UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

Council of Deans Meeting
Tuesday, March 10, 2015
10:00 a.m. – Shiawassee Room

~ Minutes ~


Interim Provost Dixon called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes from February 12, 2015 ► The Minutes of February 12, 2015 were approved as written.

Barbara indicated that there seemed to be a concern regarding conversation about marketing and she wanted to re-emphasize that Deans are to continue working with Jennifer Hogan on marketing, even if it involves new initiatives, until such time as there is a final decision regarding how the brand is going to look. The end goal is so there will be a uniform look to UM-Flint.

Dean’s Role in Student Success and Enrollment Management ► Barbara explained that she is interested in talking with the deans regarding aspects of enrollment management, particularly about retention. She said that it takes much less money to retain a student than to recruit one. She indicated that she would like to see the deans take a leadership role within their unit regarding scheduling, four-year program map, and relationship with Student Success Center advising. She reported that 10% on the Student Satisfaction Survey who drop out say that the major reason was because they could not get the courses that they wanted. There are obviously other reasons but this is a major one.

Barbara said that there are three major problems with current scheduling:

- Compressing the Schedule – courses compacted between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. – not student friendly.
- Making changes to the schedule after it is printed, especially with non-freshmen commuter students.
- Making changes to the time, but more importantly changing the day.

She wanted to know what role the deans currently have in scheduling courses within their units.

Albert reported that CAS has a huge schedule and that Susan Gano-Phillips has taken the lead in remedying past practices that resulted in a lot of course changes once the schedule went live. She has challenged the chairs to submit newly created schedules rather than a copy of what they did last year and has emphasized that changes afterward would not be acceptable unless there was a good reason. CAS has also made a commitment to offer courses outside the normal compressed time. Susan is also reviewing schedules comparing them during a three-year period to make sure that student demand is driving the schedule rather than faculty convenience.
The other deans commented on similar efforts. One of the deans mentioned that if a course is changed from face-to-face after being printed, he requires the faculty member to contact every single student on the pending roster to make sure that the change is satisfactory with all the students. Another mentioned that even though the number of changes may seem high, some changes are required from our outside partners that are beyond our control, especially when dealing with clinicals. Deans said that efforts are being made to minimize the number of changes and that if any changes are necessary after the schedule goes live, they will try to do so with the least amount of damage.

Bob indicated that rather than coming down on faculty regarding scheduling problems, his unit is trying to create guiding principles to follow. They are looking at what it takes in terms of the schedule to get a student through the program in two or three years. They are also really working on spring/summer terms as well.

Vahid indicated that he monitors graduate programs regarding scheduling by their survey results, i.e. how happy are students when the course is being offered, and other questions related to scheduling.

Barbara indicated that the shift, even if ever so slightly, is gradually moving to students who are first-time freshman out of high school who live on campus. She asked deans to do what they could in keeping changes to a minimum.

Barbara also explained that we have a lot of literature/advertisement that say, “Come to UM-Flint and get your degree in four years; however, do we really know how long each program will take? She asked if each of the units have a four-year road map for students. The Deans indicated that they are either working on it or they do have one; some departments do and some don’t. The development of a plan is complicated because of transfer students. Barbara indicated that she would like the Deans to request a roadmap schedule for every department for her to review.

Chris mentioned that the Early Alert Program is highly under-utilized by faculty. Faculty should let the Student Success Center know of problems very early on, i.e. third or fourth week, whether it is attendance, academic success, etc. She said that they have a multitude of ways to help and are totally committed to helping any student that needs it.

Vahid reported that OEL has started a retention study for online students/courses. They review three metrics: percent of retention by course, average GPA, and students’ evaluation of instruction. Preliminary results have shown that there is no statistical difference between online and face to face. Their next initiative is to study whether taking online courses is an important factor for degree completion.

Spring and Summer terms were discussed as well reminding deans to assist in making them student friendly and urging them to make a concentrated effort to plan the terms, especially Summer. Discussion involved the tenure track workload policy as well as what is allowable for LEO’s regarding workload.

Barbara indicated that sometimes the electronic approval process gets slowed and she asked that more attention is paid to the following:

- That she get an up-front notice if parameters change before the start of faculty searches.
- If there is anything different in the way in which you are going to advertise or a change in qualifications, for instance, she needs to know and a phone call could be made.
Budget Presentations  ► Barbara reported that the schedule for budget presentations is being
developed. The plan is for up to a 30-minute presentation, including discussion about discretionary
funds left over, and then a 15-minute question and answer period.

Barbara reminded Deans that the Chancellor’s Inauguration is a week-long affair and she urged deans
to be visible at as many events as possible. Much discussion took place regarding development and the
upcoming Capital Campaign. The Deans are eager to help coordinate efforts to engage current and
potential donors. Additional information included the fact that we should have a more robust
alumni/university relationship.

Other: Curriculum - Programs  ► Barbara indicated that we have over 100 programs; she indicated
that this is a large number of programs for a university our size. She thought that it would be worth it
to do a review of the programs. The deans indicated that many of them are not stand-alone programs,
but rather, programs that have been repackaged from our current courses. The thought was that we
need to look at enrollment for efficiency; for instance, if there are only three or four students, it is
difficult to generate a robust conversation. General Education was discussed as well. Barbara
indicated that she discovered that when the implementation of GE in CAS gave up 10 hours of credit,
that accounts for a 4% drop. FYE courses were discussed with the thought being that we should offer
them but offer more than one section of the same kind rather than 20 different ones.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.