Consultative Committee   Campus Governance

10-9-2017

Consultative minutes 10/09/2017

Consultative Committee

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October 9, 2017 - 1:00 p.m.
Prairie Lounge - UMM Student Center

Members present: Sarah Buchanan, Mike Cihak, Nancy Helsper, Tiernan Lenius, Michelle Page, Noah Pilugin, Angela Stangl, Jeri Squier, Elsie Wilson and Roger Wareham.

Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m.

<u>Minutes</u>
The chair stated there were no paper copies to present, but were shared online. If members haven't had a chance to review them, should we delay approval? A member suggested there is an error on item 3-A-I-1, that perhaps the word 'tenure' is not the right word for this. Someone suggested removal of the word 'tenure.' The minutes were approved with the proposed changed.

The chairs would like to create a document with dates of upcoming meetings with general topics and specific agenda items. The document would also identify the individual committee member tasked with recording minutes. This list is generated alphabetically by last name, and persons can switch with another committee member if needed.

A question was raised on why the Consultative Committee doesn't have administrative support, and can a request be made to the chancellor? Was the lack of administrative support due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the topics discussed? According to one committee member, it may have been at one time, but is no longer the reason.

Related to minutes, this committee is often tasked with confidentiality. It is common practice by the committee where specific comments are not attributed individual members. A committee member reminded the committee that any member can request the discussion go 'off the record' and meeting can be closed to discuss sensitive information. If discussion of a topic is of concern to people in the room, we can kindly ask those affected to not be present and try to be responsive to concerns. The primary concern for the committee is to provide a safe space. We generally take minutes to try and capture substance of the conversation meeting/discussion and respond to those concerns, yet, also demonstrate to the campus the work this committee is doing. Members are free to contact Michelle and Angela on any concerns that one would want to remain confidential.

Chair update:
Issues have come up that have delayed a couple of actions by chairs of committees. The co-chairs have not yet communicated with the chancellor and dean about our consultative role, but plan to do very soon. Because of some issues that will be discussed later in the meeting, the co-chairs wanted feedback from committee first before moving ahead and having those conversations with the chancellor and dean. So far, the co-chairs have met as chairs, and have met with Membership Committee representatives to work on the campus conversations that are

happening this fall. A special thanks to Sarah Buchanan and Tiernan Lenius who have facilitated some of those discussions. There was also a call for solicitation from the student community for discussion items coordinated with Elsie Wilson, and she stated there is an MCSA Forum Facebook moderated page and a listserv mailing list moderated by the Meme Team. Elsie has shared the links with Michelle, and Michelle will forward them onto the committee regarding proper student contact and contacting student groups.

Introductions of members who were in attendance was held.

Campus conversation review
Follow-up discussion was provided on the campus conversation initiated by the Chancellor was held last week. Articles provided by Chancellor Behr were given to the campus community on broad issues facing higher education. Main takeaways from Consultative Committee members that were in attendance included: lower rates of campus enrollment; changing nature of what a college education means and needs in the real world; changing needs such as the career services; change in campus climate in regards to free speech; safety for immigration needs and minority groups on campus; and funding.

Some felt it was a really good conversation. The biggest takeaway by one committee member was the atmosphere. Everyone had a say, positive tone. No one was defensive. One comment included that UMM needed a bold, big idea that the campus could rally behind and set us apart from the competition; an idea on bringing in nursing as an area of study was one example. Everyone who wanted to speak did speak. The conversation didn't propose solutions, but a search for ideas. These campus conversations will continue to build onto one another.

Another committee member suggested UMM capitalize on the niche of UMM and summarized a professor's remarks at the conversation that UMM a small, functional, high-quality liberal arts college with intelligent students that draw from local area. Including the issues of rising costs and rising value of college, and that specific niche can be utilized to address a lot of the problems that were facing, including admissions; better need for advertising our message, especially for people in close proximity. If we can capitalize on our strengths we already have, those strengths are needed by a wide percentage of the incoming group of students.

Another member said the conversation was rewarding and refreshing and what was really clear was that we [UMM] embrace our mission and our distinctive personality and that is something that is core to us and that we don't want it to change. But this doesn't mean the same thing as maintaining the status quo. It doesn't mean we shouldn't be bold, or not look at repackaging of programs or exploring big ideas, but find ways to communicate these to prospective students and their families.

Another member said a way UMM can become a name again like it was in the 1980s is because of UMM's general education program. The HLC has said several times UMM needs to review its core curriculum, and it's been done in Curriculum Committee in piecemeal ways, but

doesn't make UMM stand out in any way. UMM would need to do a lot of exploring and creative thinking about this to make it stand out.

Another takeaway was UMM is part of the University system, but UMM faces competition and some restraints because of the system. An example, UMM is not allowed to used the tagline *'a renewable and sustainable education'* because it conflicts with the system's *'Driven to Discover'* campaign. One thing the committee can study if are there other ways UMM can use the *'a renewable and sustainable education'* as a marketing tagline. This is such as a good tag line, or 'marketing message,' as Marketing and Communications unit describes it. We also can no longer use the three circle logo that was developed. So UMM and other campuses are being constrained to use the system's block M logo to fit the University's image. The question is what is our degree of maneuverability to create an identity for ourselves that is distinct.

One committee member commented UMM always seems to be in the shadow of the larger system, and if we're unique, how do we set ourself apart from the rest of the system? Yet we have to be fair. The largest competitor of UMM is the Twin Cities campus. This was addressed in the system's strategic plan last year that there would be a mechanism to share prospective students applications with other campus' admissions if the Twin Cities felt that particular campus was a better fit. Is there detail on how that happens. Do we see that happening?

According to one committee member, Dean Schrunk Ericksen and Admissions director Jen Zych Herrmann - perhaps Chancellor Michelle Behr - have attended a meeting with a systemwide admissions strategic planning group to see how that all plays out and to see that specific component is done in good faith. UMM is in the Twin Cities' shadow and yet we're supposed to be distinctive and until UMM can step out from that shadow it will be hard to recruit students, yet, the Twin Cities doesn't allow UMM to step out of that shadow because then we infringe upon brand, and that creates constant tension, and both need to figure out a way to navigate that. Both entities need to come up with a viable solution to coexist.

Another point given by a campus staff member during the campus conversation was about the importance of producing jobs for graduates - or placement of graduates - and UMM should be above that. The committee felt that concept was not reality, and it is important that UMM can prove that value of its education by the metrics of job placement. A student representative of the committee comments it is important, and that most students have financial needs and thinking about jobs after college is in the forefront of their decision making on which college to attend.

UMM needs to be shifting the narrative - the difference between jobs and a career path. It's not just about getting a job, it's about a career. This implies something different, that it's not just a job after graduation, but a rewarding and fulfilling job that one pursues and are passionate about. UMM has a wide variation of students that come to Morris, with many that are first generation students. And those families need to be comfortable that the investment that is being made will serve them better here at UMM. Parents want that assurance that their child will have guaranteed placement after graduation. It is up to the graduate to get that job, but UMM will give them all of the tools they need to compete to get that job out of college.

There was a brief discussion on how research and data be integrated in the discussion points during the campus conversations. Perhaps the discussion forum on the website can be a mechanism to share that data.

Issues prioritization
A handout was shared of new issues that were submitted via email to the co-chairs of the Consultative Committee and holdover issues from past years that could be addressed by the committee. How should these issues be addressed? What are the highest priorities?

Two additional issues came to the co-chairs after printing of the handout and these were discussed verbally. Members were encouraged to select three topics from the list as their top priority, which indicated the committee's top priorities.

Discussion questions emerged:
- Can we talk about some topics simultaneously?
- Some topics can be grouped into a broader theme.
- Do we address the status of Consultative Committee since there is a one-year hiatus? Or do we provide work on this, only to find out there may be changes in the charge and the effort is wasted?
- There will be more conversation on the status of these committees slated for elimination?
- Should we be working on action items instead of talking about things and having no solutions?
- Where can we directly influence action (for example, in the past when the committee requested that UMM Human Resources provide conflict resolution people from the system to campus to assist with issues) and where do we try to work indirectly? What is in our power to do?
- Can we address the basis of issues that can affect other items of these lists?
- If we do not have the power to impact it, should we work on it?

Additional comments began to brainstorm solutions to some issues. Additionally, it was suggested that the committee meet with the chancellor to discuss some broad topics.
We could meet as a large group, but also work with the Chancellor in smaller group settings.

Meeting adjourned 2:05 p.m.
Minutes provided by Mike Cihak