

**Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the
University of Missouri-St. Louis
University Assembly and Faculty Senate
November 9, 2010 - 3 p.m.
126 JCPenney**

University Assembly Meeting

The meeting of the University Assembly was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by the Senate Chair, Dr. Michael Murray.

Chair Murray asked for approval of the minutes from the meeting on October 12, 2010. Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved as written.

Report of the Chairperson, Dr. Michael Murray:

Dr. Murray reported that the Budget and Planning committee will be holding two meetings. The first meeting will be held on November 19 from 3 – 5 p.m. The agenda items will be the FY 2012 budget issues including state appropriations, tuition increase, and salary increases. The second meeting is scheduled for December 3 from 2 – 4 p.m. The findings from the audit of the Office of Research Administration will be presented to the committee. Both meetings will be held in 222 JCPenney.

Dr. Murray reminded the attendees that President Forsee will be on our campus to host a Town Hall meeting on November 17 at 1:00 in the Summit Lounge. On November 16, Chancellor George and Dr. Barbara Harbach will host a reception for State Senators Rita Days and Joan Bray at 4:00 in the Touhill Performing Arts Center.

Dr. Murray said that at the campus and system level, the other two most prominent areas to mention are the “Access to Success” or A2S program that the Chancellor, the Provost and the various Dean’s have reviewed with the faculty recently and also the “Degree Completion” initiative which targets the need for UMSL students to stay in school to complete their degrees in six years. The goal is also to re-capture some of those former students that we lost. The Chancellor noted at an earlier meeting that we recently submitted an application to receive the Carnegie Foundation’s recognition as a “community-engaged” university as a means of improving our profile.

Dr. Murray updated attendees on the continuing benefits discussion. He said that in the preparation of a “White Paper” this summer and in discussing the issues within the campus community we tried to emphasize the importance of approaching the benefits issues with a “one-voice approach”. Following UMSL’s “White Paper”, UMKC produced a very detailed benefits document. At a recent meeting with the curators, the paper was acknowledged and the faculty was commended on the helpful content of the “White Paper”. Dr. Murray recognized the good work of Drs. Joe Martinich, Susan Feigenbaum and Tom Eyssell in preparing the paper.

Report of the Chancellor, Dr. Thomas George:

Chancellor George reported on the following topics:

- UMSL has set a new enrollment record with 16,800 students. The average freshman ACT is up to 23.6 – well above state and national averages. He reported that 32% of students are minorities; 21% of students are African American; and 24% of students are enrolled in graduate programs.
- UMSL Day is November 13. A 25% increase in students and families are expected to attend this open house. Chancellor George thanked all of the faculty and departments for their involvement in this crucial recruitment event.
- Opportunity Scholars Program. This new all-inclusive, four-year scholarship will be awarded to under-represented and first generation college students from local high schools who demonstrate academic ability in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. UMSL has received donations from AT&T Foundation, Emerson, Energizer, and David and Thelma Steward of World Wide Technology.
- College of Education's Kids Voting program received the Spirit of Justice Award which is given by the St. Louis Bar Foundation.
- Assistant Teaching Professor Kathleen Nigro received the Governor's Humanity Award for her leadership in a statewide reading program.
- For the 2nd straight year, UMSL has won a St. Louis Top 50 Award from St. Louis Commerce and Growth Association. The award is given to companies and institutions that are "shaping St. Louis' future".

Chancellor George asked the Chief of Campus Police, Mr. Forrest Van Ness, to speak to the attendees about the incident that arose earlier in the day and the new emergency notification system. Mr. Van Ness talked about the incident that occurred in Lucas Hall and that it created the need for an emergency message to be distributed to students, staff and faculty by e-mail and cell phones. The incident was resolved without any significant problems and a follow-up message was sent to the campus notifying everyone that the campus was safe. Discussion ensued about the proper procedures for emergency notification and what procedures faculty should follow if an emergency arises during classes. Mr. Van Ness addressed their concerns and explained that the glitches are still being worked out with this new notification system, but it should serve the campus well in providing a quick way to notify the campus of any future emergencies. Dr. Zuleyma Tang-Martinez asked about the status of last year's recommendation from the Student Affairs Ad Hoc sub-committee on violence prevention. Last April, they had recommended that a standing University Assembly Committee on Violence Prevention be instituted and the assembly had agreed with the recommendation. Dr. Murray said that we will follow up on this recommendation and report on its status.

Report from the President of Student Government Association, Mr. Dan Rosner:

- The Homecoming events went well. More Homecoming activities were held this year with less money spent. Approximately 1,000 people attended the Homecoming Dance which was a great turnout.
- The student Comptroller finished student activity budget committee workshops. The students learned how to submit their budgets and spreadsheets through MyGateway and the Faculty Resource Center graciously assisted them. On Friday, Nov. 12 the students will review proposed student fees and tuition increases.
- In October, the Student Government reviewed the changes in the non-smoking policy and approved it.

Report from the President of Staff Association, Mr. Chris Scheetz:

- Mr. Scheetz explained that with UMSL's new partnership with the Missouri Institute of Mental Health (MIMH), the university has gained an additional 50 staff members. Members of the Staff Association will meet with them next week to welcome them. MIMH said they are looking forward to becoming involved with the university.
- On November 9, a Staff Association Social will be held in downtown Ferguson. This event encourages staff to interact with other staff members and the community.
- November 10 is the Fall General Staff meeting. Chancellor George and the new Chief of Campus Police, Forest Van Ness, will speak to the staff.
- The Staff Association Holiday Bazaar will be held on December 7. The income from the bazaar funds the John Perry Scholarship that provides a scholarship to staff dependents.
- Save the date for March 12 for the Staff Association's annual Trivia Night.
- November 12 will be a "Discover UMSL" program. "Discover UMSL" gives staff the opportunity to see a different part of the campus that they might not have seen. This month's program takes a back-stage look at the Touhill Performing Arts Center and what it's like behind the scenes at a successful show at the Touhill.

Committee Reports:

Assessment of Educational Outcomes (AEO) & Information Technology (IT) Joint Report:

Drs. Paulette Isaac-Savage (AEO Committee Chair) and Bill Klein (IT Committee Chair) briefed the University Assembly with a power point presentation about online course evaluations.

Dr. Isaac-Savage explained that the charge of the committee was the following: to recommend online course evaluations that would relieve students of filling out multiple evaluation forms, to make evaluations more useful for faculty and administration, and to make the evaluation data searchable. After consolidating questions from departments, SB 389 questions, and questions from faculty feedback, seven questions were chosen as a sample questionnaire with respondents using a Likert scale of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). Below are the suggested questions:

- 1) The course is well organized.
- 2) The instructor assigned grades consistent with the guidelines.
- 3) The instructor was concerned whether or not students learned the materials.
- 4) The instructor was able to communicate clearly in English.
- 5) The instructor's explanations were clear.
- 6) What is your overall rating of the course?
- 7) What is your overall rating of the instructor for this course?

Dr. Bill Klein explained that the IT committee reviewed various online course evaluations that would meet UMSL's needs. The committee's recommendation was web-based, course evaluation software called CourseEval. This software could provide information in layers from the instructor through the department, as well as the college and university level. He also explained that ITS will bear the cost of CourseEval and that the cost will be recovered by reducing paper-based evaluations.

An extended discussion of the merits of the faculty on-line evaluations followed. Below lists some of the concerns and comments from the faculty:

- The online questionnaire could produce very low response rates and very biased.
- Written comments on evaluations are usually much richer. Does this allow space for written comments? (yes)
- Have these questions been validated?
- We should examine the reliability of these questions. Pilot implementation should be used before going any further.
- The Likert scale should be reversed. Positive is usually associated with a higher number.
- Questions 6 and 7 need to be re-worded.
- Question 2 – “Guidelines” may be unclear to students.
- Chemistry department reported 50% response rate when using both paper and on-line evaluations.
- Question 4 – Should be changed to “The instructor was able to communicate clearly”.
- Do you know response rate of fall semester? We have noticed that mid-semester feedback is pretty high – 95%.
- Can this program also report how many classes the students missed?
- Will you be able to view what other people wrote?
- We should consider that it may be dangerous to publish evaluations because of personnel issues.
- Should you reward students for completing the forms? For instance, if 2/3 of the class completes the form, the students could receive points.
- Will this information be made available to students?
- During pilot program, look at return rate and compare paper vs. on-line.
- To increase completed questionnaires, can you take the entire class to take the survey at once?
- Is there data available from other colleges that have used this software?
- If the system tracks if the student has completed the survey, should there be a reward?

After much debate, Dr. Murray asked the assembly to vote on a pilot implementation of the CourseEval software. The University Assembly agreed. The departments that will participate in the pilot program are: Teaching and Learning, Chemistry, and Criminology & Criminal Justice. This issue should be re-visited after more data is provided.

Physical Facilities, Space & General Services Committee:

Dr. Harold Harris (Committee Chair) provided background on the creation of the original non-smoking policy and the changes that are being proposed. The updated non-smoking policy proposes that the campus be smoke-free by July 1, 2011 (rather than the original date of January 1, 2012). The policy has been coordinated with the students and staff. After discussion, a vote was taken and the policy passed, but not unanimously.

Bylaws & Rules Committee Report (written by Dr. Tim Farmer):

Dr. Farmer explained that the committee has been asked to advise the Senate and Assembly on three issues related to membership so far this semester.

- Missouri Institute of Mental Health. The committee unanimously recommends that the faculty of the Missouri Institute of Mental Health (MIMH) seek out academic unit affiliation as a catalyst for integration into the UMSL faculty and to facilitate their interest in shared governance.

Because the MIMH has no regular (tenured/tenure-track) faculty, it is not eligible for unit representation on the Faculty Senate & University Assembly, but its non-tenure track faculty are considered “eligible faculty” and may thus be elected to several Senate and Assembly committees. These faculty members are welcome to participate in shared governance to the extent allowed by the by-laws and rules of our organization.

- College of Nursing representation on ATP. With the intended resignation of Dr. Roberta Lee at the end of 2010, there will be a vacancy on the Committee on Appointments, Tenure, and Promotion from the College of Nursing. The Committee on Committees proposed nominating a full professor from the College of Education to represent the College of Nursing on the ATP committee. The By-Laws & Rules Committee unanimously agreed that such an election violated the by-laws and the operating rules. An argument was made that the College of Nursing lacked another full professor, which is the stipulated requirement for service on ATP. In fact, the College of Nursing does have a full professor who could serve.
- Merger of Anthropology, Sociology, and Foreign Languages. The operating rules of the Faculty Senate and University Assembly stipulate that unit representation in the Senate and Assembly is granted to departments that have 5 or more full time regular faculty. Because the new Department of Anthropology, Sociology, and Languages meets this criterion, it should elect one of its eligible faculty to serve as its departmental representative.

Currently, there are 3 Senators representing the Department of Anthropology, Sociology, and Languages. Rather than abruptly ending the terms of these elected senators mid-year, the committee recommends that the terms of the three senators now serving as departmental representatives should end on July 31, 2011 and a new senator be elected to represent the new department during elections in the spring 2011 semester.

Aside from the merger issue, the senators from the former Department of Foreign Languages and Department of Sociology were elected in error as the number of regular faculty in these units had fallen below the threshold of five some time ago. That is, these units, according to the operating rules, would be too small to warrant departmental representation even if they continued as independent departments.

There being no other business, the University Assembly meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Faculty Senate Meeting

The Senate meeting was called to order immediately following the assembly meeting by chair, Dr. Michael Murray.

Rather than a report from the Senate Chair, Dr. Murray requested that Dr. Joe Martinich (Benefits Committee member) brief the attendees on the latest developments with the changes to the retirement benefits. Dr. Martinich reported that some progress occurred at the November 1 meeting with the Board of Curators. After the curators reviewed the UMSL White Paper and the follow-up paper from UMKC which detailed our concerns about the change in retirement benefits, the curators understood the impact of this change and how it would affect both new and current employees. Dr. Martinich explained that the good news is that the president announced that he is forming a task force to go back to review this issue and look at other options. The Benefits Committee also recently met and discussed guiding principles and made suggestions to Betsy Rodriguez about who should serve on the task force. Their recommendation was that the entire Benefits Committee should serve on the task force as well as four individuals from IFC and two from the Intercampus Staff Council. Dr. Martinich said that they are hoping the decision for the retirement changes can be made in March rather than December. The task force awaits feedback from the president.

Dr. George did not have additional information for the Chancellor's report.

IFC Report (written by Dr. Susan Feigenbaum):

On Tuesday, October 26th, the IFC met via Telepresence with Vice President of Human Resources, Betsy Rodriguez. The meeting was dedicated exclusively to a review of the presentation that would be made to the Board of Curators on Monday, November 1st concerning potential changes to the UM pension plan. IFC members expressed their concern about the seemingly artificial deadline of December 1st for action by the curators and cautioned that this was not enough time to analyze proposals that were under consideration and to educate faculty and staff. Nevertheless, Ms. Rodriguez talked about the goals of a pension system and described four alternatives that are under consideration by the Administration. All of these were plan designs for a new defined contribution plan for new employees. Other than the IFC representatives from Columbia, none of the other IFC representatives were willing to express their preferences about these alternatives and instead emphasized our concern about instituting a DC plan for new employees that could, in fact, hold current employees harmless.

On Thursday, October 28th, the IFC met in Columbia. The meeting was dominated by a discussion between members about the proposed pension plan changes. While members of the Columbia campus split from the rest of the group by stating their preference for a DC plan, they understood the general concerns about the "hard-and-fast" December 1st deadline for making such an important decision. There was unanimous support for requesting that the decision be delayed until all of the analyses and education could be completed.

We were joined by President Forsee by telepresence. He again emphasized that the proposal to move to a DC plan for new employees was not driven by potential costs savings but by the desire of the University to reduce the volatility of its budget commitment to pension benefits. He said that he appreciated faculty and staff input as “stakeholders” in the University. He was asked whether he and the Board were willing to make a written commitment to current employees concerning how they would be held harmless – that is, that the formula, computation of service years, age of retirement, employee contribution and so on would remain unchanged. He responded by saying that even without the introduction of a DC plan, there could be financial circumstances that would require a change to be made to the current pension plan. IFC members again expressed their concerns about the seemingly arbitrary December 1st date for curator action on this matter. The President responded that this issue has been on the table for almost a year and that it had been studied to death and decisions had to be made at some point.

The IFC also met with Steve Knorr, Vice President for Government Relations for the University. He spoke about the impending election and the fact that some of the Missouri legislators returning to the US Congress would likely have important roles as leading, senior Republicans. Representative JoAnn Emerson is among the most senior. Knorr also spoke about earmarks and the importance of having a delegation that supports earmarks as long as other state delegations are still pursuing them. He believes that future earmark restrictions may favor the University in that they may be limited to nonprofit and government projects.

Finally, the IFC met briefly with Mike Nichols, Vice President of Research and Economic Development for the University. He spoke about two new research parks that are in progress, as well as the process by which faculty partner with the University to gain patent protection for their innovations. One of his key objectives has been to speed up the timeline for University review and feedback to faculty about whether the University wishes to partner in the patent process or not.

Committee report:

Curriculum and Instruction Report (Mr. Michael Allison):

Mr. Allison presented one program change proposal for the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. All were in favor of the proposal. None opposed.

Executive Session:

The Senate met in Executive Session to consider candidates nominated to receive honorary degrees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Willman
Assembly/Senate Secretary

(Minutes written by Loyola Harvey, Faculty Senate Office)