

[draft]

Academic Staff Assembly
Minutes – April 24, 2015
Christie Theatre

1. Call to Order and Welcome

With about 30 people in attendance Katrina Hrivnak, the Chair of the Academic Staff Committee, convened the Assembly at 3 p.m., welcomed all, and introduced the other members of the Academic Staff Committee: Josh Goldman, Brent Blahnik, Jennifer Jones, Emily Rogers, and Kristi Aoki.

2. Chancellor's Report

The Chancellor began by presenting Katrina Hrivnak a token of appreciation for her service as chair and then launched into a description of recent actions on the proposed budget cuts. There has been considerable talk with legislators. The state's revenue picture is not looking good but the talks on gaining flexibilities for the UW System, the kind of things that were initially part of the governor's Public Authority proposal, may be gaining some traction, as the Chancellor puts it. There is still a hope that the cuts can be handled without laying people off, but every unit of the campus will suffer. Work continues on the voluntary separation incentives and some decisions may be made soon. Work also continues on the institutional "work model" though more data is needed. In any case it is likely that we will wait as long as possible to implement cuts, postponing reductions in the hopes that we may be able to grow ourselves out of our budgetary problems. He assured the Assembly that if there are to be layoffs, they will follow established personnel policies and procedures.

The Chancellor then invited questions and got some.

Will the names of those getting separation incentives be announced – not publicly, but the success of the program will be announced in general terms.

What is happening to frozen positions supported by seg fees – frozen positions may eventually be filled but we are still waiting to do that.

Will development funds be lost – everything is on the table.

Will the development allocation committee be eliminated – possibly suspended.

Will UW-Madison be treated differently – student access to Madison is unlikely to be curtailed.

Can flexibilities reduce the budget cuts – not immediately, but they can save money over the long run.

Will there be more deans – possibly, because UWGB's organization is not aligned in conventional ways, it tends to be misunderstood and ignored and a different array of deans may help that.

Will there be any realignment in non-academic areas – it is probable, but more analysis is still needed.

Will we have more consolidated and integrated marketing – we are moving in that direction since we need a more integrated focus on the Web and social media. The institution will also need to invest in enrollment growth, philanthropy, and community engagement.

The Chancellor reached for an upbeat ending by reminding the Assembly that we have excellent community support, an increasing enrollment, and award-winning individuals.

3. Provost's Report

Since the Chancellor had exhausted the Assembly's questions, the Provost had little to add except support. He and the Chancellor then had to leave for other engagements.

4. Academic Staff Committee Report

The current chair, Katrina Hrivnak, and next year's chair, Josh Goldman, then gave a demonstration of how a change of leadership can be less like the passing of a baton and more like a process of melting of one leader to another. Their uniform message was that the ASC exists to serve and wants to be a responsive sounding board for all academic staff, who are invited to bring concerns to the ASC. They acknowledged a few problems with secretarial chores this year but promised to get agendas and minutes out more regularly in the future.

5. Committee Reports

a. Committee on Workload and Compensation

Brent Blahnik reported that this committee has spent much time understanding how a compensation plan works and how tuition affects the university budget. An initial resolution calling for a connection between tuition revenue and compensation was passed by the ASC, tabled by the Faculty Senate, and then revised by the CWC.

b. Professional Development Allocations Committee

No report.

c. Professional Development Programming Committee

Diana Delbecchi reported that combining efforts with the University Staff has saved money. An April activity had focused on shared governance, held right before the Assembly meeting, and a final program was scheduled for May.

d. Leadership and Involvement

Stephanie Murphy reported that a streamlined process for filling committee vacancies has now been completed for next year's committees. The plan is to add short bios to the election process next year as a way for people to become more familiar with new faces interested in committee service.

e. Personnel Committee

Josh Goldman reported considerable work with HR on UPS forums, that staff will see a new form for performance reviews (previously recommended by the Committee), and that a survey of workplace expectations is coming.

f. System Rep Report

Katrina Hrivnak reported that the next Rep meeting is in a week. UW-GB seems to be in a better budgetary position than many other campuses who had delayed previous cuts and were now facing an increased problem because of that. Asked if the cuts will result in fewer classes, she responded that is probably true.

6. Approval of past meeting minutes

Minutes of the last Academic Staff Assembly in January had been approved by the ASC. (The SOFAS apologizes that the website still labels them as “draft”.)

7. Other Business

The end of the meeting seemed to be the time for general advice, warnings, aspirations, and questions. Assembly meetings should be better attended; committees should hold hand-off meetings for their new members; the ASC should keep after the administration on plans for budget cuts; there should be better communication about ASC activity; and the Personnel Committee can be used as a hearing body for contested layoffs.

8. Adjournment

Business concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clifford Abbott, Secretary of the Faculty and Academic Staff