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Campus Assembly, "Campus Assembly minutes 02/19/2009" (2009). *Campus Assembly*. 64.
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University of Minnesota, Morris
Campus Assembly Minutes

February 19, 2009

I. Chancellor's Remarks

Chancellor Johnson said her remarks would be brief today because we have a full and interesting agenda. While attending the Board of Regents meeting last week, President Bruininks remarks focused on the ongoing budget challenges: he reiterated the state situation and the impact on the University of Minnesota. He also reiterated the budget principles: the first priority is to keep education accessible; second to address compensation and retention of faculty and staff; to use all possible tools and to remain accountable. For our part, we continue our work here to model cuts at the percents we were given a few weeks ago and we will continue to follow the schedule for that work and the consultative process that is part of our campus culture. President Bruininks also mentioned budget planning strategies that encompass five areas: administrative; academic; HR; printing; facilities and technology and capital strategies. He also mentioned the need to restructure; to reduce costs; to defer investments; and to generate new sources of revenue—these are all things that we are working on as well.

It's been a rough, long winter and it's been a rough week at UMM. We are doing our work in tough, crazy and chaotic economic times. It's sometimes hard to stay focused on the good work we are doing. Some days it feels like it's hard to stay focused at all. It's easy to get dragged into despair and pessimism. Now more than ever, we need to keep our mission in front of us—the extraordinary opportunities we provide here for undergraduate students and the outstanding work of our faculty and staff. We also need to keep in front of us the importance of the attention we garner from external audiences. This community comes together to support its students in difficult times. This community came together to support our enrollment efforts two weeks ago for the Community of Scholars event.

We need to keep this good news at the forefront—the work we do here really is a model for others. She inspired every day by the ideas and the imagination that unfold here. Winter will end and nobody understands the significance of that better than Minnesotans so no wonder that we should lead the nation in retaining a sense of hope and confidence in the future. Because we can be hopeful and we should be confident in our ability to succeed.

II. Minutes from 11/5/08 Campus Assembly meeting approved as presented.

III. From the Curriculum Committee. The following Curricular changes were approved as presented.

Humanities Course Changes:

These courses were inadvertently left out of the list of courses to be inactivated that went to the October 2008 Campus Assembly meeting.

CMR 3211 – Public Address (Hum)

CMR 3311 – Social Uses of the Media (E/CR)

CMR 3341 – Communication Technology and Society (Hum)

A maximum credit limit of 32 credits toward the degree requirement for I.S. internships 3796, 3896, and 3996.

Foreign Language Gen Ed requirement (with editorial changes)

IV. From the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Academic Calendar for 2013-2014 presented for information.

Cheryl Contant walked through the 2013-2014 calendar. Several assembly members had questions/concerns about the proposed calendar that included the actual start date; the effect this has on lab sections; and potential holidays. Cheryl noted that on any academic calendar there will be weeks where you will lose class days. To review and revisit the student orientation is a much larger issue that what we can discuss today. She suggested that people who have a significant stake in the calendar—students and particularly faculty in the sciences—to send her an e-mail and she will put together a working group to discuss the calendar.

V. From the Executive Committee. The following mission statement was presented for information at this meeting.

The University of Minnesota, Morris provides an undergraduate liberal arts education of uncompromising rigor for a diverse student body. The University is a center for education, culture, and research for the region, nation, and world. As a public liberal arts college, UMM is committed to outstanding teaching, dynamic learning, faculty and student scholarship, innovative creative activity, and genuine outreach. Our residential academic setting fosters extensive collaboration, rich diversity, and a deep sense of community. UMM prepares its graduates to be engaged global citizens who are intercultural ambassadors, lifetime learners and effective stewards of their environments. (95 words)

Sarah Buchanan reported that the Executive Committee took into account the feedback they received regarding the mission statement. She believes they addressed all of the concerns except what it means to be an effective steward of the environment. One of Janet Ericksen's students came up with the following sentence:

“UMM prepares its graduates to be global citizens who value and practice intellectual pursuits, civic engagements, intercultural competence, and effective environmental stewardship.”

Sarah suggested substituting the last sentence in the mission statement above with this new sentence. Bert Ahern supports the last sentence. Stephen Martin is uncomfortable with the word practice, suggests using embrace. Ray Schultz added that CRPC had a long conversation about the wording. Sarah added that the general sense is this new sentence is better. Paula O'Loughlin made a motion to close discussion on proposed amendment and decide whether we want to substitute the last sentence. Motion passes.

Motion in favor of sentence substitution passes by voice vote.

The following editorial changes/comments were suggested:

- replace practice with another word
- take out “and practice”
- why “effective” environmental stewardship – suggest striking effective
- change to “who value and pursue lifetime learning”
- intellectual pursuits more contemporary
- happy to hear that a student came up with the sentence
- suggest using “pursues intellectual growth” instead of “intellectual pursuits”
- replace “The University” with “The college community” in the second sentence
- most public liberal arts colleges have one or two line statements – makes a bigger impact on students

Gordon McIntosh read the following statement: “In my opinion the proposed mission statement is more of a call to political activism than a commitment to intellectual development. I do not support it. Since the mission statement is not attractive to me I am sure the statement and the thinking it represents are not attractive to at least some politically conservative and moderate prospective students and their families. Such a mission statement may reduce intellectual and political diversity and may contribute to the enrollment challenge faced by the campus. The results of the CIRP survey indicate the shift to the left of our student body over the last 10 years. I think the shift represents the fact that many moderate and conservative students are opting to go to other colleges. The proposed mission statement along with the response to Dr. Myers blog, the condemnation of the campus' speech code by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, and various other campus actions will reinforce the perception that UMM is an extremely liberal campus where other political perspectives may be tolerated but are not generally welcomed.”

Bert Ahern respectfully disagreed with his colleague that the mission statement is a not a loaded political statement. Michael O'Reilly thinks we should get rid of the hype. Perhaps we are not as good as we think we are. He suggests the one sentence becomes our mission statement and everything else is deleted. Henry Fulda said that if you look at the one sentence very narrowly, some people might not see their jobs there. However, if I look from a broad context of what this university does, then I see myself there. Paula O'Loughlin suggested that if we decide on a single sentence that liberal arts is explicitly stated as well as teaching, research and service. Barbara Burke inquired about the deadline we are up against. Chancellor Johnson responded that the deadline is more self-imposed and there's no particular deadline that's driving us. Clare Strand said she finds the dialogue to be heartening and really valuable.

Sarah Buchanan suggested taking a straw poll to see if people are in favor of one sentence or the longer version. The straw poll results: many people prefer a single sentence; some people prefer the longer version. Not a clear overwhelming majority. The Executive Committee will bring back for action at the next Campus Assembly meeting.

VI. Campus Committee Reports

Campus Resources and Planning Committee

Pete Wyckoff reported that the committee is in the process of reviewing the revised campus master plan. Upcoming agenda items include the current fiscal year budget and international students and our growing student population.

Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee

Bert Ahern reported that the committee is looking at patterns of student retention and graduation. They will be engaged in conversations with division chairs to try to help us find ideas and tools to address the gap.

Assessment of Student Learning

Michael O'Reilly that last October four members from UMM attended a major conference on Assessment at the U of I in Indianapolis. Much of the committee's work has been driven by considering issues and ideas raised at that meeting. As a result we wish to ask Disciplines this year to address the following three issues in their annual reports.

1. to document any changes made as a result of prior reports,
2. to document the assessment of the effectiveness of these changes,
3. to pay particular attention to those GenEd courses that the Discipline offers for non-majors (for example, Survey of Math in the Mathematics Discipline) to assess if these courses are attaining their stated objectives.

In general the ASLC is seeking to move Disciplines towards regular internal assessment of each course offered, on an incremental basis. A suggested process is that, year by year, Disciplines prepare stated goals for each course, together with stated assessment measures to test if these goals are being achieved. This term the ASLC has formed two subcommittees. One (convener: Julie Eckerle) is to address assessment of General Education aspects and the other (convener: Arne Kildegaard) is to investigate aspects of the level of academic challenge. The latter issue arises because, consistently, according to the NSSE surveys, our own students rate the level of academic challenge at this institution at a lower level than students at other COPLAC institutions rate it at their institution.

Later this term we expect the Vice-chancellors to discuss the broader results of the 2008 National Survey of Student Engagement survey with the campus community.

Update on Self-Study

Michael Korth reported that the deadline for the work of the five subcommittees is approaching. The steering committee will bring a draft of the report to the Campus Assembly for review in the fall.

VII. All University Reports

Benefits Advisory Committee

Michael O'Reilly reported that because of current and future budget contractions, UM Human Services has been asked by the University president to find savings for the University of around \$4M in the \$200M cost of benefits. UM Human Services has prepared the list of guiding principles and proposed cuts. This list has been acknowledged by the President as of an appropriate amount and is now under consideration by the Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC). The BAC is seeking feedback from university employees as to alternative ideas to find the same savings for the University. From the initial discussion at the BAC meeting of Feb 19, I know that Human Services have taken the task very seriously and the saving and cuts proposed have been priced based on previous usage. The BAC response will be considered at the meeting of March 5. Please channel any comments either to me or to Dann Chapman in Human Services.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

Adjourned at 6:00 pm.

