March Faculty Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 13th, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Present: B. Billeaudeaux, K. Brunsting, G. Chaudron, S. Dahman, T. Day (secretary), B. Gonzales, K. Haggerty, C. Harrington, C. Hess, K. Maust, J. McClure, E. McDonald, M. Peeples, G. Neeley, A. Roach-Freiman (chair), J. Roberts, P. Rustomfram, I. Singarella, B. Varner

Welcome

- A. Roach-Freiman

Approval of January Minutes

- J. Roberts moved to approve; C. Hess seconded.

Committee Reports

- ESAC – B. Gonzales
  - ESAC was cancelled. No updates at this time.

- UUC – S. Dahman
  - UUC met on February 14. Updates include the following:
    - The Department of Civil Engineering is now named the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering.
    - Mechanical Engineering approved a new course on Transformative Technology in Engineering.
    - There was a mention of some individuals in manufacturing supervision planning to meet with corporate partners of Blue Oval City.
    - The College of Communication and Fine Arts announced revisions to the core requirements for theater and dance majors, as well as some revisions to the music and music therapy concentrations.
    - There was some feedback from the accreditation review and recommended changes were made to the College of Arts and Sciences; Arts & Sciences also announced a new concentration in child welfare.
    - Voting took place for the AI for All core course requirements:
      - They have received 4 course proposals and since AI technology is evolving rapidly, there may be more courses approved by the beginning of August.

- There was some discussion on the potential overlapping content between the two current AI courses in English and Social Work: Skills & Techniques for Applied AI and AI Literacy for Social Work. Ultimately, there was not much concern about the potential for repetition in these courses; students can learn more/deeply that way, and these are still just the first two approved courses.
        - 4 other University disciplines/colleges are currently working on additional AI course proposals.
      - A committee is being formed to review accelerated bachelor's to master's requirements; it will be chaired by Lawrence Weiss in the College of Health Sciences.
      - There is also currently a group evaluating prior learning for credit options for various programs.

- Faculty Senate – C. Hess
  - Faculty Senate met on February 25. During the meeting, the Senate voted on and approved 3 motions:
    - One specified the ways that elite student auditors can participate in courses. This is part of a program required under Tennessee state law in which people over 65 can freely audit some courses at the University. This motion outlined restrictions on how they can participate in the courses and what permissions are needed to do so. UofM's motion followed models found at UT Knoxville and UT Chattanooga.
    - The Senate approved the final list of candidates for the Faculty Trustee election. Only one candidate submitted documentation, current trustee Jeff Marchetta. There will be an open forum with him on March 19 at 3:00 pm in the UC theater that will also be simultaneously streamed on Teams.
    - The Senate passed a motion requesting that the benefit payments for nine-month faculty be pro-rated and paid over 10 months, rather than the "double dipping" in August and September, which is the current planned structure.
  - Additionally, they received an updated list of proposed faculty handbook changes.
    - The committee has until March 18 to send the final version with all proposed changes. Of note, everything from the previous version related to non-tenure track policies has been removed; they are giving themselves the charge to completely redo those sections next year.
    - The proposed changes include:
      - Page numbers in Table of Contents have been updated, as those were no longer accurate after previous revisions.

- Some proposed changes relate to the processes for the selection of Department Chairs; since we do not have formal Chairs, only Associate Deans, he does not believe this applies to or impacts us.
- This will only apply to tenure-track faculty going up for promotion to full professor, which still requires external reviewers for scholarship activities: If you ever tun into a situation where you cannot get an external reviewer, they now have a new process for documenting what has happened and why; another change is that external reviewers can't just be anyone outside the University, rather they must be people at peer or aspirational peer institutions. Also specified was that candidates up for approval do not have access to the external reviewers in the dossier, even though they do have access to the rest of it. There is also mention that candidates can access redacted external review letters but only after the process is over through the Provost's office.
    - From discussion in the Libraries Faculty meeting, C. Hess said he'll ask about the change to external reviewers needing to be at peer/aspirational peer institutions, considering the difficulty candidates have in finding external reviewers at all.
    - The Office of Institutional Research currently maintains the [list of the peer/aspirational peer institutions](#).
  - This will be voted on during the March 25 meeting.
- During the administrative report, the Provost talked a little about what was then in the guidance from the Dear Colleague letter on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Since then, the Department of Education has released more guidance. C. Hess is sure they will have some follow-ups from him or the President, depending on who is giving the administrative update that month.
- Dr. Owens-Mosby reported that, as of right now, Fall enrollment is not looking good. Related, there has been no update on how much of the proposed salaries from the governor's budget are being covered.
- There were two presentations discussing current faculty feelings on campus:
  - One was the COACHE survey (a nationwide survey), completed last Spring and sent to a select number of Faculty, and reported on by the Provost's Office. There was a particularly low response rate.
    - As part of this survey, all of the colleges are being tasked with creating action plans to try to address the issues that came up through the survey related specifically to each college. G. Chaudron said the Libraries has not been tasked with creating an action plans related to this survey.

- Strengths identified through the survey were departmental engagement. Opportunities ("challenges") identified, meaning they ranked lower compared to peers, included appreciation, recognition, collaboration, departmental collegiality, facilities and work resources, governance, leadership, mentoring, nature of work, tenure expectations, and tenure policies.
  - The other was the annual report from the Ombudsperson; C. Hess recommends that everyone look at this from his notes. There was a 79% increase in contacts and the average time spent per contact went up 95%.

- UCGS – P. Rustomfram
  - UCGS met on March 7. There were several deadline reminders relating to awards and fellowships, including the Morton Theses and Dissertation awards, graduate assistant meritorious teaching awards, part-time master's scholarship awards, UofM Society Inc. Doctoral Fellowships, etc. All of which have a March 17 deadline. There was a reminder about new course proposals: they must come to the committee by March 1 if the college wants them to be adopted for the coming academic year.
  - A new concentration in Civil Engineering was announced: Construction Engineering Management.
    - There is a lot of interest in this area from local companies and currently no public institution in west Tennessee offers a graduate-level construction engineering management program.
  - A new concentration and graduate certificate in Nursing was also announced: Psychiatric Nursing. The courses have already been approved.
  - There was significant discussion around the minimum number of credit hours required for graduate certificates and the number of credit hours that may be shared between two graduate certificates. The maximum number of shared credits for multiple graduate certificates was decided at 3 credit hours.
  - There was also discussion on academic regulations around transfer credit, shared credit, and experiential learning credit. Voting will take place in the next meeting on options for these credits and how many credit hours must be completed at UofM for graduation from any particular program.

- TLAC – K. Brunsting, B. Billeaudeaux
  - There was a big discussion from Dr. Sue Hull-Toye, Assistant CIO, on the Acceptable Use of IT Resources policy draft, which would effectively eliminate our ability to load just any type of software to our work devices (such as personal software or free ware); all downloads would have to go through ITS and/or we'd have to notify our area LSPs of what we already have downloaded. Essentially, they want all software/free ware to be single-sign-on/DUO authentication compatible.

- This has not been implemented; this is still very much in draft form, and they are soliciting feedback from various units on campus.
- An attendee suggested (which was re-iterated by many committee members) a "white list" of approved software that faculty and staff can use and that can be shared campus-wide for exceptions to this policy.
  - There was an update related to new quiz features in Canvas; instructors should be able to seamlessly copy existing quizzes to the new quiz platforms. The Canvas analyze report has been updated to include information on the number of attempts it takes students to get the correct answer. Additionally, there are accessibility-related updates including the integration of assistive technology and improved error feedback. There was also brief discussion on options for course teams to be collapsible/removed from Canvas, as it's causing difficulties for instructors navigating to current classes and teams.
  - MATLAB is no longer enterprise software and there are currently only 50 licenses, so there was some discussion on current/prominent program users.

Topics

- Revised promotion criteria and guideline proposals – A. Roach-Freiman
  - We received 19 votes to approve the revised promotion criteria and guideline proposals shared at last month's meeting. The poll was sent out via email by A. Roach-Freiman. A. Roach-Freiman asked if someone would move to officially approve the revisions.
  - C. Hess moved to approve; S. Dahman seconded.

- Professional Development Funds – J. Roberts
  - We're nearing the end of the fiscal year, so J. Roberts is beginning to look at potentially redistributing the remaining PD funds for the remainder of this fiscal year. Everyone will receive an email on Monday, March 17, with their individual available balance; J. Roberts is asking that we all respond to him by the end of next week with any plans we may have for using additional funds prior to the end of this fiscal year.

- Results from the latest Faculty and Student Surveys – K. Haggerty
  - The survey was developed and sent out in response to our new Strategic Plan KPIs; It also aligns with recent SACS accreditation process and recommendations. The survey has received 140 faculty responses and 103 student responses as of March 12, 2025.
  - Highlights include:
    - In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the physical space of the UL in terms of cleanliness?," faculty rating was a 4.26; student rating was a 4.27.

- In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the physical space of the UL in terms of comfort?," faculty rating was a 4.11; student rating was a 3.93.
- In response to the question, "Have you used any UL resources in the past 12 months?," 110 faculty said yes (18 said no); 79 students said yes (12 said no).
  - The most used resources by faculty were databases/articles, books/ebooks, and research tutorials/guides. The most used resources by students were databases/articles and books/ebooks.
- In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the availability of online and print resources at the UL?," faculty rating was a 3.61; student rating was a 4.09.
- In response to the question, "Have you used any UL services in the past 12 months?," 88 faculty said yes (37 said no); 60 students said yes (29 said no).
  - The most used services by faculty were interlibrary loan, UM3D, and circulation. The most used services by students were spaces to study, interlibrary loan, computers, circulation.
- In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the services provided at the UL?," faculty rating was a 4.36; student rating was a 4.51.
- In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how well does the UL adequately support your research needs?," faculty rating was 3.85.
- In response to the question, "On a scale of 1-5, how well does the UL adequately support your teaching needs?," faculty rating was a 4.00.
- In response to the question, "What would you consider to be the UL's biggest strengths?," top faculty responses were interlibrary loan, libraries faculty/staff, electronic resources, physical space, UM3D. Top student responses were electronic resources, physical space, libraries faculty/staff, interlibrary loan.
- In response to the question, "In what ways could the UL be improved?," top faculty responses were more electronic resources, better promotion of services/resources/programs, and more print books. Top student responses were more electronic resources, better promotion of services/resources/programs, more print books, improved cleanliness/comfort.

- Open discussion / Dr. Chaudron updates
  - We have been told to expect a 1.5% budget cut for this coming fiscal year (which is just under $110,000).
    - There will be a series of budget presentations next Monday from administrative units. The University Libraries has not been invited to give a presentation.
    - The Provost did tell G. Chaudron that he hoped to speak with him at some point to discuss the budget, especially since it was cut pretty significantly last year and is anticipated to be cut again for this coming year. He seems

sympathetic to these cuts and the challenges we're facing, but G. Chaudron is not sure of how much freedom or power the Provost has with the CFO.

- G. Chaudron will share K. Haggerty's survey results with him to provide some evidence and indications of the impact of our general lack of funding.
- G. Chaudron has asked C. Harrington to begin looking at potential cuts to journal packages in light of this expected budget cut; they are looking at actually cutting beyond the 1.5%, especially because enrollment is still expected to decrease for the next few years as the University continues to work out its recruitment strategies, meaning there would likely be further cuts. Additionally, this approach allows the Libraries to be more strategic and selective on what gets cut.

- K. Brunsting asked, on behalf of a staff member, if the President will be visiting staff areas on his March 19 visit for the "President's Perspective" video series; G. Chaudron said he's not sure and has received little information on the plans. However, the focus of the video will be on areas/programs related to student use and is likely marketing-driven, so he doubts they will be visiting staff work areas.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.