

Approved April 2, 2008

Executive Council
ASB 230
March 26, 2008

Members Present: Eric Karlin, Steve Rice, Marcia Sexton, Susan Eisner, Maria Vail, Irene Kuchta, Anita Stellenwerf, Erin Augis, Amruth Kumar, Jim Morley, Lisa Cassidy

1. Faculty In-Service

Members present participated in a general discussion as to whether or not to have a Faculty In-Service end of year retreat. A majority of Councilors voted to hold In-Service on Tuesday, May 20. The schedule will include time for units to discuss academic issues as well as the faculty assembling as a whole. In-Service/Retreat will formulate recommended agenda items for next year's Executive Council, discuss current major issues such as assessment, and standardized testing, and provide time to wrap up any pending agenda items with the current Executive Council.

Action Item: Councilor Eisner will provide recommendations on mentoring, and Councilors Stellenwerf and Kuchta will provide recommendations on Implementing Personnel Policies, to the Executive Council in April.

Suggestion: It was suggested that some of the available Faculty Assembly funds be used to bring in a speaker for lunch and/or provide raffle prizes for attendees.

2. Student Assistant for Faculty Assembly

President Karlin informed Executive Council that past Faculty Assembly Presidents had hired a student to assist with various tasks including webpage maintenance and clerical support and that this year's workload suggests that be a practice to continue.

Suggestion: It was suggested that the incoming Executive Council consider hiring a student assistant as clerical and technical support for the Faculty Assembly Secretary and to assist in the Provost's Office when ballots are needed, and that budget requests continue the line item.

3. Standardized Testing and Assessment

Members of the faculty continued to express concerns with standardized testing especially in terms of content vs. skills. A few questions were brought up including: 1) what data does Middle States need for this review and what must be in place to satisfy that? 2) Is this to satisfy an immediate need or will the proposed standardized tests be part of longer-term assessment? 3) What objectives will be assessed by standardized tests and how will the results be used? 4) What about in-house developed standardized tests?

Suggestion: It was suggested that the chair of the General Education Task Force be invited to meet with Executive Council to discuss their review of the three suggested standardized tests.

Action Item: Topic will be an agenda item for the next Executive Council meeting with Provost Barnett.

4. Efficiency/Effectiveness Questions

Councilor Kumar passed out copies of the draft Efficiency/Effectiveness items prepared in response to Provost Barnett's requests for such feedback expressing areas of concern to the faculty. Discussion suggested adding an introductory paragraph and splitting the questions into sets dealing with budgetary questions and non-budgetary questions.

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Action Item: Councilors Rice and Augis will edit the document based on general discussion and circulate it among Executive Council members before it is presented to the Provost.

5. Convener job description

Members of Executive Council expressed continued concern with the lack of compensation for conveners. General discussion also brought up the results of the convener survey conducted last year by Councilor Kumar, the adjunct rate, and the size and number of majors and minors. It was suggested that recent past practice of providing each unit with a set number of reassigned time slots for the Deans to distribute for administrative work be continued, if reassigned time for conveners per se is not reinstated. Additional discussion covered possible rotation of conveners, length of terms, and the use of conveners plus program coordinators for smaller groups.

Recommendation: Executive Council recommends that the term for conveners be changed from one year to two years with a limit of serving twice for a total of four years. Council members also agreed, though, that convener term limits might not be feasible for small groups.

6. Follow-up items

- Task Force on Streamlining Access to Funding: Executive Council presented the Task Force charge to President Mercer at the March 19 meeting. President Karlin will follow-up.
- Unit approval of budget plans: Dorothy Echols-Tobe is invited to the April 30 Faculty Assembly to discuss budget.
- Improving work-life/intellectual commons: faculty space.

7. Minutes of the March 19 Executive Council meeting were approved.

Revised by M. Sexton, April 1, 2008