

Meeting Notes

Item	Description
Name/Title	Educational Environment & Facilities Committee
Date	March 12, 2010
Time	1:00 to 2:30
Location	205 Welch
Attending	Dennis Beagen (chaired), Sylvia Bethea (for Michael Bretting), John Boyless, Steve Camron, Dave Crary, LaVerne Higgins (for Fraya Wagner-Marsh), Raymond Lucas, Eric Owen, Joe Scazzero (for Mary Vielhaber), Barbara Scheffer, Wade Tornquist, Walter Tucker (for Mary Brake), Bob Winning
Absent	Sean Braden, Matt Evett, Sandra Hines, Bob Neely
Guest	Provost Kay

I. Approval of minutes from 2/8/2010

Motion: Moved by Dave Crary to approve minutes from 2/8/10. Seconded by John Boyless. **Motion carried:** Unanimously.

II. Provost Jack Kay: Report on tours of Academic Affairs facilities

Provost's Report

• Faculty Offices:

- The provost has asked President Martin and John Donegan for a survey of faculty offices to determine how many faculty share offices and what it will take to realize a minimum standard of each faculty member having an individual office.
- The current situation not only inconveniences faculty, but also the lack of privacy interferes with faculty-student relations.
- With the swing space issues we are now experiencing, the possibility exists of making more permanent use of the additional spaces we will be utilizing.

• Safety issues:

- The tours revealed certain items that, to the lay observer, seem like safety violations. Examples include workspaces in the Art Department and weapon and ammunition storage facilities in COT that do not have adequate heating and cooling.
- Provost Kay has related these to John Donegan and indicated that we need a plan and a timetable to resolve these issues. Situations need to be prioritized, with those that are dangerous to be taken care of immediately. A long term plan is also needed.
- Can this committee be more proactive in this area?
- The provost needs to be more proactive in the whole area of facilities.

Discussion of role and activities of committee:

- **Faculty Offices:** Dave Crary stated that one of the recommendations of the committee was to explore the use of King Hall as dedicated space for faculty offices and to, at least, get a cost estimate from the Physical Plant.
- **Safety issues:** Dave Crary mentioned that Faculty Senate referred the provost's safety concerns to the committee. About a year and a half ago a subcommittee structure was created which might accommodate these issues. At the February meeting it was suggested that one of the existing subcommittees might morph into dealing with safety issues. Steve Camron stated that such a

subcommittee should have a definite charge. Provost Kay asked if we really need a committee or if a system where people can report their safety concerns for prioritization might be more timely and effective.

- Prioritization of work: Provost Kay stated that prioritization of work on facilities in Academic Affairs should be more formalized, with the Provost's Office possibly being a repository for concerns. He asked if such centralized reporting and prioritization is a process this committee would consider establishing.
- Expansion of role of committee:
 - Dave Crary stated that, while on the negotiation team for faculty during the last contract talks, he pushed for expansion of the role of the committee and wanted enhanced leverage for Academic Affairs in the area of facilities. Provost Kay commented that he would welcome anything that draws attention to the need to have such issues addressed.
 - In discussing the role of the committee, Provost Kay stated that he had encountered confusion from administrators and Faculty Senate as to the committee's responsibilities. Wade Tornquist stated that the contract language is very general and refers to the entire educational environment and facilities. There was discussion as to the genesis of the committee, which had been preceded by a committee of administrators that prioritized work in an era when the Physical Plant was far less responsive than it is today.
- Achieving specific goals:
 - Capital outlay process: Provost Kay stated that delays in processing capital outlay forms, such as occurred last summer, should not be an issue in the future. He suggested that the committee be proactive in the process and look at the process for next year now.
 - Smaller projects: Costs quoted by Physical Plant can seem exorbitant and wait times long. Physical Plant does have a process for hiring outside contractors if they don't have capacity to do the work in a timely manner.
 - Maintenance:
 - Dennis Beagen stated that the term "maintenance" is something of a moving target. Provost Kay agreed that there should be a policy statement on what is considered routine maintenance and what is the responsibility of individual departments.
 - There was general agreement that routine cleaning of the interior of buildings is inadequate. The usual excuse given for this is shortage of custodial staff. The importance of curb appeal and general appearance should not be underestimated in attracting new students.
- Physical Plant liaison on committee: Having a liaison has proved invaluable in terms of getting feedback and information on how to speed up processes. The Physical Plant should be aware that this is a priority. Dave Crary stated that it would be useful for the committee to contact the Physical Plant to stress how helpful it has been to have a liaison attending meetings and to suggest, informally, that they also identify an alternate.

III. Swing Space: Office and classroom scheduling

- Wade Tornquist asked that feedback on adjustments to the last scheduler output be directed to Bette Warren as soon as possible as the scheduler is ready to be run again.
- LaVerne Higgins asked that she be apprised of which classes will be in which rooms in COB so she can ensure the correct equipment is made available and that rooms are unlocked for classes.
- Wade Tornquist asked that the information for spring/summer classes be checked to ensure smooth scheduling. He stated that Mark Jefferson will still be available during this period and the Library will only be impacted by computer lab requirements, not classroom space.
- There are still a few "emergency" classrooms available on campus for fall use.

- Barbara Scheffer stated that CHHS will have people from the Advising Center stationed at the exterior doors in the fall to guide people to their classrooms and schedules will be posted outside each classroom door. The college has yet to figure out the issues of keys and equipment maintenance necessitated by increased use. Wade Tornquist stated that Brian Hoxie is working on these types of problems.
- In response to a question by John Boyless, Wade Tornquist stated that open studio classrooms may have to be taken out of the scheduler.
- Furnishings and projectors will be brought into rooms not fitted out as classrooms from Pray-Harrold.
- Dave Crary stated that the current move to Hoyt is scheduled during the first three days of spring term and there is a push to see if the movers can accommodate the move the weekend before. He also thanked the rest of campus for enabling the accelerated move which will allow savings to be funneled into new office equipment for faculty in Pray-Harrold.

IV. Discussion of faculty survey

- Joe Scazzero stated that the subcommittee--consisting of himself, Barbara Scheffer, and Ray Lucas—had met and needs input as to what questions to ask, how to use the information obtained, and who is going to act on the information. He distributed a hand-out with requests for clarification on survey data. In a general discussion there was agreement that what is needed is a systematic input from faculty as to the quality of both their work and instructional spaces.
- Possible issues include: safety, office space, instructional space, curb appeal, technology in the classroom and performance areas, building accessibility, building maintenance, parking, use of card readers in lecture halls to take attendance.
- How inclusive should the survey be?
 - It could be broken down into subject areas, such as IT infrastructure, office spaces, etc.
 - Could have one general survey or each area could be a separate survey. Should be mindful of survey fatigue and the length of the survey.
 - Touch issues in general way, without getting too detailed; for example, the specifics of technology in the classroom may not interest all faculty.
 - If survey is to take place of team visits to departments, we do need to allow specificity.
 - Could ask if there is a particular area in which the faculty member would be willing to be surveyed in depth.
 - Survey shouldn't take the place of visits, but could identify target issues for those meetings.
- Feedback to participants: Is instant feedback possible? or can we follow up survey with feedback via email or web site?
- Areas of concern include:
 - Can the committee actually do anything about the issues raised?
 - Should not include questions about things the committee cannot impact.
 - A question could be included in the survey as to ranking of priorities given the funds available for facilities.
 - May want to include a statement of purpose that states the survey results will help prioritize needs.
 - With the swing space issues and renovations, is this a good time to survey faculty? Would it be better to wait until fall or later?
 - Not all faculty are affected by the moves and we can't wait two years for feedback.
 - Certain issues are independent of the moves.

- One of the background questions on the survey should identify if individuals are in a group being impacted by moves. The survey needs to ascertain the current location of each responder.
- Walter Tucker brought up the issue of instability in the my.emich portal, stating that there is not enough capacity to deal with peak periods. Provost Kay suggested inviting the new director of IT to talk to the committee on this issue.

It was agreed that the survey subcommittee would draft questions and submit them to Bob Neely as a draft.

V. Planning for next computer refresh round

Eric Owen distributed a hand-out on computer lab refresh for 2010/11.

- Owen and Marshall didn't have refresh in the last round.
- Are laptop carts working out as a viable option? Wade Tornquist stated that CAS is putting laptops in a room in Rackam for use in journalism classes and, thus, creating a lab out of that space. Battery power is the main issue with this.

VI. Other Items

- Dennis Beagen thanked the provost for attending.
- John Boyless thanked the committee for speeding up the computer lab refresh in COT.