

FACULTY SALARY AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

MARCH 29, 2013

PRESENT: Aaron Baxter, Teresa Beck, Pat Bravender, Larry Burns, Gregg Dimkoff, Joe Godwin (ex-officio), Kathy Gulembo (guest), Robert Hollister (Chair), Lori Houghton-Rahrig, Brian Johnson, Zack Kurmas, Julia Mason, Paul Stephenson, Pat Thorpe, Xandra Xu, Mike Yuhas.

1. The meeting was Called to Order at 12:00pm.
2. The Minutes of March 15, 2013 were reviewed and approved with minor amendment.
3. Provost Davis discussed question presented prior to the meeting.
 - a. The provost said there has been progress to make the university more efficient. This has been a topic that the provost's office has been promoting for the last several years, but has gotten much more attention in the last year especially after David Attis provided strategies to maximize academic and enrollment planning in his Smart Growth presentation last summer. These include many curriculum reforms which are likely to result in fewer low enrolled sections of courses. The changes may also better align student credits received for a course with what a faculty receives as assigned workload for the course. The provost has encouraged all unit heads to evaluate where similar changes may be possible without significantly effecting quality. The members of FSBC commented about the anxiety among faculty caused by the current approach where units are singled out and the fear that a faculty's home unit may be next. The provost was sympathetic to these concerns and was willing to hear suggestions.

The provost did not articulate a direct role for FSBC in facilitating efficiency measures; rather she asked that members of FSBC help to inform colleagues on the necessity of such matters and approaches that might be employed within the members home units.
 - b. The provost did not directly address specific questions about strategies that departments might employ to make up for low-enrolled courses, however it was clear from the discussion that there is awareness of the problem across the university. It was also acknowledged that there is not a centralized mechanism to track courses where a faculty member does not directly receive workload credit.
 - c. The provost expressed mixed feelings about on-line courses. As with many educators there is apprehension to fully embrace them for a number of reasons including lack of face to face interaction, retention, and cheating. However, it is clear that on-line courses are very appealing to students with busy schedules (especially non-traditional students) and that they can be cost effective. The university is not in favor of any totally on-line programs, but is supportive and promoting hybrid programs especially for graduate programs. These hybrid programs may include courses done totally on-line, but are more likely to meet only a few times during the semester. The administration is also providing support for faculty who choose to move their courses more and more on-line for example with flipped courses (where a student views lectures on-line and comes to the classroom for discussion and problem solving). While the provost's office has no intention of pressuring faculty one way or the other, it is clear that the trend is moving toward a larger on-line component to teaching. One particularly interesting type of on-line course are MOOCs (Massive open online course). In some ways MOOCs are in direct competition with traditional courses taught at GVSU. The administration does not intend to promote MOOC development, but is considering ways to respond to MOOCs.

The provost commented that there is a task force assigned with the topic of potentially giving credit for on-line courses. Ideas include some form of testing similar to Advance Placement Exams to assure that students learned the material from the course. There is pressure to accept credit for on-line courses because students are taking them and other schools will likely give them credit and if GVSU does not then student may choose another school that does. Furthermore the American Council of Education has made recommendations that course credit should be offered for some on-line courses.
 - d. There was no time to discuss new initiatives for next year.
4. The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.