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Campus Assembly minutes 05/07/2019

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Campus Assembly Meeting
May 7, 2019
Science Auditorium

I. For Action. From the Steering Committee. Minutes from 4/30/19 Campus Assembly meeting unanimously approved as presented.

II. For Information. From the Steering Committee. Group 4 Amendments.

Tammy Berberi, Chair of Steering Committee, reminded Assembly members there are six committees proposed for elimination and one revision to the Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee. The Steering Committee is empowered to determine how the work can be done in alternative ways. Those discussion will take place in the summer or early fall.

Comments:

Aaron Wenzel had a question for the original Constitution work group. Were alternative potential reforms considered instead of eliminating committees?

Michael Korth reported the Constitution Review Committee had plans to go further to change committee compositions. When Steering took control over this set of amendments, we understood that they were going to look at how the tasks would be handled. He thought that would be part of the information presented to Assembly before the vote.

Tammy Berberi responded that recommendations are included in the Assembly agenda and Steering has talked about the work allocations.

Sheri Breen said this is an important topic and wondered if we're going about it backwards. She would like to see us first discuss and negotiate alternatives if and when committees are eliminated. This upcoming vote seems premature and she thinks we should table and talk about it more because we are taking a vote before we have all of the information.

Michelle Page said the question for us is to think about the work that is valuable on campus. What work needs to be done and why or why not. That would determine what committees we need and this seems like a good moment to consider the actual value of the work.

Peter Dolan believes that moving the work of the Faculty Development Committee will not be as efficient.

Sarah Lam said the Faculty and P&A Affairs Committee had a pretty heavy workload this year and the work was meaningful and important. She's concerned that we're concentrating too much on some of the small work rather than alleviating the workload.

Sarah Buchanan said that as a member of Consultative, she would be fine eliminating the committee but she cannot vote in favor unless there's another committee with equal representation of constituents across campus.

Alisande Allaben said she is a USA elected representative to Campus Assembly. These changes would not only push the work of the committee to another committee but also to administrative staff at a time when administrative staff are seeing reductions and increased pressure. As a fairly new member of Campus Assembly, she does not feel the process has allowed enough information for her to make an informed decision.

When Jon Anderson was chair of Steering, the phrase "replace and repeal" was used and we were going to try to have a replacement before committees were removed. As part of their work, Steering held interviews and examined governance practices at peer institutions. Almost everything we are proposing to remove had standard places in governance at other institutions. The only thing that seemed odd was the Consultative Committee. No other peer institutions had this type of committee.

Janet Ericksen added that the Consultative Committee on the Twin Cities has a representative from each campus. Their primary role is to set the agenda for the University Senate. Our Campus Assembly does not follow their Faculty Senate. Our Consultative Committee doesn't have a charge that echoes the Twin Cities Consultative Committee in any way. Our Consultative Committees seems to be a place where people air their complaints and then someone is called in to investigate that complaint.

Kristin Lamberty wondered where the work would go and if we should formalize service load. She hopes we can come up with some plans and agrees that the work slated to be moved is not governance work. She would like to vote in favor and have faith that we will pick up that work in another way.

As parliamentarian, Tim Lindberg reminded Assembly members that all of the seven would be voted on separately so you have an option to vote differently for each committee.

Nancy Carpenter said we need to get rid of some committees because we have too much inefficiency. The work group has done their due diligence. Is this an issue of trust? Do we think we can trust each other to work together to get the work done? I choose to trust my colleagues so we can move forward.

III. For Information. Strategic Visioning and Planning Priorities.

Michelle Behr said in your Assembly packet are the 10 priorities she is asking Campus Assembly to vote on. We will only be voting on the 10 priority areas. The sub areas will be incorporated if and as groups that are working on the priority deem them appropriate. In terms of overlap, we will work to conglomerate them so we are not duplicating extra work. She has met with the chairs of governance committees and will work with them and administrative offices to form, develop and implement should we adopt those priorities.

Motion to divide the vote into 10 separate votes was moved and seconded. Motion fails by show of hands: 25 in favor; 86 opposed; 14 abstentions.

IV. For Information. From the Steering Committee. Proposed Community Hour Schedule AY 19-20.

Tammy Berberi reported that based on a suggestion from committee chairs, the only change in your packet is that the joint meeting with Steering and committee chairs will be scheduled at least two weeks into the semester to allow committees to begin their work. The schedule would change based on the outcome of the group 4 amendment vote.

V. Announcements.

Nancy Carpenter said we are graduating our first McNair Scholars and thanked everyone for the good year. She is happy to welcome and announce that Jennifer Deane will be the new incoming program director in the fall.

VI. Campus Committee Reports.

Consultative Committee Statement on Campus Communication

Through the course of the last academic year the Consultative Committee has fielded a number of concerns about the nature and tone of communications across all constituencies on campus.

Summarized succinctly, we have heard:

- a strong desire for more frequent, timely and transparent two-way communication with our upper-level administrators, which honors the history of highly consultative decision-making expected on this campus.
- dismay about instances when the faculty/P&A listserv was used to air grievances and posit conjectures about the motives behind particular administrative actions, when the more appropriate first step would have been direct communication with the administrator in question; and
- consternation caused by the rash of comments posted to a student-run social media page and posters tacked across campus, which can only be read as mean-spirited targeting of some students, such as members of our LGBTQ community.

Though this pattern of communication is not unique to UMM and, indeed, is much in keeping with trends we observe nationally, we believe that we are better than this!

Therefore, as we move forward, Consultative Committee asks each member of our campus community to examine their own past actions and strive to model only constructive patterns of communication with others, including honesty, empathy and open-mindedness. While academia thrives on vigorous discussion, the lively exchange of ideas, and even vehement disagreement at times, we can and should debate without resorting to meanness and distrustfulness. Instead, let us remember that we are in this enterprise together, starting from the assumption that we all want what best for our institution and for all other members of our community, even though we may have very different ideas about how to achieve that result.

VII. All University Reports.

None.

VIII. Adjourned at 12:20 pm.