

Detailed ECS Notes from 11/12/2021

Report from the Chair

- *On Faculty Forums:* A summary of the discussions at the faculty forums has been posted. See the end of this document for the summary.
- *On the November 10 & 11 Teach-In:* The Teach-In was well-attended, with 396 attendees virtually and 196 face-to-face on Wednesdays. The numbers for the Thursday sessions were equally encouraging.
- *On the RH2025 Update and ECS/UAS Schedule Change:* RH2025 Co-leads will update UAS at the 12/3 meeting. ECS will plan for the RH2025 endorsement vote meeting when ECS meets on 12/10. The ECS 1/21/22 meeting will change to a UAS meeting for the RH2025 endorsement vote.
- *On Title IX:* A response to the ECS Title IX Taskforce report was provided by President Mantella. You can see President Mantella's response by going [here](#). The external investigators interviewed the ECS/UAS chair, and requested interviews with the taskforce members. The taskforce members did not feel as though they had anything of significance to contribute, since their information was all second-hand. There was a discussion about inviting the external reviewers to ECS, but the body was uncertain what this would accomplish. President Mantella already expanded the scope of the investigation, as requested by ECS, and ECS will be provided with the reviewers' final report. A vote was taken, it was decided not to invite the reviewers to ECS at this time. However, the external reviewers will have an opportunity to speak with ECS after their investigation is completed and a final report submitted.
- *On the Next ECS Meeting of November 19:* The agenda contains the following items: Faculty Activity Plan Designation Discussion; AFFARES Task Force Report on AFAC and Bylaws Language Change; Active Learning Classroom Task Force Findings Official Report to ECS; Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC) Report on Prioritizing the Equity in Personnel Policies (EPP) Task Force Recommendations for 2021-2022 AY; Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Memo on Leadership and Succession Planning; and Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Memo on Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2022-2023.

Report from the Provost

- *On the Education for Young Children Program:* This was reported last week as a collaboration between CLAS and CECI. However, that information was erroneous. The Education for Young Children Program is solely the initiative of CECI. Congratulations to our colleagues from CECI for the BOT approval.
- *On Parent Event in Chicago:* The Provost met with 100-150 parents of current students. They were appreciative, excited, and happy about their children's educational experiences this year, particularly the efforts to provide in-person experiences.
- *In Response to Questions Regarding Enrollment for Winter 2022 and the Impact of Enrollment on the Budget:* The enrollment pattern for Winter is consistent with the pattern for Fall. The 4% decline resulted in a \$15 million shortfall; money had been set aside in contingency in anticipation of an enrollment decline due to COVID; this has covered the shortfall.

Report from the Student Senate President

- Students are advocating for Student Senate to work with the University to end the contract with Aramark, especially students who are members of Students for Food Sovereignty; however, Student Senate does not have the ability to end this contract. Student Senate has created the University Food Committee to help address concerns. Concerns from students include the following:
 - Long lines
 - Closed dining areas
 - Inability to use their whole dining plans due to limited availability of dining options
 - Culturally insensitive food options
 - Unethical food practices
 - Food quality

New Business

- *On the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee's (FPPC's) Update on Use of LIFT:*

- In March 2021 UAS supported FPPC's initial proposal
- LIFT MC said CEI should not be used
- FPPC planned to conduct a pilot this semester, but did not have any volunteers to participate
- Only distributions should be reported as these are ordinal data, means should not be calculated
- Pilot will be for associate professors who are not up for a personnel action
- *On Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee (FTLCAC) Memo on LMS Selection Feedback Survey Finding Report:* A slight preference for Canvas was revealed in the faculty survey, which is consistent with the results of the previous survey. Student Senate also prefers Canvas. Discussion revealed that inclusivity issues have been noted in Blackboard, these are present in Canvas as well. Both support textbook and online homework managers equivalently. The contract with Blackboard ends in June 2024, there will be a transition to the new LMS (Blackboard Ultra or Canvas) over the next three years. Typically, a decision would have been made by last spring; IT has a short timeline for implementation. There does not appear to be a discernable difference in the learning environment between the two LMSs. Some accredited programs use accreditation tools that are built into Blackboard, Canvas does not have a comparable tool. Other institutions that have accredited programs and use Canvas are more technologically advanced than GVSU. Many institutions, including high schools, are using Canvas, so using Canvas may be easier for students who are familiar with it; however, many community colleges use Blackboard. Canvas collects a lot of data about individuals in courses, which is great for educational research, but is it "unnecessary surveillance"?
 - Those who have opinions should share them with the Provost's Office.
- *On the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Memo on University Policies Language on Pay Equity:* This memo clarifies that a faculty member can request that HR looks at their salary in terms of equity concerns. This has always been the case, but this memo clarifies the language.
- *On the FSBC Memo on Allocation of Federal Funds:* The request from FSBC is that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) seek input from a wide range of perspectives and create a transparent process to determine how best to utilize federal funds to address budget shortfalls while preserving our core functions and best positioning the university for the future. Currently, there is a Budget Representative Group (BRG) that makes recommendations on this. The BRG has representatives from each Division, with faculty having two representatives in the Chair of ECS/UAS and the Chair of FSBC.
- *On the FSBC Request for Meaningful Dialogue:* FSBC stated a need for earlier involvement of shared governance in decision-making at the University. ECS has accepted the memo and will discuss this further at a future ECS meeting.

Summary of Faculty Fora 10/27/2021 and 10/28/2021

What are the Pressing Issues?

- *On the Provost Search:*
 - Student Affairs will separate from Academic Affairs. The new Provost will oversee Academic Affairs. A new VP will oversee Student Affairs.
 - Faculty want the following:
 - a strong academic advocate for faculty
 - bridge between SLT and faculty
 - someone who will work well with SLT
 - sovereignty of the Provost's Office; there is concern that initiatives that impact Academic Affairs do not always go through the Provost's Office; this impacts the ability for faculty governance to provide input
 - possibly an internal candidate, such as Ed Aboufadel or Chris Plouff
 - Question was asked how the search committee members were selected:
 - ECS/UAS nominated faculty members and voted
 - Faculty at large were chosen by the Deans to get faculty representation beyond those involved in governance
- *On Title IX:*
 - ECS taskforce sent recommendations to the President

- ECS cannot infringe on personnel actions or other divisions within the University, but can ask questions
- ECS is waiting to see the results of the external investigation prior to taking further action
- *On Other Concerns:*
 - Workload increases
 - Changes happening quickly, a “work fast and break things” mentality
 - Low morale
 - Adding tasks without removing tasks

How can the Faculty Voice be Heard?

- The President’s scheduled conversations
- Have dialog in advance, prior to making decisions, so faculty can provide input rather than merely reacting
- Provide internal communication prior to press releases, it is disconcerting to learn of University initiatives via external rather than internal sources
- Include relevant standing committees in conversations
- It is not efficient to have everyone involved in every decision, but faculty should take advantage of opportunities to provide input and should communicate concerns to ECS/UAS reps

How can Faculty Governance Serve the Faculty?

- Articulate to SLT how much dialog is expected
- Go to BOT when faculty’s position differs from administration’s
 - Some faculty would like to see lack of communication presented to the BOT
 - Some faculty feel going to the BOT should be a last resort, working together internally first is preferred
- Let faculty know when looking into things that “don’t seem right”
- Question about how ECS/UAS can work with AAUP
 - When AAUP members bring concerns to ECS/UAS reps, share them
- Be part of the conversation when decisions are being made