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Consultative Committee

Campus Governance

12-5-2008

Consultative minutes 12/05/2008

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Recommended Citation

Consultative Committee, "Consultative minutes 12/05/2008" (2008). *Consultative Committee*. 84.
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Minutes for the Consultative Committee meeting

Friday, 5 December 08

Present: Len Keeler, Bradley Deane, Alex Murphy, Jenn Zych (Chair), Jon Anderson, Judy Korn, Lynn Schultz, Nancy Carpenter. **Guest:** Cheryl Contant, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean. **Absent:** Maggie Larson

VCAA and Dean Cheryl Contant was welcomed and initiated the conversation by reflecting on the questions which were sent to her earlier by Chair Zych. The three main “priority” areas she sees (in no particular order) are 1) academic operations (the routine operations such as hiring, sabbaticals, curriculum, etc.), 2) academic support (working with the direct and indirect reports to her, and 3) strengthening our academic stature. Some of the specific high priority tasks facing her are the computing services director position and the grants development position. With regard to “strengthening our academic stature,” Contant mentioned working with both enrollment management and retention. Assessment and a review of the general education requirements, examination of program efficiency, and external review of programs, are also on her radar screen.

The issue of communication was raised and Contant recognized that she is still learning about UMM and finding out that some assumptions she has made are not necessarily true; she needs to communicate more clearly so that her expectations are better understood.

Contant asked what the Consultative Committee does and was greeted with general laughter. The historical role of the Consultative Committee as a sometime grievance committee was noted, as was the unusual representation of the committee: it is a good place to come for consultation. To that end, Contant briefly discussed her process whereby she appointed the search committee for the Grants Development position.

Keeler asked Contant about program efficiencies, especially with regard to low-enrollment classes. Contant pointed out that there are low-enrollment courses at the 2000-level as well as 4000-level. Both situations require attention, and program efficiencies can be achieved by examining alternative ways to deliver this material. The question of an appropriate faculty/student ratio was brought up, which led to a discussion of “who do we compare ourselves to” for purposes of knowing what an appropriate student/faculty ratio is.

Submitted by Nancy Carpenter