

Date: Friday, April 10, 2015

To: Karen Gipson, Chair, ECS/UAS
Tonya Parker, Vice-Chair, ECS/UAS

From: Ross Reynolds, chair Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC)

Re: FFPAC Faculty Governance Year-End Report

Below is a summary of the charges identified by UAS/ECS for the FFPAC during the 2014-2015 academic year. Following each is a description of what was accomplished regarding each.

1. Problems with Classrooms

A. Communicate New Classroom Issues Reporting Process

Communicate the new email process for reporting classroom issues to faculty. Some suggestions for communication include:

- Updating the FFPAC website;
- Placing stickers on faculty workstations in all classrooms with information on how to report problems;
- Communicating with Deans and Unit Heads and requesting them to communicate with faculty.

Response:

All classroom instructor stations now have an icon (A button labeled “FIX IT”) for classroom issues that take them to a gateway to the facilities work order system, the IT problems page, or to the FFPAC committee email addresses/anonymous survey. All reported issues are responded to by the appropriate unit regarding their resolution to those reporting them where possible. Typing in classroom problems or classroom issues into the GVSU search bar also takes you to the same gateway. Most immediate problems are being resolved quickly.

B. Identify and Report on Problems with Current Teaching Spaces

- Collect information from faculty members about the particular classrooms, laboratories, and other teaching facilities that they use, and share this information with Facilities Services so identified problems can be addressed.
- Monitor whether the problems are indeed addressed, and, if not, determine whether the concern was valid, and, if so, why it is not being addressed.
- Provide an annual report listing the problems that have been identified and any subsequent follow-up, planned or implemented.
- Report on the findings of the ethnography project that began in Winter 2014.
- Plan for yearly participation in the Registrar’s Walkabout (review of teaching spaces).
- When appropriate, reported issues should inform how future facilities are designed.

Response:

Information is collected via direct email and/or anonymous classroom survey which is open year round. Email issues are placed on the agenda and discussed as soon as possible (usually at the next meeting). The classroom survey is read each spring and data is added to our spreadsheet of issues of concern. This list, when compiled, is shared with facilities for consideration in the following summer's repairs and renovations. The committee has representatives participate in the summer Walkabout (checking all classrooms for suitability for Fall semester) and checks complaints against the rooms to see if issues have been resolved. The list is then modified to reflect the current state of classrooms.

A list of issues of particular concern for new buildings is being maintained on our blackboard site. This list is available to the committee members who serve on new building committees.

The ethnographic survey summaries are placed on the FFPAC web site at the end of each year. Particular issues brought to light by these studies are discussed in the committee and recommendations made to the appropriate units. To date the primary issues raised have been about Disability access, which has been discussed with Kathleen VanderVeen (Equity and Inclusion), white board sight issues which are being discussed with IT, and problems with multiuse classrooms, some of which are working poorly because of the equipment that was chosen for the rooms. All of these issues have led to items on our concerns sheet for new building construction to make sure that these issues are carefully addressed when the buildings are built.

- FFPAC should monitor this process to ensure that all parties are appropriately informed.

Response: The Facilities Work order system responds to the person filing the work order and follows up with the resolution. Changes to IT's policy this year now ensure that those who report classroom problems are notified, not just the "owner of the classroom". Issues brought to the committee members' attention are discussed and the committee member first contacted responds to the person identifying the problem as to how the committee will proceed. The anonymous survey can have no individual response but the problem goes into our list of problems which is updated yearly as problems are resolved.

2. Long-Term Facilities Planning

A. Long-Term Planning Process Design

Formalize and document the process whereby FFPAC identifies long term needs for academic facilities (those relevant to teaching, research/scholarship, and service). Ensure that the process for space requests is done in a fair and equitable fashion.

B. Recommended profiles

Explore recommended profiles to assist in the design of new spaces and remodel of existing spaces.

C. Design Standards Review

Review current GVSU design standards to ensure that the architectural and furniture standards the university provides to new building design teams are in line

with best practices and new trends in education and that they address as much as possible concerns voiced by faculty.

D. Classroom innovations

Explore means to gather university-wide faculty input on classroom innovations.

E. Legacy structures

Investigate the process of monitoring the condition of legacy structures on campus, and prioritize plans for refreshing and refurbishing facilities, especially in light of higher technological needs (*e.g.*, electrical outlets).

F. Accessibility Issues

Make recommendations to ensure that all buildings are highly accessible (this may be beyond the legal requirement) and work with the University Parking Committee to ensure that adequate handicapped parking is available.

G. Safety issues

Take steps to ensure the dissemination to faculty and staff of university plans for responding to crisis (*e.g.*, lockdown, evacuation, *etc.*).

Response: Although the committee is working on all of these issues, this year's committee focused primarily on the last three. Our Ethnographic studies continue to inform us on problems with legacy structures which are then discussed with facilities as to ways to improve the problems. As with AuSable Hall, sometimes the only solution is major renovation. As we identify needs of this long term nature they are passed to facilities and placed on their list of things to fix, but the resolution time depends on the cost and scope of the projects. Facilities has been very willing to work on identified problems in a timely manner where possible. They also get our survey summary at the end of the academic year.

One of the benefits of the Ethnographic studies has been to start the conversation with Disability Services (now under Equity and Inclusion) as to making spaces truly accessible, not just technically qualifying. We are learning what types of problems exist and incorporating these into our list of concerns for new construction as well as identifying existing problems and bringing them to the attention of Facilities, the registrar (through their representative on the committee) and Disability Services. We have had discussions with Facilities regarding disability parking availability which has resulted an increased number of spaces. Handicapped permits allow one to park on the loading dock of Padnos and more spaces outside of Makinac Hall and Manitou Hall were allocated last summer. This will continue to be an issue as we have more senior faculty members and is an area that needs to have more attention focused on it. Handicapped parking spaces with long walking distances are not reasonable especially in the Winter.

Finally, regarding safety issues the committee recommends that the Provost's office work with Public Safety to have a brief presentation at all Fall start-up meetings making faculty aware of the Emergency Procedures Manual and briefly what it covers. This should also be part of all new faculty orientations. We further recommend that stickers be placed in each classroom (upper right corner of the white board) providing an easy web-link to this manual. A request for a funding recommendation from the Provost by the Senate will be forthcoming. The estimated cost is around \$500 to place a removable sticker on every white board on all campuses.

3. Review Usage

Assess the usage of the various new spaces on campus and report findings.

Response: As types of spaces are identified our ethnographic study will focus on new spaces and how they are working. One of the types of spaces considered for Winter was the smart classrooms. We deferred that in favor of looking at the multiuse technology classrooms with computers that could be opened or closed to have a table like surface. This decision was primarily made because of plans to build more multiuse technology rooms before more smart rooms. Consideration of primarily two different types of these rooms gave a clear indication that one type of implementation was far superior to the other. This recommendation was identified to Facilities and is on our list of concerns for new building committees. We will likely address “smart classrooms” next year to assess how well they are working for faculty and what additional training faculty may need to make the most of these types of spaces.

4. Meeting schedule:

In light of the fact that FFPAC is one of two Standing Committees that only meets monthly, please consider revising the meeting schedule of FFPAC if/as necessary in order to address the above charges and other business that FFPAC may wish to consider.

Response: Many things must be done between meetings, our current schedule suits our needs.

IV. Other Accomplishments/Issues

- I would like to thank the ex-officio members of FFPAC for the great support they have provided throughout the year. In particular, Jon Jellema, James Moyer, Brad Newman, Laura Przybytek, Sue Korzinek and John Klein who have been with us this year. Their involvement has allowed some important changes to be made easily. Following our recommendation changes were made to the Faculty Handbook by the Senate to add the representatives from the Registrar’s office and IT as ex-officio members to the committee. Also added was a graduate student representative as a regular member. Final reports of the Ethnographic study from Fall 2014 on three different lecture halls and that for Winter 2015 on multiuse technology classrooms will be posted on our web site.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ross A Reynolds, PhD
Professor of Physics
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Grand Valley State University