Faculty and P&A Affairs Committee   Campus Governance

2-2-2015

FAPAAC open forum memorandum

Faculty and P&A Affairs Committee

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Dear Faculty and P&A colleagues,

   As you may remember, the Faculty and P & A Affairs Committee hosted a drop-in open forum on the afternoon of Monday, February 2, 2015.   The topics were work appreciation and professional development. Our cohosts were the Faculty Development Committee and the Morris Academic Staff Association. Further context for this forum is given in the original e-mail invitation you received, included below.

   Attached are nine pages of notes from this open forum, with e-mail responses from the campus and also input from a meeting with the Consultative Committee included. These notes are organized by general topic, and represent candid contributions from approximately twenty-five members of our campus community.   We imagine that each of you will find that you agree with some suggestions and disagree with others.

    Our next step is to discuss the input we received with Chancellor Johnson and Dean Finzel. Simultaneously, we welcome further input from you, especially on specific topics already raised in the attached notes.

   We would like to take this opportunity to thank our cohosts for their help with the open forum, and all respondents for their contributions.

   Sincerely,

   Dave Roberts
   on behalf of the Faculty and P&A Affairs Committee

Memorandum from the FACPAAC Forum of February 2, 2015
and from the Consultative Committee meeting of February 25, 2015
(Organized by the FACPAAC Forum Subcommittee on 3/25/2015)

Civility & Community

1. Top-down decision making is a problem. Examples: unilateral reduction in payment for summer classes and the new advising model – both done without consultation of faculty. This decision-making discounts faculty.
2. Faculty and P&A staff can get somewhat isolated depending on the size of your area—need support for isolated offices.
3. Any sort of criticism or push back on proposal is seen as contrarian, but this kind of response is a variety of engagement.
4. Communication is not as clear as it could be on this campus. Could this be addressed? This lack of communication gives a sense of not being treated as professionals. People want consultation and given an opportunity to express concern.
5. Places for casual interaction and physical places have gone away in campus buildings. Every building on campus should have a location for lounge for staff and faculty. Some suggestions for a central location would be the Student Center or the Welcome Center. If you leave your office space during the day either for lunch or break, it can help for better employee productivity which is a good thing. This can help develop appreciation for people by being together.
6. Policies on receptions honoring colleagues who are retiring or leaving UMM.
7. Having an employee leave after many years at UMM and told no money for retirement celebration gives a feeling of no appreciation.
8. Email during treacherous winter travel interpreted as Chancellor's unsympathetic concern – "they choose where they live."
9. Atmosphere that is rigid – workers don't feel they can relax with each other, nose to the grindstone at all times.
10. Feel like being watched all the time and tenured people have freedom and P & A people feel threatened.
11. "Water cooler" sites have disappeared in most buildings, i.e. kitchenette area used informally by residents of the building providing opportunities for interactions that don't otherwise occur.
12. Lack of opportunities for new people to make connections socially and professionally.
13. If you say no to a request to do something—chair a committee, for example—then you are seen as not being a team player—despite the fact that your saying no could have something to

do with all the other teamwork you're doing. And further: yes, it's an honor to be asked, yes, one feels appreciated, but sometimes it seems like one is being asked just to fill a slot, and it can be true that the person asking knows how to "play" you.

14. We need to hold empowered members of the community responsible for less-than-civil behavior.
15. There is no empowerment to deal with issues around lack of civility.
16. Inequity resulted from job re-classification process; it was a "heinous process."
17. People are disengaging—that is, they're choosing to avoid opportunities such as a forum or the campus assembly.
18. Work on committees feels useless; committees are mostly advisory (after the fact) and have little power.
19. "I'm contemplating incompetency" since people use incompetency as a way of avoiding service.
20. We need some mechanism that allows people in one area (faculty, say) to understand what those in another area (USA, say) do.

Professional Development: What is it? What are your thoughts about it?

1. On the professional development matter, I fear a misunderstanding of the question. For the faculty who are interested in embracing an administrative career there are many opportunities for conferences and workshops to go to and our dean has been very inclusive in taking or sending faculty to those workshops/conferences. But for the majority of the faculty who I believe are those who want to continue teaching and doing research, it is not clear what prof development means. It is important that administration understand that not all of us are interested in developing professionally into an administrator. Perhaps for faculty who want to continue just focusing on teaching and research, professional development could be getting more involved with our professional organization, being on national committees on research and other initiatives; I think many may like to work more in their own national organization but UMM is far away from the centers of powers and one needs to go to these meetings and FREF would not consider this research (we can get the $400 for the conference but no higher categories).
2. I don't see how professional development is a problem for faculty members, and I'm not sure I understand what that would even mean for a faculty member. So I'm guessing it mainly concerns staff.
3. Concerning professional development, I have two ideas: 1) some sort of time release or credit for development in the form of sitting in on our colleagues' courses. There are any number of overlaps I could imagine. 2) More specific feed back when we apply for internal

grants and awards.

4. There was not general agreement about what professional development is. Some ideas of what professional development is: Doing activities/research that furthers your position; Something that helps you with your job; Webinars are an example: vendor and association webinars are too pricey. Need an alternative; Fall development day; Formal mentoring process; Interaction with others outside of UMM; Support through MAPS and FREF; In my field it would look like training. Don't have enough time or resources to run to the Twin Cities for training, yet would like training for young professionals/leaders as a unit. This would save time and money; Fall Development Day, Tech People, MASA Group; career advancement; do job better.

5. We should be encouraged to be a better professional. In my case, even when I researched and found an opportunity, my supervisor said we didn't have the time or money. It didn't seem to be of value.

6. Many hats problem – people take on new roles and do more than what they are trained to do.

7. Mentoring played a big role in improving my teaching.

8. Could Twin Cities campus use WebEx to include other system campuses in a professional development series?

9. New and untenured faculty get lots of resources for research while tenured faculty do not.

10. Need more opportunities for professional development for P & A.

11. No money to support P & A for conference reimbursements.

12. Lack of funding is the problem and couldn't funds be allocated for this.

13. Time is not the issue; where to find funds is the problem. It would be nice to find conferences/professional meetings/opportunities so the whole staff can attend a type of professional development in their specialty.

14. More availability for research.

15. This [FREF] works well for faculty. Some are worried about rumors that it may not continue.

16. Could something like FREF be used by P&A to receive funding in order to present at a conference? We need ideas of where the money might come from to support presentations. What are the options? Are presentations an official part of the job…if they aren't, shouldn't they be?

17. A go-to person for work information which can help you do your job better.

18. An employee with years of service in the same job classification.

19. There is no transition training if you move to a different job classification.

20. Supervisory Training from Twin Cities campus may go to $1000 per person, not including the cost of hotels, transportation and meals.

21. Departmental office seminar in Chicago was three-day training, and it was very good.

22. People who are promoted don't get training for new role.
23. Several people felt that there should be more opportunities for "training to be supervisors, leaders, etc.
24. I need a training orientation on supervising students that would be about 1-2 hours; maybe an online module could cover this.
25. I wish there was training for supervising students. I need help in this area.
26. Not much professional development is provided on teaching/classroom skills and/or pedagogy. There was the flipped classroom workshop, but I would like to see more on interactive online development that includes branching, etc.
27. Add development of teaching as I was never taught how to give an official presentation.
28. Professional development opportunities are inconsistent.
29. Faculty have three identities (teaching, scholarship, service) —which gets professional development?
30. Some people don't have time for professional development opportunities.
31. Some of these opportunities are too generalized to be of particular help.
32. People need training in how to do performance appraisals.

Fall professional development day

1. Last year about 80 attended. It seemed there was attrition through the day. This might not happen if the location was away from campus and it had a social event at the end of the day.
2. A few dozen people replied to the Fall Professional Development Day survey. It seems most people want more social interaction.
3. Recent Fall Professional Development Day survey had higher response numbers of "maybe" and lower response numbers of "yes" when asked if they were willing to present a topic at Fall Professional Development Day.
4. Survey feedback on the time allotment for the open forum was mostly positive. People grouped into tables by self-chosen topics. (Several people agreed that they liked the open topic time best.)
5. UMM has expertise here—we need to use our own "gold." But, will our people be able to get it done with their other duties? Will they have time? Will they be appreciated for their contributions?
6. Topics need more direct instruction—need to dig deeper into the topics.
7. Topic descriptions on the Fall Professional Development Day invitation should include a short overview of the topics.
8. Go back to holding this event outside of UMM. Money needs to be given to accomplish this. Also good for interaction among colleagues and sets a good start for all incoming new

faculty.

9. Need topic on "teaching and student mental health" at the Fall Faculty Development Day.

Appreciation

1. Obvious different needs in each area.

2. Appreciation should come from a unit level, others felt administration level and others at a system level. Most feel ignored by the Twin Cities.

3. Are celebration events like the ones the Humanities Division organizes whenever one of our faculty publishes a book useful to raise the morale of faculty? There is disagreement about this matter in the division. The anti side say they are divisive and always the same people get attention; the pro side find them to be useful to share knowledge about what we do with colleagues and students. They are especially useful to show students how we work.

4. Again some people have also been critical of the Scholarship celebration. I am so very glad we started doing these events and hope we will continue. The real problem I see (with division celebrations and the Celebration of Scholarly Accomplishments) is to make sure there are analogous type of events for performing arts and sciences (if they are not captured by the division celebrations and Celebration).

5. Concerning appreciation: In general, a thank you goes a long way, and I am not sure we are always so good at saying this. More of these little things could go a long way. In addition, really coming up with some concrete ways to evaluate who is doing what service and showing that it is or is not equally distributed across campus is a strong foundation to start any discussion of workload. Right now I think a lot of people's opinions are based on perception and speculation.

6. For the most part, I do feel appreciated and I feel I have adequate professional development opportunities. In light of last year's engagement survey, my experience does not sound like the norm around here. I have no great ideas on how to cultivate a culture of appreciation, because in my small sphere I feel appreciated.

7. About the culture of appreciation question: I believe that this is predominantly about money. I feel grossly underpaid (according to any comparison) and so in that sense feel underappreciated. I don't want any merely symbolic appreciation; I want something tangible. I don't want coffee cups, thank you cards, recognition dinners, or posters (although that is nice). I want a paycheck that is not insulting.

8. Generalized, not-personalized faculty/staff gifts are not received as genuine signs of appreciation, e.g. luggage tags, chocolates on anniversary date. Unsigned holiday cards don't indicate appreciation.

9. The staff gifts seemed tacky and unnecessary to give out. People would like to be appreciated

in a personal way rather than by this gift.

10. "Gifts" from the Twin Cities offices are especially not regarded favorably. Need to support UMM and its unique mission in resources.

11. People want genuine, one-on-one recognition. The source of appreciation varied: some wanted it most of all from colleagues, some from immediate supervisor, some from UMM administrators, some from system administrators.

12. Appreciation should be more personal.

13. For most, money/salary does not equal appreciation.

14. "I know I'm awesome and don't need people to tell me this."

15. **"**Being a faculty member no longer feels important. I feel like a cog, like a cipher."

16. No recognition for all the hats you wear but instead you are given more and more responsibilities.

17. Expectation that we can just take on more and more tasks indicates a lack of appreciation for the work we're already doing and that we're working 100% already.

18. No thanks are given personally for individual's strengths and values.

19. Don't hold cocktail hour celebrations at Bello during work hours.

20. Discipline coordinators are not appreciated or recognized.

21. Research support is great and so is the celebration of scholarly accomplishments.

22. Staff feels undervalued compared to faculty.

Faculty and/or P & A Concerns

1. Concerning workload, what seem like "little things" add up and it seems the administration adds up and doesn't remove.

2. Evening obligations have increased.

3. Change to one-year contracts for P&A employees leaves them feeling vulnerable, uncertain of their future.

4. Lots of committee meetings with work involved and no showing of results.

5. Faculty service overwhelms other identities.

6. Workload is inconsistent among faculty and among USA.

7. Adjunct faculty often teach service courses which are not necessarily the most-loved courses, and yet those faculty are judged on student evals.

8. Curriculum – We need a task force (or other) to work on curriculum development; it is underfunded.

9. I would like class and/or support on making sure my materials conform to Universal Design so all students can access them.

10. There is nitpicking among/between divisions and this is a reflection of stress and being

overwork, etc.

11. Full time, even for P&A should be 20 credits.
12. There is a lack of clarity about expectations/opportunities for P&A faculty to have advisees, serve on committees, etc.
13. There is no available reasonable food on weekends or on 3-day weekends; and even evening food is mostly grilled and fatty.
14. There is a life cycle in academia, but here there is not. Faculty don't move into the "elder" era of their professional lives.
15. Tenured faculty are given more and more administrative tasks and cannot follow their research. Some of these are "hidden" things that no one knows about – that don't necessarily appear on a c.v.

Miscellaneous

1. "There are no slackers!"
2. "Teaching" help for those who need it and want it. Need on-demand help.
3. I have used the sliding white board lectures. I learned you need to pick bite-sized chunks of information to support F2F lectures. Then in-class can cover troubleshooting.
4. It would be a benefit to catch everyone up to a consistent Moodle standard.
5. I taped my lectures to review for improvement in the classroom (like athletes watching game tapes). It was eye-opening and most useful. I learned I was talking too fast and moving too quickly through the presentation for people to take good notes. I also use TAs to takes notes and put them up on PDF, but there is a time lag problem.
6. Another college I taught at had a teaching certification program that was 1-2 days for new faculty/instructors.
7. Centers for Excellence are out-of-fashion—Scholarly Commons are better.
8. Job descriptions don't match actual jobs.
9. The separation of P&A and staff during orientation is not good.
10. Preparation for tenure is handled through divisions for faculty and is done reasonably well.
11. Well defined goals; supervisors are clear about goals, indicate in an ongoing way that you are meeting expectations.
12. The help desk seems understaffed and hours should be extended to cover the on-demand need.
13. Training should be offered but would like it to be available at the moment rather than to sit through hours of it.
14. We need more communication about directions in technology—technology hype cycle.

15. Need more research-based teaching tips and best practices for using technology in the classroom.
16. We have much better technical help and helpdesk response in recent years, but labs belong to pipe people instead of users people.
17. Need help in teaching writing. Could there be a writing room requirement as there are struggles with writing assignments due to poor writing and not enough language training for SUFE students. Could curriculum take up the need for more ESL classes and we need to figure out how.
18. I would like to see a "teaching writing in your discipline" class for professional development, i.e. writing in the field of economics, writing in the field of history, etc. Another college handled this by having: 2 lectures per week by senior faculty; 1 session per week plus office hours with writing instructor (assignment was developed by senior faculty working with writing instructor); 1 session per week plus offices hours with TA.
19. We need to grade content and flow as well as grammar in student writing assignments, but don't always have the time to do this well.
20. 4000 level courses need to have papers that involve multiple drafts and should require students to work in conjunction with the writing room.
21. As a student I needed the instructor to teach "reading/writing/interpreting in my field" such as how to write a technical or scientific report, how to create a "poster" or other presentation, or how to accurately describe your research data and accompanying graphs.
22. Maybe we should include a writing room requirement and peer reviews. We should also make sure students can describe data and graphs in all math, science and social science courses.
23. CST student employees need more work on how to write a report. Maybe we could have a one-hour PowerPoint with script for getting student workers up to speed on writing professional reports.
24. It would work better for ESL students to have many small writing assignments, rather than one long one. That forces students to read and digest articles more often.
25. What are the resources for ESL help? There are not enough resources after the first entry level ESL sections. We need more ESL help in the intermediate sections.
26. Need more help on how to incorporate ESL students in your discipline—tends to be more international students in economics, math, and statistics.
27. Need to learn how to work with ESL students in residential life, facilities, signage—signs are not heeded by international students.
28. There are issues with writing – faculty in econ/mgt have given up writing assignments because of the poor writing. We don't know the effects of WLA yet, admittedly. There is

not enough language training for SUFE students; there is a different cultural attitude toward sharing work among SUFE students and we need to be in unison in our response to that.