

Rochester Community and Technical College
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Faculty Shared Governance Council
Minutes for Tuesday, April 28, 2009 – 2:00 p.m. – AT109

Present: Administration Bequette, Hansmann, Supalla
Faculty Atwood, Guenette, Israelson, Marconett, Martinez, O'Bryan, Wright (Chair)
Recorder: Kingsbury
Guests: Engelmeyer

ITEM 1 (A) Search Update – Engelmeyer distributed the latest search update spreadsheet, noting several faculty positions have been filled since the last meeting. Engelmeyer also announced that the College would be participating in a state-wide webinar regarding retirement and the webinar is available to everyone. Wright expressed his appreciation to Engelmeyer for setting a pleasant tone for the Human Resource Office to work cooperatively with the faculty. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 1 (F) Class Size – Wright announced the faculty do not support increasing class size and do not believe a rationale was presented that justified such changes. Wright also expressed his desire for the decision to be reconsidered or at least placed on hold until next year. Wright went on to say that the increase in workload may jeopardize the quality of instruction, and RCTC should be looked to as the leader (understanding quality of instruction and workload) and not follow what the other colleges are doing (increasing class size). Furthermore, Wright requested it be stated for the record that the decision to increase the class size was not supported by faculty at any committee level. Supalla responded discussions were held and are documented through AASC meeting minutes, of which faculty have a responsibility to read the minutes of such meetings. Supalla added the financial conditions are requiring efficiencies and one way to add efficiency is through class size. Supalla also stated, although the phased changes are being implemented, it does not preclude the College from reviewing the progress in a year and further discussing whether the initiative should continue to move forward as proposed, be modified, or suspended. Wright expressed his appreciation for Administration's willingness to review again in the future. ACTION: The College will implement phase one of increasing class sizes.

ITEM 7 (A) – Policy Reviews:

- a) **Academic Program Review Policy (3.36) Third Reading** – Wright stated the faculty believe the workload being done by the Program Leaders/Division Coordinators already surpasses the workload intended in the contract for the amount of release time credits awarded. Wright added he understands under the current budget situation that work needs to be spread around, but added there is a point when the work may not be sustainable. Wright suggested one way to reduce the workload is to reduce the number of hours Program Leaders/Division Coordinators spend in meetings a month. In addition, Wright suggested that the issues at those meetings remain more focused. Supalla responded the suggestions are good, but faculty need to have those conversations with Bequette and the Academic Deans, adding it would be helpful to know the specifics of what issues the faculty are dealing with that are not appropriate for those meetings. Wright responded the faculty would support the policy changes with the understanding that continued conversations would take place on the priority issues and workload of the Program Leaders/Division Coordinators. ACTION: Faculty support the policy revisions under the condition that additional conversations be held with Bequette and the Academic Deans.

- b) **Academic Standards Policy (3.17.3) Third Reading** – Wright stated the faculty do not support the revised policy because it is confusing and vague. Bequette responded that he consulted with Office of the Chancellor Staff and they indicated one year was too long of a period of time before scrutinizing a change; adding many MnSCU institutions limit a change to one semester. Supalla suggested Wright and Bequette work together to re-write Part 3 of the Policy to make it more clear. ACTION: Wright and Bequette will re-write Part 3 of the Policy and return for a Fourth Reading.

- c) **Intercollegiate Athletics (2.6) –Second Reading** – Wright reported the faculty support the revisions to the current policy. ACTION: The Intercollegiate Athletics policy was approved.
- d) **Tobacco Free Campus (5.18.2) –Second Reading** – Wright reported the faculty support the new Tobacco Free Campus policy. ACTION: The Tobacco Free Campus policy will continue to move through the proper policy review process with students and the other bargaining unions.

ITEM 2 (A) Budget/Tuition– Supalla reported the FY10 budget is being developed based on a worst case scenario (10% budget reduction and a 5% tuition increase, including a buy-down). Supalla added there is currently no consideration of staff reductions or program closures, however several position remain unfilled. Hansmann added fees will not increase, including the parking fee. Supalla added there may be some shifting of expenditures between funds (i.e. institutional student help may be paid out of auxiliary enterprise funds). ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 4 (A) Red Flag Regulations – Cram reported the College is responsible to ensure student information is secure; hence a local task force is working on developing materials to be shared campus-wide to protect our students from identity theft. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (F) Dean Replacement – Israelson reported the faculty voted unanimously to recommend not replacing the Dean of Teaching and Learning during the interim, adding it is an opportunity to examine how the College does things, and with the tight budgets, determining which duties are essential and which may be placed on hold (i.e. eliminating faculty evaluations for one year). Wright added the vacancy may be a great opportunity to look at reorganizing Teaching and Learning with one less Dean. Bequette confirmed that initial discussions have been held with the remaining three Deans to determine what tasks could be postponed and what duties could be redistributed should the Dean position remain vacant for one year. Bequette and Supalla confirmed no definite decision will be made on the replacement of the Dean until a clearer understanding of the budget is determined in the next few weeks. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 5 (A) 2010-2011 Academic Calendar Draft – Bequette stated WSU has requested RCTC reconsider adjusting spring break to align with WSU’s calendar to meet the needs of co-enrolled students. Specifically, WSU would agree to delay spring break by one week if RCTC is willing to move spring break up one week. Although a common spring break would be beneficial, it was noted RCTC postpones spring break to accommodate nursing and law enforcement needs, and to provide ample time for winter sports to conclude before spring sports begins. ACTION: The 2010-2011 calendar will not change.

ITEM 4 (F) Charter Schools – Wright questioned if Administration was considering sponsoring a new charter school. Supalla confirmed conversations have taken place for a new online charter school. Wright stated he believed MnSCU was scrutinizing more carefully the charter school sponsorships of colleges. Supalla responded MnSCU has never been involved in the decisions of institutions to sponsor charter schools in the past, and was not aware of any directive by MnSCU to scrutinize any differently. Wright questioned what role faculty had in the shared governance process to consider charter school sponsorships, adding with the departure of one academic Dean, whether taking on additional responsibilities of a new charter school was appropriate. Supalla confirmed the responsibilities and work load of the Dean is just one factor being considered in making the decision to sponsor or not. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (A) R&R Project– Hansmann shared an update on the R&R Projects, including the Heintz Center Roof Project, moving the HVAC machines inside the buildings, expansion of the West Parking Lot, and repairs to Memorial Hall. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 9 (A) Summer Meetings – Because many faculty are not on campus during the summer, the May and June meetings will be canceled. ACTION: The May and June Faculty Shared Governance Council meetings will be canceled unless pressing issues arise needing immediate attention.

Adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

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| NEXT MEETING: May 11, 2009 – 2:00 p.m. |
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