about the division chairs as administrators or faculty members. The answer seems to be it depends. Under some circumstances they are defined primarily as administrators for certain kinds of appointments. But most typically, division chairs are drawn from faculty and hold the title of chair as an incidental to their essential appointment as a faculty member. At the same time, because they are chairs, they are not eligible to serve on certain committees such as the Consultative Committee.

It was noted that the Chancellor and Dean are almost always hired as administrators though at UMM they always have been given tenured appointments as faculty members.

The committee will continue its discussion of the constitution on March 20.

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