

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

CAMPUS PLANNING AND FINANCE COUNCIL

Minutes of 21 February 2017 at 3 p.m.

Faculty Lounge, Bernhard Center

Members present: Todd Barkman, David Dakin, Richard Gershon, Harold Glasser, Jon Neill, James Penner, Colleen Scarff, Jan Van Der Kley, and Pat Vander Meer

Guests: Kathy Beauregard, Athletic Director; Elizabeth Knips, Senior Associate AD/Business Operations; Jim Leja, Chair, Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies; and Patti VanWalbeck, Associate Vice President for Business and Finance

Procedural Items

Welcome

Council Chair Barkman began the meeting at 3 p.m. He welcomed guests and council members.

Acceptance of the Agenda

A motion was made by Neill to accept the agenda as presented, supported by Van Der Kley. Motion passed.

Approval of the Minutes of 17 January 2017

A motion was made by Neill to approve the minutes of 17 January 2017, supported by Penner. There was no discussion. Motion passed.

Chair's Comments – Todd Barkman

Barkman called attention to a recent bill that has the potential to severely impact higher education funding. This is due to a proposed cut in income tax for next January from 4.25 to 3.9 percent and with additional smaller subsequent cuts for a number of years following.

Information/Discussion Items

1. Universal Information Technology Access Project Action Team Report – ADA Compliance – James Leja

Leja gave a background and a detailed account of the work of the Team and its report. One of the objectives was to explore how to broaden the discussion and engagement on campus regarding accessibility for low vision and blindness concerns. Historically, the Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies was heavily relied upon for information and access issues on campus, and the department has been overwhelmed with filling that role. The Team worked on a proposal that pertained to universal access to instruction, especially where things have fallen through the cracks, and conducted a survey of students, faculty, and staff in various labs and facilities on campus.

Recommendations were then given, which included identifying different units on campus that could implement change, starting with easy tasks and building to more complex. Multiple issues that need to be addressed on campus include software compliance, proper equipment, and dealing with accessibility to textbooks. Technology access is essential for student success and WMU needs to become current in this area, similar to what peer institutions are doing. In addition to infrastructure needs, new positions are recommended. WMU currently graduates students in Blindness and Low Vision Studies that get hired in positions that work in supporting accessibility at other schools. WMU currently does not have those types of positions. Campus wide training was also deemed necessary. The report is currently under consideration by a committee at the provost level.

2. Charge #8 Review WMU athletics on campus, in terms of cost, facilities, future planning, graduation rates, etc.

Beauregard reported that she and Diane Anderson, vice president for student affairs, and Van Der Kley recently met regarding funding of athletics. She gave background related to funding for the Broncos, which fall under Division I Athletics and Title IX and Gender Equity Compliance. The total number of athletes range between 350 to 400 students. A large part of the allocation that is designated for athletics out of the general fund supports scholarships. Scholarships must adhere to guidelines that are not flexible. A history and analysis of spending was presented. Nearly all colleges and universities do not make money on athletics, even with phenomenal winning seasons due to the steadily rising costs of equipment, travel, etc. The potential for a positive effect on recruitment and enrollment is an important consideration to explore. WMU has a relatively high graduation rate of athletes as well as grade point average compared to other institutions. Discussion ensued related to the University's budget for athletics in relation to the University's mission. A report on funding will also be presented to the Faculty Senate.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn at 4:57 p.m. by Penner, supported by Dakin. Motion passed.

Pat Vander Meer
Recording Secretary