

**Academic Assembly**  
May 25, 2016  
2:05 – 4:00pm, ADAL Community Room

**MINUTES**

Present: Rick Block, Pat Buchsel, Isiaah Crawford, Bill Ehmann, Charlotte Garden, Leticia Guardiola-Saenz, Mike Huggins, Bruce Koch, Kate Koppelman, Chuck Lawrence, Viviane Lopuch, Margit McGuire, David Neel, Michael Ng, Katherine Raichle, Rob Rutherford, Frank Shih, Heath Spencer, Dan Washburn, Braden Wild

*Minutes taken by Rosa Hughes*

- I. Motion to Suspend Rules to Allow Visitors for MRC Agenda Item
  - A. Approved with no oppositions or abstentions
- II. Proposed New Member to Academic Policy Committee
  - A. Professional advisor from College of Arts and Sciences would add valuable input to the policy committee
  - B. Motion to add Kate Elias to committee, approved with no oppositions or abstentions
- III. Faculty Handbook Revision Committee
  - A. Need four members, two and three year appointments
  - B. Motion to table and bring a ballot to next meeting, approved with no oppositions or abstentions
- IV. Provost Search Committee
  - A. Process
    - 1. Proposal to send the top nine nominees to the President and request that at least the top five be included on the search committee
    - 2. Votes were not ranked
    - 3. Several schools are not represented by the top five or even top nine nominees
    - 4. Voting method is unclearly representative, distribution was dependent on deciding to put forward more names than asked for and ask for more faculty positions
  - B. Motion to choose the top nine and put forward their names
    - 1. Discussion
      - a. Does not send a good message to the schools
      - b. Perhaps request each school and college be represented on committee
      - c. Need representatives who speak not to their individual school interests but to the best interests of the faculty interests of the university as a whole
      - d. If we are putting forward a larger group, need to represent all schools
      - e. Resolution passed on Monday – AcA requests seven rather than three appointments, if unwilling to do that, choose one non-tenure track and provide top three nominees
      - f. Can include this discussion with the names and express other concerns (representation across colleges, etc.) and leave up to the President's discretion
    - 2. Vote – 15 approve, 2 oppose, none abstain
- V. MRC Dean and Colleagues
  - A. This meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for MRC dean, faculty, and students to share perspectives on current issues the college and inform AcA in their shared governance and advisory role to the Provost

## B. Discussion

1. MRC is open to the review of curriculum
  - a. Differently organized than other colleges because there are not departments
  - b. Curricular discussions follow along the line of the course series (1800 series, etc.) and typically only involve the faculty teaching in that series
  - c. MRC submitted program reviews in 1991, 2002, and 2009, and is currently undergoing a program review that will be different than before, as an external reviewer will be brought in per the standard process
2. Curriculum committee and revision in college
  - a. Currently functions ad hoc along lines of series that are taught
  - b. Open to faculty to organize in the ways in which they want (emails from the last few years to support that open invitation), for example, the Minor in Humanities was developed by a faculty member and colleagues from the college were consulted as needed during the development
  - c. The ad hoc curriculum committee is working on three-year Bachelor of Arts in Humanities for Business degree development
  - d. It is unclear if the previous program reviews were submitted to the university (Program Review Committee/Academic Assembly) for review, they were conducted under previous deans
3. MRC Student Coalition has brought forth concerns that the two initiatives offered by administration can deal with well
  - a. Curricular review done with an outside consultant
  - b. Cultural analysis also done with an outside consultant
4. Communication with faculty
  - a. Very small college, all located in the same wing of one building, the dean is the only one with an individual office, faculty all come from different disciplines
  - b. The environment is collaborative with open communication, so may be different than other areas of the university
  - c. Unsure what caused the sense of intimidation, silencing, hostility amongst some faculty who spoke at the previous AcA meeting
    - i. Three years ago and again this year, dean asked faculty to weigh in on APR
    - ii. Out of 22 faculty teaching in college now, five people chose to submit signed feedback, the four faculty who spoke Monday did not submit feedback
    - iii. With only 22 faculty, if people were feeling threatened or intimidated it is not surprising that they would not step forward
    - iv. Most MRC faculty are borrowed from other departments and have their APR in other departments
    - v. Don't have tenure in college, APRs are used in that process
    - vi. Now with more full time MRC faculty, beginning to implement APRs as an annual process
    - vii. Instead of an APR, the process before has been to ask faculty to look at student evaluations each quarter and reflect on what affirms and challenges them
  - d. Strong negative responses to employee satisfaction survey
    - i. MRC had just come off probation with the Provost and a review of whether MRC should continue as an independent school,
    - ii. Dean Kelly had just been appointed as interim dean
    - iii. Unclear whether responses were about university management or MRC management

5. Lack of formal college processes
  - a. The rest of the university has been moving toward formal processes, for example, non-tenure track faculty across the university get APRs
  - b. It appears that the ad hoc nature of curriculum and communication works well for some and not for others, should not be so selective
  - c. The dean believes these processes should come from the faculty, whereas the faculty believe the dean is in a leadership position and is responsible for development and guidance
  - d. With the dean's history of involvement in the administration of the college and university (began at SU in MRC in 1984 as Assistant Dean, then became Associate Dean, and then Dean in January 2012), should have been aware of these ongoing issues and working toward their resolution
  - e. MRC for a long time functioned as an experimental college that did not have to follow standard university processes, allowed teachers to move with instinct and be nimble
  - f. Formal shared governance is now clearly necessary in the college to increase transparency, collaboration, oversight, curricular revision, syllabus design, etc.
6. Current program review
  - a. Two groups of faculty in MRC disagree with how to proceed with the program review, currently not moving forward
  - b. When curriculum assessment was brought up in the program review meetings in the college, the associate dean said that this was not the time to dismantle the curriculum
  - c. Unclear to the faculty whether this is a snapshot that can be assessed later or a robust opportunity for curricular revision, received conflicting messages from the dean
7. Frequency of meetings
  - a. Faculty meetings occur once per quarter and it is left up to faculty to meet more than that based on their course series
  - b. Dean noticed from informal feedback that younger faculty prefer more frequent meetings than older faculty
8. Leadership style to promote development of organizational culture
  - a. Important to develop feeling of inclusion, even with many borrowed faculty
  - b. View is to hire good people and then make opportunities happen, encourage faculty to engage with each other
  - c. MRC Student Coalition has brought forward that we are failing some students, now need to decide how to address this and create supportive environment
  - d. Some helpful steps could be: rules of order at faculty meetings, feel free to ask questions, if something isn't working agree to talk about it, not assume any ill intent or wrongdoing, set common ground to lift every voice
  - e. Response and structure designed to respond to faculty concerns and the many students who have formed and support the coalition
    - i. Faculty who have been in MRC for many years may not feel a need for curricular revision
    - ii. Also don't know the number of MRC students who are as concerned about the curriculum as expressed by the coalition – many of those involved in the protest are not MRC students

- iii. Dean's job is to assist those who want to change curriculum, not lead faculty who are hired experts in their field
    - iv. Processes will be developed to support the two suggested initiatives
  - 9. Two university initiatives
    - a. Forming curriculum committee to look broadly at MRC curriculum and hear feedback from faculty, students, alumni; a consultant will work with that committee to submit a formal report to the Office of the Provost
    - b. Another consultant will be brought in to conduct a cultural assessment of MRC and provide professional development training in cultural and racial (diversity) literacy
- VI. Other MRC Visitors
  - A. Administrative assistant
    - 1. Many students have a different opinion from coalition and now feel bullied, ostracized, and intimidated by the coalition
    - 2. Has never seen dean be disrespectful to any students
    - 3. Welcome to give feedback to dean
  - B. Associate dean
    - 1. Dramatic cultural change taking place globally
    - 2. Lack of cultural language to communicate between faculty and with students makes this cultural crisis difficult to address
    - 3. These are problems that cannot be quickly solved and are part of a longer discussion
  - C. Senior student
    - 1. Devastating experience, hope for compromise
    - 2. Ninth member of family to graduate from MRC
    - 3. Feel welcomed, accepted, and appreciated at MRC
    - 4. Education at MRC has taught student to read, write, and speak, be curious, ask questions, dig deep past obvious answer, be open minded and accepting of differing viewpoints
    - 5. Would be beneficial to revise curriculum to include more modern perspectives, materials, etc.
    - 6. Disagree with the coalition's demand for the resignation of the dean
  - D. Senior student
    - 1. Cohort model, connect with professors and faculty in a familial sense
    - 2. Dean has counseled on personal problems
    - 3. Cannot stand behind the dean given the dissonance in experience with fellow students
    - 4. Exceptions made, do not know where identities fall in that experience
    - 5. Other students not offered similar experiences and exceptions
    - 6. Informally offered a position on the curriculum committee, paid from the dean's salary
    - 7. Was not aware of faculty issues
  - E. Second year student
    - 1. Disappointed with lack of communication from coalition, many of the coalition are not MRC students
    - 2. Some students feel that to be challenged is a bad experience, in fact this is what education is about
    - 3. Was granted freedom to mold own experience in independent studies
  - F. Junior student
    - 1. Does not believe MRC curriculum is racist and non-inclusive, and having that associated with college is problematic for those seeking teaching positions
    - 2. Agree that texts used could be more inclusive, there is always more to grow and learn

3. Global poverty, social transformations courses have prepared for future job as teacher
- G. Faculty member
1. Experience has differed dramatically from other MRC colleagues
  2. Dean stepped into the role in a time of challenge and appointment was unanimously supported by faculty
  3. The terrain of the campus has changed with the insertion of the SEIU, has divided the faculty on campus
  4. Feel judged on campus by those who are not familiar with MRC culture
- H. Faculty member
1. Never been intimidated, fearful of dean
  2. Always felt deeply supported by dean
- VII.** Executive Session