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Steering Committee

Campus Governance

2017

Steering final report 2016/2017

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Recommended Citation

Steering Committee, "Steering final report 2016/2017" (2017). *Steering Committee*. 29.
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University of Minnesota, Morris
Campus Assembly
Steering Committee
Final Report
2016-17

Committee Members: Jon Anderson, Nic McPhee, Denise Odello, Jacqueline Johnson (Chancellor), Michelle Behr (Chancellor), Jennifer Zych Herrmann, Janell Kolden, William Rasmussen, Madison Hughes, Tim Lindberg (Parliamentarian), David Israels Swenson (Parliamentarian) and Carrie Grussing

The Steering Committee has the following responsibilities (from the UMM constitution):

- To prepare agendas and schedule meetings of the assembly;
- To request and receive reports and recommendations for action by the assembly;
- To develop, with the assistance of the chancellor, an annual agenda for the Campus Assembly and its committees;
- To advise the administration on issues that do not fall under the purview of any assembly committee;
- To apprise appropriate committees or the assembly of any matter the Steering Committee considers appropriate;
- To schedule a meeting of the chairs of all assembly committees at least once per semester in order to promote communication and coordination among the committees. The first such meeting each academic year shall include a discussion of how committees function and interact with the Campus Assembly as well as how to be an effective committee chair;
- To monitor the functioning of the Campus Assembly and its committees and to recommend needed changes in structure; In particular, the Steering Committee shall periodically evaluate the productivity and necessity of each standing committee and consider whether its responsibilities are appropriately delineated;
- To carry out other functions assigned to it by the assembly.

Revitalizing Campus Governance & the Community Hour

During the previous academic year, the UMM Consultative Committee produced recommendations for Revitalizing Campus Governance:

- re-organizing the agenda and/or substance of the agenda;
- assuring that Q & A after reports not be confused with actual discussion;
- allowing for discussion time after all pertinent topics;
- adding an open forum at the beginning of Assembly;
- changing the venue (perhaps to the HFA Recital Hall?), if only on a trial basis;

- video-recording every meeting and making recordings available to all Assembly members
- re-considering the current meeting time
- Informational materials about Campus Governance should be developed for easy access (one-page summary of Constitution or YouTube video, etc.)

In response to the concerns expressed by the Consultative Committee in AY15-16, the Steering Committee examined several proposals to establish a 'Community Hour' so that no classes or labs meet during that time. This time could then be used for governance and other UMM community events. During fall semester 2016, campus assembly members were given the opportunity to review and respond to several 'community hour' proposals via a google form. There was convincing evidence that campus assembly members wished to examine a 'community hour' further. During the remainder of the academic year the Steering Committee studied how other institutions implement a community hour and at the end of spring semester 2017, the Steering Committee made a formal presentation of a 'community hour' proposal to the campus assembly. The proposal calls for a change to the existing Tuesday/Thursday calendar so that classes begin at 8am, there is a 10 minute transition period between classes, and a community hour between 11:40am and 12:40pm. The assembly will vote on this proposal in academic year 2017-18.

Constitutional revisions (incl. committee elimination)

In fall semester 2016, the campus assembly approved constitution amendment group 2 – making changes to clarify membership and voting member status. Amendment group 3 regarding a campus-wide review of the chancellor was tabled to wait for a new chancellor, and to obtain input from human resources and the general counsel's office; it's unclear at this point whether this will return as an issue.

The constitution task force made a set of recommendations (group 4) that consisted primarily of eliminating committees. The Steering committee decided to study these proposals further to consider some of the implications of removing these committees before a vote on elimination is taken. During spring semester 2017, the Steering committee studied governance structures at peer institutions to gain insights on how we might implement a new governance paradigm without several existing committees. These findings will be considered further by the next Steering committee.

Near the end of spring semester 2017, the campus assembly approved constitutional amendment group 5. These changes primarily clarified voting and election procedures.

All that is left for Steering to address is group 4, on the potential elimination of committees.

Assembly membership for faculty on leave

During the year, a faculty member on leave, and therefore not a member of the campus assembly wished to be reinstated. The UMM constitution states that a faculty member on leave shall not be a member of the campus assembly unless a written petition is presented to the Steering Committee. The constitution also states that such petitions will be granted. This issue raised a few questions about how such petitions should be handled in the future. Should the constitution be amended to clarify the petition process? The following questions were raised

1. Should reinstatement be automatic or require a vote, and in either case, this should be more specifically addressed. If a vote is required, can people vote no, or just raise objections?
2. The timing of reinstatement requests - are they always open for submission (or does the member have to request it prior to beginning leave) and when they do take effect?
3. Should it be allowed if a member is not intending to/able to attend meetings?

Upcoming Steering Committees will need to decide if these issues justify a clarification or a revision to the constitution. The outgoing chair of Steering offers this as a resolution.

Faculty on sabbatical or single semester leave shall be removed from membership for the duration of that leave unless they submit a written petition to the Steering Committee requesting to remain a member of the Campus Assembly during the leave. The petition must be submitted to the Steering Committee prior to the first day of classes in a semester. The Steering Committee is expected to grant all such requests unless the petitioner fails to provide evidence and assurance they will be able to satisfy the responsibilities of campus assembly membership during the upcoming semester.

Meetings with committee chairs

The Steering Committee decided to conduct an end-of-year joint meeting of all committee chairs near the end of spring semester to get new chairs familiar with their new roles and issues facing their committees in the upcoming year. By having this meeting near the end of the semester, a Google Form was completed by current chairs during spring semester 2017 to give an overview of their activity that was shared with all committee chairs. That report is attached as an appendix to this summary.