

SECTION: 13

DATE:

September 21, 2007

BOARD OF REGENTS
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

RECOMMENDATION

MONTHLY REPORT
FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Faculty Affairs Committee Agenda for September 21, 2007 be received and placed on file and the Minutes of the March 20, 2007 meeting be received and placed on file.

STAFF SUMMARY

The topic for the September 21, 2007 Faculty Affairs Committee meeting is a report on the Perspective on Academic Budget Cuts.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no fiscal impact.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.

University Executive *Officer*
Provost and Executive Vice President

Date

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Board of Regents

Faculty Affairs Committee

September 21, 2007

12:45 – 1:30 p.m.

205 Welch Hall

AGENDA

Regular Agenda

Section 12

Monthly Report and Minutes (*Regent Parker, Vice Chair*)

Status Report

REPORT: "Perspective on Academic Budget Cuts"

Introduction (5 minutes)

Art Department (10 minutes)

School of Nursing (10 minutes)

English Department (10 minutes)

Open discussion (10 minutes)

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF REGENTS

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 20, 2007
2:05 – 2:45 p.m., 205 Welch Hall

Attendees (seated at tables): Regent Ahmed (Chair), D. Barton, H. Bunsis, M. Evett, P. Leighton, Provost Loppnow, S. Moeller, Regent Parker.

Guests (as signed in): P. Buchanan, D. Clifford, A. Chickonoski, M. Evett, C. Foreman, M. Marz, V. Reaume, D. Tanguay.

Monthly Report and Minutes (Section 22)

Regent Ahmed called for approval of the minutes of the January 19, 2007 meeting. There were no additions or corrections.

REPORT: "The Primacy of Academics and the Student Experience"

Don Loppnow, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, stated that today's topic was chosen after consulting with *Howard Bunsis*, on behalf of the AAUP, and *Daryl Barton*, on behalf of the Faculty Council. After he stated that Academic Affairs would present, followed by Mr. Bunsis for the Union, and then Faculty Council representatives, *Regent Parker* asked if separate presentations were the norm. Provost Loppnow stated that this has been the case in recent months, but could be changed as the Chair saw fit. Regent Ahmed asked if the presentations were shared beforehand; Provost Loppnow stated that was the case.

Provost Loppnow stated that he wanted to: highlight some accomplishments, issues, and challenges that exist with regard to some of the priorities that have been worked on this year; look at where to go from here in terms of a planning process in the context of what is evolving at the University; and, finally, to examine the guiding principles for this process in adjusting academic goals in the face of the changes we are experiencing as an institution. He emphasized the importance of elevating academics as a priority of this institution, both in terms of the attention given to the teaching, research, and service enterprises and in terms of funding priorities and attention given to academics at this University.

Provost Loppnow highlighted the six priorities that Academic Affairs has been working on this year and that have been presented at various provisional leadership and Faculty Council meetings. Please refer to the attached handout of his PowerPoint presentation. The first is to emphasize certain areas within academics that affect students. The second is to increase the support for scholarly and creative activities. Third, is to strengthen processes of assessment, accreditation, and institutional effectiveness. Fourth, is to improve instructional and research facilities. Fifth, is to recruit and support faculty and lastly, to begin to lay the groundwork in terms of plans for an upcoming comprehensive campaign by expanding the extent to which we are cultivating support for the University.

With regard to the first priority, elevating the primacy of academics, Academic Affairs expended the most energy on three things. The first is the third year of the new General Education Program implementation. The first students involved in the new program begin this fall. This program is different in that it is the first time in the history of the University that it is a program, rather than just a set of courses from which students choose. Given the options that students have and the fact that it is a coherent, intentional,

outcome based program, the faculty who have worked on this program believe this will prepare students better for, "education for participation in the global community" as the title of the program states. This entire process has been driven by faculty, with various committees appointed by Faculty Council, so that curriculum is in the hand of faculty, as it should be. As the program is outcome based, it can be evaluated, which is an expectation on the part of accrediting bodies and accomplishment of the goals of the curriculum can be assessed.

In the area of enrollment enhancement, the various colleges have worked with the Community College Office in developing more articulated transfer agreements. Some new international initiatives have been launched. In the area of Continuing Education, there continues to be some growth in off campus sites and on-line instruction. For the second year in a row, a revenue sharing plan has been in effect, with \$350,000 being distributed this year to colleges and departments based on credit hours generated and the offering of full programs.

With regard to the Honors College, effort has been expended on both protecting it from budget constraints, increasing enrollment, and attracting distinguished and outstanding students. The College currently has about 960 students and this program offered about 90 courses this semester taught by faculty in their various departments. In many cases, these are interdisciplinary and innovative courses. Students in this program have an average GPA of 3.75 and, during the course of their studies, do about nine thousand hours of community service. The students who graduate from this program are admitted to top graduate schools in the nation and those who go directly into the workforce are sought after by employers in an array of disciplines.

There are some challenges in priority one. The new General Education Program has not generated as many interdisciplinary course proposals as anticipated. Efforts will be redoubled to encourage faculty and provide support in this regard. There are some serious concerns about student persistence and student retention. Some teaming is being done with Enrollment Services and College deans to examine this problem. Finally, there are limited resources to be able to achieve desired goals within the Honors College.

In the priority two area—supporting scholarly and creative activities—an attempt has been made over the last several years, even in the face of reducing significant resources within the University, to be able to protect and reinvest in support for internal research awards, and to combine general fund resources as well as indirect cost funds. All the awards that have been recommended by the University Research and Sabbatical Leave Committee so far this year have been funded and it is the intent of Academic Affairs to try to do that for the remainder of this year and for future years. These internal research awards are very beneficial both in terms of enabling the faculty to publish their work and enriching their scholarly activities—which carries over into the classroom—and in leveraging other resources. For example, for the Faculty Research Fellowships, New Faculty Awards, and Sabbaticals that were awarded last year, thirty-five proposals were written for external grants, twelve were funded, and there were over \$700,000 of sponsored projects as a consequence. The challenge in this area is the reallocation of resources to provide more support for faculty scholarship and creative activity.

The third priority area is dealing with institutional assessment, institutional effectiveness and accreditation demands. In the case of the Higher Learning Commission, the University is pursuing the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP), which is an outcome-based program and involves a great deal of measurement and special projects for developing assessment capacities. Professor Jean McEnery, from Management, is directing the Academic Assessment area and Professor Denise Reiling, from Sociology, is directing Institutional Assessment. In the case of NCATE, which is the accreditation body for the College of Education, this is a tremendous investment of energy for the five Colleges that are a part of the education enterprise. In the budget reallocation process, just under \$600,000 was provided to

add faculty and core staff in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education to enable a successful accreditation process. The Program Review process is also being revised. The biggest challenge in this area is tying outcome assessment to improving the student learning experience.

The fourth priority, improving instructional and research facilities, is a huge challenge in academics. One of the things incorporated in the new AAUP agreement is to expand the scope of what has historically been a divisional facilities planning committee to one that looks at the educational environment in general. Progress has been made in terms of providing smart classrooms, classroom furniture, and instructional aids. Program statements have and are being developed. Challenges include maintenance of existing instructional research facilities and the provision of appropriate resources to upgrade instructional and research equipment.

Provost Loppnow stated that, with regard to priority five, it is hoped that this year there will be at least an eighty percent success rate in faculty searches. The goal is to at least maintain the present number of faculty. Challenges include faculty frustration because of the unresolved contract situation and issues regarding the proportion of course sections taught by faculty. Even though the University has almost the highest number of faculty it has had in decades, proportionally the number of faculty in classroom is smaller. Regent Ahmed asked as to the exact proportion; Provost Loppnow replied that about fifty-seven percent of courses are taught by faculty. When the full time lecturers are added in, the proportion is about seventy percent. Part of the shift is due to the faculty assuming other responsibilities within the University and some being off loaded on research and other activities. Another challenge in the area is to expand working on adopting more inclusive decision-making in the procedures of Academic Affairs.

With regard to the last priority, providing leadership in cultivating support for the University and in fundraising, the deans have taken the initiative in having development and advisory councils and working hard for cultivating support for the University as we move forward in the area of fundraising. The biggest challenge is embracing the Comprehensive Campaign as a University community.

The Provost referred to the list of challenges and opportunities detailed at the end of the slide show. He mentioned issues of sustained leadership within Academic Affairs; in the Provost's Office and among the deans everyone has served less than three years in their present roles and there is significant turnover among department heads. He also emphasized major advances in forging international partnerships and that he would like to see this integrated with General Education, throughout the undergraduate and graduate experience. He also stated that, within Academic Affairs, the areas where we can have most impact in terms of enrollment support is in relationships with community colleges and admission of transfer students, graduate students, and international students. It is harder for Academic Affairs to directly impact the number of incoming freshmen, although, clearly, the quality of programs does so. In looking at what is ahead, Provost Loppnow stated that once a faculty contract is in place, Academic Affairs should begin a process to update a more systematic plan to elevate the primacy of academics and bring that to the University level.

Regent Ahmed asked for faculty input. Daryl Barton brought up the problem of funding Spring/Summer courses. The budget left at the end of the winter term determines how many faculty can be used to teach Spring/Summer courses, regardless of the demand for courses; hence, the teaching load is not tied to realistic budget projections. Howard Bunsis stated that the Union would like to have financial metrics applied, with a percentage of the overall budget dedicated to instruction and that this should be charted over time. *Paul Leighton*, AAUP representative, added that the University should explore different expenditures in terms of return on investment. For, example, the condition of classrooms in buildings such as Pray-Harrold has a negative impact on student retention.

AAUP Presentation: "The Primacy of the Academics Mission at Eastern Michigan University"

Please refer to the attached handout of Howard Bunsis' PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Bunsis emphasized that the faculty does not want veto power, but does want a university that embraces faculty input. The opportunity for faculty input varies from department and college. He called for more discussion on the issue of a more consumer-based health care, which embraces the issue at the national level. He also called for faculty input on an appropriate goal for enrollment by 2011 and on the best way of achieving it in terms of faculty hiring and delivery of education. With regard to student/faculty ratio, he called for discussion outside of the contract negotiation process. This should also be the case with regard to expanding delivery through Continuing Education.

Daryl Barton agreed that enrollment goals and Continuing Education are topics for faculty input. She also commented that graduation rates are a misnomer, as they only account for students who started here as freshmen; hence, Eastern does not get recognized for the number of students that truly graduate. She commented that facilities need to be adequate before enrollment goals are increased. She also stated that the University needs to decide on its attitude to doctoral programs, which are extremely expensive and take away from faculty resources for undergraduates. She called for faculty involvement in all these decision areas.

Regent Parker asked if there would be a possibility of a presentation that involved the administration and the Union, rather than having two separate presentations. She stated that she would like to bring the Union and the Administration together in this regard. Regent Ahmed stressed that change at the University will involve a change of attitude that starts with the regents and also involves the Administration and the faculty. While the format of the meeting is expedient, it does not leave much room for discussion.

Regent Ahmed then thanked all assembled, and adjourned the meeting at 2:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Winifred Martin, Administrative Secretary
Academic Affairs