

[draft]

# **Academic Staff Assembly**

**Assembly Minutes – May 19, 2014**

**1965 Room, University Union**

## **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

There were more than 50 people in attendance. The Chair of the Academic Staff Committee, Kristy Aoki, called the assembly to order promptly at 10:01. She introduced the other current members of the ASC: Brent Blahnik, Katrina Hrivnak, Jennifer Jones, Mary Simonsen, and Emily Rogers.

## **2. Provost's Report**

The Provost thanked all for the recent commencement ceremony and for all the work throughout the year that it represented. Whatever people's perspectives on progress, this year has marked a fair number of accomplishments and the Provost listed several. In the area of curriculum collaborations with other campuses often involve extra, and sometimes hidden, work for academic staff members. The successful HIMT and Sustainable Management programs will soon be joined by the Engineering Technology programs (a new faculty hire was just accomplished) and work on digital humanities and data science are in discussion. The Masters of Social Work will be ending its collaboration with UW-Oshkosh in favor of an entirely local program in 2015.

Progress is being made on academic planning. Groups are working on: online instruction (centralizing information as well as clarifying how much online instruction should be available to students); signature programs (there's consensus on at least our environmental/sustainability focus); curricular repackaging (for more nimble and short term purposes); and the development of graduate programs.

State issues continue to frame our working environment. The college credit in high school program may well change. A legislatively mandated transfer arrangement with the tech schools and UW will soon go into effect. Possibilities for standardizing the variation in remedial instruction are under discussion. Teaching loads are a focus of questions and we will soon be submitting a tome to comply with legislative requests for information on those loads.

More locally the CourseLeaf software is being implemented to help the processes of changing the curriculum and maintaining the catalog. Work with international education has been busy with plans for additional ESL instruction, tutoring, and recruitment. FOCUS and orientation and advising are being revamped. We now have a greater number of transfer students than entering first year students.

Finally the Provost concluded with evidence that we have become a more welcoming campus with responsiveness in social media, a Pride Center, and a Veterans Center.

### **3. Chancellor's Report**

The Chancellor also thanked the staff for the work around commencement and mentioned the enrollment challenges that lie ahead, but he spent most of his time discussing the transition he is going through as he steps down from being Chancellor, takes some time off, and plans to return for some teaching and behind the scenes work. A few questions tried to get him to take credit for some accomplishments but he stuck to his humble guns.

### **4. UWGB United**

Mike Draney provided an information session on the local union and asked for support of a petition to get the administration to agree to meet-and-confer meetings with the union. The petition has already been signed by 95 faculty, 14 staff, and 2 administrators. Asked about the advantages of the union, Mike ticked off several accomplishments: the idea for the CWC, resolutions passed by the Faculty Senate, pressure to make the Budget Council more representative, a united constituency, access to a grievance council and legal representation. There were also questions on dues (a percentage of salary up to a maximum); representation (through open communication); and whether the administration's reluctance to meet with the union was local or state-based (there's variation but UW-SP's union has a strong working relation with its administration).

### **5. Academic Staff Committee Update**

Chair Aoki reported on the following items:

a. Career Progression and Compensation - Progress has been made on the heels of a survey. HR will notify staff members of possibilities for progression and the administration has agreed that the differences in departmental budgets should not be a barrier to compensation increases.

b. Governance Conference - Governance is important and it was good to see the high level of participation at this conference.

c. ASC Structure - Comparison with other schools might provide alternative models of representation. A particular current concern is that segments of the academic staff, notably the instructional academic staff, are not typically represented on the ASC. This issue will be on a future agenda.

d. Performance Evaluation - This is another issue currently under discussion.

e. HR Orientation for New Staff - The classified staff has a model (Campus Connection) that may be copied, particularly with respect to mentoring.

f. Chancellor Search - The academic staff were represented in shared governance meeting with each candidate.

### **6. Committee Updates**

a. Committee on Workload and Compensation - Chris Martin reported the focus on workload will be on the HERI survey results and the focus on compensation will be on the salary

compression issue. A resolution for greater transparency passed the Faculty Senate. Additional efforts will depend on the next chancellor. Asked about workload data separate from HERI, Brent Blahnik offered that there were comparable data from other surveys for non-instructional academic staff.

b. Professional Development Allocations Committee - Jamee Haslam reported that the \$11,400 budget was largely allocated by February this year to 31 recipients. The Committee will be accepting proposals for funding (forms available on the SOFAS website) over the summer for the next year.

c. Professional Development Programming Committee - There were no currently planned events to announce at this point.

d. Personnel Committee - Josh Goldman reported the Committee had looked at its charge and decided not to recommend any changes. This Committee reviews conversions - since 2011 there have been seven conversions to academic staff and one to classified staff. None has been particularly contentious. The Committee has been looking at the transparency of the career progression process and the performance evaluation process. The former should be a part of the latter. Statements on performance evaluations are sometimes listings and sometimes narratives and there should be clarification of how to respond to both. There is also a question of whether the final checkbox should be a simple binary choice or a choice along a 4 position scale. All these issues will be discussed with the ASC so the world will have to wait a bit before we see whether it can be viewed as black-or-white or through shades of gray.

e. Leadership and Involvement - Kristy Aoki reported that the elections have been held and the results will be approved by the ASC and then announced.

f. System Rep - Kristy Aoki served as the Academic Staff representative to UW-System this past year. She reported the following issues as topics for discussion: enrollment declines; budget concerns and at some schools exercises in position cuts; supervisor training (state level possibilities are unclear and local programs may be developed); 9 vs 12 month payment options; and attacks on shared governance.

## **7. Adjournment**

Chair Aoki adjourned the meeting with thanks to the Provost for cookies and coffee.

Respectfully submitted,

Clifford Abbott, Secretary of the Faculty and Academic Staff