

Approved February 20, 2008

Executive Council
Board Room
January 30, 2008

Members Present: Susan Eisner, Anita Stellenwerf, Steve Rice, Irene Kuchta, Marcia Sexton, Amruth Kumar, Lisa Cassidy, Eric Karlin, Jim Morley, Provost Beth Barnett, President Peter Mercer

Members Absent: Maria Vail, Erin Augis

Executive Council Meeting 8:30a-9:00a

1. Sabbatical Task Force

Members present briefly discussed the Sabbatical Task Force response to Executive Council feedback.

2. Faculty Assembly debriefing

Executive Council members engaged in a general discussion on reactions to the January 23 Faculty Assembly. The main topics included the current faculty governance model as a representative model, modifications to Executive Council structure to minimize the number of representatives from a single unit, operational optimization, and revising communication practices between Executive Council and the faculty.

Executive Council Meeting with President Mercer and Provost Barnett 9:00a-10:30a

1. Provost's Office

Provost Barnett updated members of Executive Council on personnel decisions. An offer has been made and accepted for Assistant Director of Academic Affairs to start on February 19. Current Board of Trustees's policy is to not announce hires at the level of dean or above until they have been approved by the Board. The Provost provided members of Executive Council with a draft copy of the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment job description and requested feedback. The position of Vice Provost relates to an Associate Provost level with rank and tenure. Members of Executive Council suggested adding "professional programs" to the phrase "familiarity with liberal arts curricula," including graduate programs and canvassing units/faculty re: "gaps" in academic service that might be included in this position's responsibility including external research/benchmarking and assessment training/support. Related discussion covered the topics of tenure review at time of hire and the importance of academic communication with the units.

2. President's Update

President Mercer provided an update on various activities including his visits to Mumbai, India, Fireflies in Bangalore, Shanghai Normal University, China, and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, China. An offer has been made and accepted for the Director of International Education to start on April 1. Members of Executive Council concurred with the suggestion of having an alumni panel on study abroad experiences. President Mercer also provided Executive Council with a copy of his proposed Constituent Assembly membership for review.

3. Long term planning for organization of Administration

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Discussion focused on Vice Presidential structure, budget implications, evaluative mechanisms for new administrative hires, and optimizing operational structures.

4. Update on new sources of revenue

Provost Barnett updated Executive Council on the summer learning experiences for high school students including courses on fossils and forests, theatre experiences, and a writing/literature course. The Business Essentials Certificate program is also under way. Ideas for revenue generating programs from the group included a personal finance program, continuing education in nursing credits, and a possible certificate in gerontology. President Mercer informed Executive Council that a Capital Campaign will be rolled out within the next 6 months. The campus will also host the 5 Star Basketball Camp beginning summer 2008.

5. Graduate program update

Members of Executive Council were informed that graduate programs in sustainability and educational leadership were being explored. Related discussion topics included compensation for graduate teaching (in load vs. out of load), development of new programs, the process for creating new graduate degrees, economic feasibility, market review of competition and/or need, uniqueness, and employment opportunities. It was understood that ARC would review any proposed programs for academic quality along with review by the graduate council.

6. College support for outside research funding

Executive Council brought up the topics of funding the cost of adjuncts for faculty members engaged in research grants, funding for sabbaticals, matching funds for grants, and grant funding to offset operational costs. Faculty development funding and reassigned time were briefly mentioned.

7. Summer session 2008

Members of Executive Council expressed concern with the timing of the summer sessions and of running into August and noted a two-week delay before the beginning of each session.

Action item: Provost Barnett will speak with the Registrar's Office to consider adjusting the summer schedule before it is posted and report back to the Executive Council.

8. Start of spring semester

Members present briefly discussed the starting of spring semester on a Monday and the Tuesday start day impact on labs.

Executive Council Meeting continued 10:30a-11:00a

1. Faculty Assembly debriefing continued (see also Item #2 above)

Members of Executive Council continued the discussion of reaction to the January 23 Faculty Assembly. Feedback expressed by the faculty was itemized. Preliminary discussion regarding recommended modifications to the current structure and its operationalization were discussed including emailing links to approved minutes, listing decision items as part of the Faculty Assembly President's report, soliciting agenda items from the faculty, modifying the number of representatives from each unit, enhancing communication and feedback, and strengthening operations through project tracking.

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Revised by M. Sexton, February 11, 2008