

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

AAAC  
*Academic Affairs Advisory Committee*

Thursday, October 1, 2015  
1:00 p.m. – Michigan Room B

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~ Minutes ~

**Members Present:** Ricardo Alfaro (Chair), Darryl Baird, Connie Creech, Blair Davis, Aviva Dorfman, Chris Douglas, Jan Furman, Doug Knerr, and Greg Laurence

Ricardo called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. and welcomed new student representative Blair Davis.

**Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2015** ► The Minutes of September 17, 2015 were approved as written.

**Review of Revised Academic Calendar 2017-18** ► The revised Academic Calendar for 2017-18 proposed in the last AAAC Meeting was approved.

**Proposed New Program: BSE in Industrial and Operations Engineering (CAS)** ► The approval of the proposed new program, BSE in Industrial and Operation Engineering, was tabled until the next meeting.

**Debrief from the Triumvirate Faculty Meeting with the Chancellor** ► Much discussion took place. The following comments were made and/or discussed:

- Some members liked the idea of a formalized communication plan with information being sent on a regular basis. Others did not think it was necessary because they felt that it is the responsibility of representatives on the governing standing committees to report to their individual unit and they felt that this is being done.
- A suggestion was made to have Faculty Council inform governing faculty that minutes from the various standing committees are posted on the Faculty Council designated Blackboard site.
- Discussion took place regarding replacing the current New Program Request and Program Change Request Forms. Doug indicated that the financial pro forma is being updated and that the old forms should be used until these forms can be reviewed/approved.
- A concern arose regarding the process for a faculty member to submit a new program request. Doug indicated that he hopes to change the process at the front end with the dean bringing the proposal to him informally. He indicated that it is vital that the cost information is clear as well as mapping it to the market. This new process will not eliminate the governing faculty approval process, but will solidify the need for the program at both the university and market levels.

**Provost Report and Goals for the Year** ► Doug indicated that we are going to be looking at programs such as the DEEP Program in the framework of fiscal responsibility. We need to not only look at what revenue programs like this may be bringing in, but the cost of involving our faculty. We need to take a better look at what our role and responsibility are around resources. Because many departments and units are different, we need to know, at the core, what those resources are before we can make a good evaluation. Doug indicated that he wants to get to the point where we know the differences between programs in terms of realistic costs so that we can make better decisions. Doug emphasized that knowing the real cost of instruction is crucial and we have to make changes in order to make this assessment. Doug mentioned that FYE was always a battle.

Faculty were somewhat concerned in regard to how the budget information was going to be used but felt that as long as they know the purpose and it is transparent, faculty will buy into the change. Faculty were very encouraged and mentioned that previous administration did not know how to work with advisory committees so they worked around them.

The Committee discussed the role of chairs and the need for defining the role. Doug indicated that a lot of work needs to be done in this regard in terms of the definition and also what makes a successful chair. He plans on facilitating conversation in this regard. The general thought was that faculty do not see a chair position as a desirable role. Much discussion took place.

The following AAAC goals were established for this academic year to either present recommendations and/or for implementation:

- Revising Program Review and New Program Procedures.
- Analyzing the Cost of Instruction and How to Use It.
- Broader Leadership in College and Schools.
- How to Improve the Response Rate of Student Evaluations.

The Committee agreed on the following principles: sustain and increase quality instruction; strive for good leadership across all levels; engaged learning; and how we use faculty time.

When asked of Blair what he considered as engaged learning and academic quality, he said that faculty need to reach out to students making themselves memorable. Faculty need to develop relationships with students.

When asked about taking general education type courses that might not fit into a student's discipline and how those courses could be more meaningful, Blair indicated that having students understand how a course connects to life experiences is important; how that course will help in the future; how can it improve my way of thinking, etc.

Doug shared with the Committee that the University has a serious enrollment issue ... at great risk. He indicated that structural changes will be made in the Provost Office but he will keep the Committee posted as that happens. He said that we are already marketing for next fall and we need to use AIMS (Administrative Information Management Services) differently and more strategically. Each unit needs to matriculate new enrollments.

**Concern Regarding Academic Leadership Appointments** ► Ricardo indicated that there are three departments in CAS that are being chaired by Associate Deans and the Associate Provost. He indicated that for the most part a couple of them are in the same discipline. He asked the committee's thoughts/input regarding that kind of structure. Discussion ensued. Ricardo will draft some kind of resolution for the Committee to consider in regard to recommending that this practice be eliminated, making sure that vacancies are filled with peers rather than administrators.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.