

Approved February 2, 2005

Discussion Notes of a Meeting of the
Leadership Council
Wednesday, January 12, 2005
Timme Center for Student Services

Call to Order

President David L. Eisler called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

In Attendance

Dan Burcham, Adnan Dakkuri, Rick Duffett, Dave Eisler, Rick Griffin, Michael Harris, Maria Knirk, Karen Paine, and Tom Weaver.

Guest: Roxanne Cullen

Discussion Notes from December 1, 2004 - The discussion notes were reviewed. No changes were noted.

New Appointments - Michael Harris introduced and welcomed Roxanne Cullen, the new Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, and reported two other recent appointments - Matt Klein, appointed as Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, and Nancy Peterson-Klein, who will assume the position of Associate Dean of the Michigan College of Optometry in April 2005. He noted it was a very good sign that there were numerous internal candidates applying for these positions. Roxanne Cullen extended her appreciation to Michael Harris for the opportunity to work in the division of Academic Affairs, and to the members of the council for allowing her to participate today.

Freedom to Learn project - Michael Harris reported that the University has received \$3.7 million from the State of Michigan for the Freedom to Learn project. The project involves the use of technology in the classroom and how we study it, the impact it can have, etc. Major benefits include that it will enhance our relevance to what's going on in the state, and for the state's well being. The project will be operated out of the division of Academic Affairs, with Roxanne Cullen and Dean Michelle Johnston actively involved. Dave Eisler extended his appreciation to Scott Hill-Kennedy for his early foresight and tireless efforts on this project. It will likely impact thousands of students and teachers.

Academic Senate - Adnan Dakkuri reported that the Academic Senate yesterday approved a revised academic program review guideline that has significant changes over the previous one.

Administration and Finance - Rick Duffett distributed a copy of the annual Ferris Foundation Report, and provided discussion on the Michigan Universities Coalition on

Health (MUCH). A preliminary presentation will be made to the Board in February. MUCH is scheduled to be implemented for people on the Ferris Flex Plan in July 2005.

Student Government - Maria Knirk reported on her first meeting as President of the Student Government. She reported that the meeting went smoothly, and that the focus of the organization's efforts include improved communication (both internally and externally), and diversity. She also reported that they are investigating the feasibility of Discount Card Programs for downtown businesses.

Student Affairs - Dan Burcham reported on e-mails and discussions relative to a tsunami relief fund. There will be a meeting to share ideas on how to help. Enrollment figures are within 25 students, as of same time last year, and it appears we will be up 60-70 students total this semester. Rick Griffin provided a potential contact for Dan Burcham to assist in our tsunami relief efforts.

President's Update - Dave Eisler reported that the university has registered close to 11,000 students, which would be the largest winter semester ever. He provided an analysis on the Cherry Commission Report, and indicated we will need to enhance our work with community colleges. He has been appointed to the Michigan Higher Education Commission and the Council of Labor and Economic Growth

AFSCME - Tom Weaver provided information regarding his concerns in the reductions for next year in the state budget. He expressed his concerns regarding the number of students performing university work and the future service needs at the university. He also expressed concern for funding so that the quality of facility maintenance and food production will not suffer, and expressed the need for increased communication of the administration's actions. Tom Weaver provided additional information regarding health insurance concerns. He extended his hope that the university will find a viable means of keeping costs down. He provided an example of a need for increased communication to employees regarding their health care coverage and benefits, and the workload on the Human Resources department.

University Planning - Dave Eisler provided information on the University-wide Task Forces Synthesis and Selected Recommendations process, indicating that feedback is very positive. He reported that university-wide priorities were developed, including the need to examine our message, to address outcomes, and to measure student engagement. The priorities include the development of a replacement cycle for replacing computers and a meshed wireless network, and developing a funding formula that rewards colleges for enrollment growth. In the unit action planning process, departmental materials are due back March 1; campus-wide presentations will be March 31 and April 1. The model for campus planning translates a broad vision into specific areas of focus. All information is available online. He reviewed the timelines of the planning process, including the capital campaign, and reported that we will focus on developing confidence in the university and envisioning what we can become.

Campus Master Plans – Dave Eisler provided information on the new draft campus master plans. These seek to organize campus around academic functions, including the creation of an academic core around the quad; the creation of a health care quad around Lake Andrews; and removing academic functions from residence hall buildings. He provided information on several options/ideas surrounding the future of Pennock Hall. He would like to see an entirely air-conditioned campus in the future. On student housing, he reported on the request for proposal to tear down East Campus Apartments and make townhouse apartments, using partnerships, and the maintenance of those facilities. He indicated this will be replacing, not adding housing. He reported that he has heard discussion regarding a proposal from students for remodeling Rankin Center, and would like to see this include a lecture hall for 150 people. The draft Master Plans will be presented to the Trustees in February. He provided information on the Grand Rapids Master Plan, including an overview of the buildings and future maintenance/remodeling needs, and parking.

At 9:58 a.m., the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Karen K. Paine