

*****Approved October 21, 2009*****

**Social Science Division Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2009**

Faculty in attendance: Pareena Lawrence (Chair), Bert Ahern, Joe Beaver, Katherine Benson, Sheri Breen, Steve Burks, Donna Chollet, Rebecca Dean, Bart Finzel, Tom Gausman, Solomon Gashaw, Farah Gilanshah, Steve Gross, Roland Guyotte, Tom Johnson, Paula O’Loughlin, Julie Pelletier, Heather Peters, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Roger Rose, Jennifer Rothchild, Kevin Stefanek, Dennis Stewart, and Sheng Xiao

Student Representative in attendance: Miranda Tjaden (History), Mike McBride (Political Science), Laura Weldy (Anth/Soc), Nicole Swanson (Psychology), and Kathy Julik-Heine (Econ/Mgmt)

Faculty excused absences: Jennifer Deane, Seung-Ho Joo, Arne Kildegaard, and Leslie Meek

Faculty on leave: Harold Hinds and Marynel Ryan Van Zee

Guests: Chancellor Jacquie Johnson and Dean Cheryl Contant

Chair Pareena Lawrence called the meeting to order at 5:15 in Imholte Hall 109.

Announcements: The meeting on Wednesday, September 23, will be devoted to discussions of 7.12 revisions; the first fifteen minutes of the October 21st meeting will be given to discussion of curriculum changes and the remainder of the time will be devoted to P & T.

Chancellor Jacquie Johnson and Dean Cheryl Contant were in attendance and addressed the following questions submitted to them earlier. Division Chair Pareena Lawrence moderated the discussion.

Reorganization of Offices, particularly computing and media services: who is responsible for what? How will we assess the reorganization?

Johnson responded that the plan is to create two entities: one devoted to “behind the wall” functions and the other to customer services. The latter is being supervised by Roger Boleman, but because of personnel issues (Trish Crace is on leave), this office has experienced some problems implementing the transition.

Contant noted that the idea is to provide a single phone number for all technical questions.

In response to concerns about reorganization and how these changes will be assessed, Johnson noted that assessment had been neglected in the past and that UMM lacked a baseline from which to measure. She argued that there was a real need to systematically state purpose, goals, mission and possible measures of outcomes.

Steve Burks questioned how the administration is insuring that research needs are honored. He pointed out in addition that the forty-five computers in IH 111 are due to be replaced next year and was curious as to the future of the lab.

Johnson responded by noting that the campus technology plan is in the works and there is a need for greater institutional resource and support for this plan. She asserted the need to study usage and accumulate useable data in order to allocate resources.

Katherine Benson expressed concerns that faculty computer replacement will be delayed.

Pareena Lawrence pointed out that unresolved tech fee questions have interfered with decisions about the Imholte Hall lab.

When will discipline websites be updated? What is the time line for updating the websites with new locations and staff after the reorganization is complete?

Johnson suggested that these questions be directed to Christine Mahoney and that the timeline for rolling out new websites is still unclear. She went on to note that additional staffing has been dedicated to this problem.

Summer session courses, study abroad and field courses: who will decide what will be offered and who will administer these courses, and who is in charge?

Contant stated that reorganization is ongoing and that they only now were getting a sense of where staff offices will be located. They are waiting on remodeling estimates and will then be able to release this information in "very short order."

Johnson indicated that the completion of the Gateway project will further complicate matters and that office assignments will not be finalized until the remodeling is completed (in January). She went on to note that the new organization chart had just been finished. The plan is to try to retain old office phone numbers.

Online courses and their future, what is the plan and who will administer these courses, and who is in charge?

Contant indicated that divisions will determine which online courses will be offered and who will actually teach them. She stated that new moneys are available for developing and teaching online classes and that Continuing Education will play a role in administering this and coordinating logistics.

Contant informed the Division that for this summer Study Abroad and field courses would function as in the past. But enrollment in regular summer school classes has been declining, while at the same time UMM has been offering more courses. The plan now is for summer courses to be owned by the divisions now and to focus more broadly on general education courses. UMM would offer fewer courses in the summer and the general education courses would cycle through the various disciplines.

At the same time, UMM is engaged in preliminary conversation with the Learning Abroad Center at the Twin Cities campus to help administer and coordinate Study Abroad.

Johnson stated that the logic behind these changes is based on the reality that Division Chairs know best what courses are needed. The primary goal remains to graduate students on time and UMM is committed to offering and scheduling courses in order to graduate students in a timely manner. But the scarcity of resources demand that UMM become more efficient. The problem persists in how to balance the need for online instruction and that which occurs in the traditional classroom. The details remain to be worked out.

Katherine Benson pointed out that one downside to UMM's small size is that students surrender flexibility in scheduling and that this problem is compounded when online courses are eliminated.

Pareena Lawrence questioned who would be responsible for managing domestic field courses.

Contant said that this was not yet clear but that this would be decided shortly. In the past some instructors have taken the initiative and organized logistics on their own while others have relied on CEE.

Johnson added that UMM needed to search for greater resources and efficiencies in offering and managing International Programs. The Twin Cities campus has access to greater resources and is better able to negotiate better prices. At the same time, Morris needs a central set of protocols to address risk control, etc. and to maintain our distinctive signature while using central resources.

Bert Ahern questioned how the administration has included faculty governance into reorganization. In particular, what has been the role of CRPC and the Curriculum Committee? Will these changes interfere with the campus's ability to fulfill its mission and deliver programs?

Johnson responded that the reorganization of CEE was under the purview of the Division Chairs and Curriculum Committee. The campus and Morris communities would be apprised of these changes in the upcoming community meeting.

Assessing the success of these changes will be difficult because UMM lacks a tradition of assessment. Still there is a need to set measures to gauge student satisfaction. However, there is an ongoing process of soliciting feedback and listening to questions and concerns. Johnson notes that the administration remains mindful of the tradition of shared governance but points out that reorganization has been driven by a resources crisis and that much of this is being mandated from above.

Lawrence decided that questions five, six and seven could be examined together. These questions are as follows:

Out-of-State travel budget cuts: Will we be allowed to accumulate money in this budget for 3 years?

What is happening regarding sabbatical supplements and single semester leaves, if anything?

It is getting increasingly difficult to maintain an active research program at UMM. What are you doing to reverse this trend?

Contant noted that the Out-of-State-Travel fund allows for \$650 per individual faculty member and that these monies may accumulate for three years. She indicated further that this account has never had enough money to adequately fund travel. She wondered aloud about the possibility of funding only presenters at conferences and not attendees. She went on to point out that the larger question has to do with how to encourage engagement in one's field.

The policy for single-semester leave is unchanged, although the deadline for applying has been moved up to October 15th. The deadline for applications for sabbaticals is December 1st. The policy for sabbatical supplements also remains unchanged.

While UMM faculty are more engaged in funded research, there are still significant differences between divisions. Contant argued that it would not work to simply return these monies to the respective divisions. She went on to note that the administration is committed to protecting faculty research by not increasing teaching loads. Contant cautioned, "never say never but it won't ever happen on my watch."

Donna Chollett pointed out that faculty whose research requires international travel are especially disadvantaged by the dearth of travel money and described how she had to withdraw from a conference in Rio de Janeiro because of lack of financial support. This damages UMM's reputation.

Contant noted the continued availability of Research Enhancement Funds and that faculty members were still eligible for \$250 to travel to the Twin Cities and for a \$750 stipend for collaborative research. Faculty initiating new research can apply for a \$1300 stipend. All told, these funds have increased by \$25,000 and now equal \$100,000. She went on to point out that UMM faculty have been slow to apply for and use these funds.

Bert Ahern stated that University sabbatical policy had changed with semester conversion. Faculty were once able to apply for quarter leave at full pay but now can take a semester sabbatical at half pay. He queried Johnson whether this policy was being reassessed.

Johnson responded by voicing her support for sabbaticals. She pointed out that eight faculty members are on sabbatical this year and is unsure whether we have witnessed a decline. This could be researched, she noted. She added that other institutions maintain other options, such as limiting the number of faculty on leave at one time. She argued that it seemed unusual for so many faculty to be on sabbatical at any one time. This would include single semester leaves.

What are the administration's goals and plans for Briggs Library's role on our campus? Specifically, 1) concern for the continued under staffing of the library, the demands for subscription reductions and the lack of plans for a badly needed update to its facilities,

and 2) fear that the library's role and resources will be nibbled away when it's part of the heart and soul of a liberal arts institution. What do the chancellor and dean anticipate for the next 2-5 years? The next 5-10 years?

Johnson admitted that the library renovation is not part of the capital plan for 2010 but may be included for 2012. It is the next highest priority after the Gateway Center.

Contant explained the dramatic changes in libraries in the recent past and the growing need for electronic resources. With the sudden resignation of a staff member during the summer, Contant has asked LeAnn Dean to develop a staffing plan that would anticipate changes in the library's systems and functions. She noted LeAnn Dean's plan for the library to hold a "learning commons." She also suggested UMM continue to investigate new efficiencies by joining consortia in purchasing electronic resources.

Johnson asked whether disciplines regularly reviewed holdings and was informed that this is the case.

Lawrence asked about the status of First Year Seminar and the large class sizes for this fall.

Contant noted that this was currently a topic under discussion in Curriculum Committee and that its status for next year was still up in the air. She pointed out that the predecessor of the current program was put on hiatus for a year and that this remained a possibility. Moreover, it would have been difficult to decrease size of FYS sections while cutting courses in the major. She concluded by asserting that there is a need to rethink the First Year Seminar as a part of the First Year Experience.

The next two questions were addressed out of order.

The timeliness of missives from 3rd floor (HINI, faculty retreat information).

Johnson cited that the Twin Cities campus starts later than UMM—because of the state fair—and that the Provost's Office was slow to forward this information to the coordinate campuses.

Contant addressed the policy that students with the H1NI influenza virus are not required to provide a medical excuse to the instructor and shared that from her experience students seem very concerned about missing class time.

Johnson stated that she would not be the party responsible for cancelling individual classes and that existing protocols seem to be effective.

What is the Dean in charge of, and what is the Assistant Dean in charge of?

According to Contant, the Assistant Dean, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, reports directly to Contant and is in charge of all things academic relating to students. These include the Student Academic Service Offices—Career, Advising, Retention and Enrichment and Academic and Disability Services—as well as the First Year Experience and GenEd. The Assistant Dean handles much of the day-to-day business and is working to solve problems related to the Scholastic Committee, which will be reseated after the first Campus Assembly. Much of what Ratliff-Crain is in charge of this year has to do with the reorganization of offices.

Contant stated that she is responsible for everything else and this includes the Divisions, the Library, Media Services, the Center for Small Towns and Continuing Education. She asserted that her most important role was to be an advocate for the faculty and for curricular programs.

Johnson noted the significant challenges facing the campus and the number of important decisions that demand attention. These include the need to address faculty salaries and the need to be more efficient in class offerings. She cited the number of specialty courses that are often under enrolled.

What steps does the Dean plan to take as leader of the faculty this year (such as communication from the Dean to the faculty)?

Contant expressed her intention to meet with disciplines and that History and Psychology had already scheduled meetings. She would not, however, be able to honor her plan to drop by faculty offices and meet one-on-one with faculty members.