

**2009-10 Report from the Executive Committee of the Senate (ECS) and University
Academic Senate (UAS)
19 May 2010**

UAS Achievements

As is usually the case, the 2009-10 Academic Year has been a busy one for UAS and ECS.

Unlike some years, however, it is easy to identify two of the initiatives completed by governance (working with faculty members and its committees) as standing out above the others. Perhaps it is not surprising that both involved revisions to the faculty personnel policy in the Administrative Manual. Both of them are also the culmination of multi-year review processes. But only one of them was the subject, for the first time in 50 years, of a referendum process.

The “referendum” issues – as they have come to be referred to – arose from the UAS proposed revision of the unit personnel policy as to which faculty members could vote in unit personnel actions involving contract renewals, tenure, promotions and sabbatical. After what was an at times contentious, sometimes emotional, and always heartfelt series of conversations involving formal and informal, public and private, electronic and “face to face” communication, this faculty personnel issue was finally resolved by a recommendation delivered to President Haas from UAS. It was the UAS’ recommendation that tenure track faculty members have a two year probationary period before being among the voting faculty in unit personnel actions (except sabbatical recommendations). UAS further recommended the adoption of a conflict of interest policy for unit personnel actions that identifies some situations in which otherwise eligible-to-vote faculty members would not be eligible and, importantly, would remove those faculty members from the unit quorum count. Provost Davis has accepted these recommendations and, in addition, decided to “grandfather-in” any faculty member who already has participated in unit

personnel actions once the Administrative Manual language reflecting these proposed revisions is developed and approved by the Grand Valley State University Board of Trustees. The second change to faculty personnel policy language recommends revisions to the Administrative Manual language regarding “effective teaching” to update the expectations of faculty in this most important aspect of their work lives, to provide greater clarity as to the expectations for faculty performance and evaluation, and to align it with the university’s strategic plan.

Annual reports from all of the nine standing committee providing updates on their activities are available on the Faculty Governance Web site for review. Some of the major governance activities for the 2009-10 Academic Year (also reported in many of those reports) include:

- A thorough review of current Academic Integrity policies by an Academic Integrity Task Force of the Academic Standards and Policies Committee, which has reported out a series of possible action items for consideration by UAS during the 2010-11 Academic Year,
- The continuation of involvement as a participant in the development and approval of revisions to Grand Valley’s strategic plan as we move forward post NCA,
- The completed review and support of three prospecti and five final plans. All of these proposals are of considerable importance to the university as they contain a diverse range of new initiatives for Grand Valley as well as requisite revisions to existing curriculum.

These include:

- Recommending approval of Biomedical Engineering and Adventure Tourism Management minors,

- Recommending approval of a Masters in Educational Technology along with the development and revision of current curriculum review processes and policies that were needed to support such online programs,
- Recommending approval of Comprehensive Arts and Sciences for Teaching major and the approval of Education and Special Education programs as second majors,
- Recommending approval of the reorganization of the College of Health Professions,
- Recommending revisions to governance processes and structures including approval of new policies and procedures for the review of new programs and academic units, which will be implemented through an online review system mirroring that used for other curriculum initiatives, and a modification of the role of the General Education Subcommittee, making it a full standing committee reporting directly to ECS and UAS, and
- Acceptance of the completed equity review of faculty salaries done by the Faculty Salary Budget Committee members and its Chair, Donijo Robbins,

Among items that will be addressed during the summer and in the upcoming academic year:

- Collaboration with HR and the VP for Inclusion and Equity on inclusion proposals being developed for revisions to faculty personnel actions,
- Consideration of the proposals from the Academic Integrity Task Force targeting areas of potential growth and improvement,

- Supporting implementation of revisions to the personnel policies and new program/academic unit review process, and
- Consideration of final plans for new program initiatives such as the proposed Master of Arts in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, a Master of Arts in History, Religious Studies major and minor, a Juvenile Justice minor, International Communications minor, and the proposal from the College of Engineering and Computing to change the engineering emphasis areas into separate majors.

Finally, elections of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Executive Committee for 2010-11 were held on April 23, 2010. Kristine Mullendore, was re-elected Chair and Nancy Levenburg was elected Vice Chair. At that meeting outgoing Vice Chair Larry Burns, who served over the last two years, was recognized for his energy and work ethic while serving in that position.

We look forward to a continuation of the positive and productive working relationships with Provost Davis, President Haas and the Board of Trustees. These epitomize the genuinely successful “shared” faculty governance long employed and respected here at Grand Valley. We share a common goal—the continued development and enhancement high quality educational excellence for our Grand Valley students, particularly, as made possible with increasingly efficient and effective governance processes.

Kristine Mullendore, 2009-10 ECS/UAS Chair

Lawrence Burns, 2009-10 ECS/UAS Vice Chair