Rochester Community and Technical College
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Faculty Shared Governance Council
Minutes for August 28, 2012 – 2:00 p.m. – SS209

Present: Atwood, Gross, Israelson (Chair), Supalla, Tweeten, Vrieze, Engelmeyer (Guest), Kingsbury (Recorder)

ITEM 1 (A) Staffing Update – Engelmeyer reported that a search for an Assistant Director of Financial Aid is underway (MAPE position), adding the position would be a temporary appointment to provide an opportunity for the College to watch what transpires with the Campus Service Cooperative before making a final decision on a permanent posting; the Safety Officer classification was upgraded and a second search is underway; and two College Lab Assistant searches are underway for part-time positions in the Learning Center and the Science Labs. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 6 (A) Presidential Search – Engelmeyer reported that a call will be going out this week for all constituency groups to nominate representatives by the September 17th to serve on the upcoming Presidential Search. Israelson questioned how many faculty would be appointed to serve, and Engelmeyer responded the Chancellor and the Chair will make the decisions on the membership, but if there is a desire to have four faculty serve, then eight faculty should be nominated to ensure the Chancellor has a diverse pool from which to consider. Engelmeyer also reported that the College is required to have a public Presidential Search website prominently posted on the main website, and the Public Relations Department will maintain the website to ensure the dedicated pages have the most up-to-date information on the search. Engelmeyer added members of the search consultant firm hired by MnSCU will be on campus to meet with as many constituency groups (including legislators and community members) as possible, to ensure as many people from both the campus and the community are engaged in the process. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 2 (F) Campus Master Site Plan – Supalla reported that the UCR Facilities Master Plan was presented and approved by the system office over the summer, and a copy of the final plan and presentation materials are posted on the Intranet website. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (F & A) Fall Semester Start-Up Assessment – Supalla questioned if the faculty had any comments or suggestions for improving the WOW Weekend or the first week of the semester. Israelson responded he did not hear any major concerns, and Atwood added having Educational Technology staff in the computer labs the first day of the semester dramatically reduced the frustration level of the students with login or other computer problems, resulting in the classes running smoother. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 4 (A) MnSCU Dashboard Update – Supalla reported that the College was not required to respond to the red and gold statuses on the MnSCU dashboard, but were strongly encouraged to share the best practices for obtaining a gold standing in the Facilities Condition Index, and to share plans to improve the red standing in Retention and Completion. Israelson stated it was a goal of faculty leadership to work with Academic Affairs in whatever way they can to improve the retention and completion numbers for the upcoming year. ACTION: Israelson and Gross will have further discussions on improving the Retention and Completion numbers in the upcoming year. The updated red and gold narratives are posted on the MnSCU Accountability website.

ITEM 5 (A) Faculty Release Time Position Description (Credit Equivalency Assignment Form) – Gross reported that Program Leaders/DIVISION Coordinators (PL/DC) have position descriptions, but there is a need for one that defined the objectives and expectations of other assignments. Israelson indicated the biggest issue he fields is how do faculty get access to the positions. Gross responded it is the recommendation of the Academic Deans to put out a call/notice to determine interest when there is a need for a new appointment. Further discussions occurred on the advantages of continuity from year to year, but also the desire for new ideas to be generated by new appointees, and the desire to avoid a faculty member having a “monopoly” on any given assignment. Gross stated it is his desire to ensure equity, yet retain flexibility and the freedom to choose based on talents and skill sets. It was suggested that perhaps the appointments could be made similar to those of PL/DC where you serve a two year term so others have the opportunity to champion the initiative as well. Israelson stated adding term limits eliminates favoritism, or at least the perception of it. Gross responded he supports limited terms; however renewal
by mutual agreement would also be an option. In addition, Gross announced the Academic Deans would go through an exercise with the form to ensure assignments align with the College’s priorities. Tweeten and Israelson stated some faculty have considered not accepting the release time because they don’t want it to undermine what it is they want to do, however, with a document that outlines duties and expectations, it does provide a means of justifying why a release-time credit is reduced or increased based on changes in the expectations from year to year. ACTION: Gross will work with the Deans to establish a Credit Equivalency Assignment document for release time (with the exception of PL/DC) and put out a call to determine which faculty are interested in the current vacant special assignment(s).

ITEM 7 (F) Overload Assignments – Israelson and Atwood questioned the process that is followed in determining which faculty member is assigned overload. Gross responded, although it is management’s right to assign, overload is very infrequent and those done for FYEX classes are based on whether the faculty member is qualified to teach FYEX or not. In addition, Gross added it was his presumption that Deans (in consultation with faculty and departments) find the best mix, which may result in the appearance of inconsistency. Israelson recognized management’s right to assign, but suggested (for continuity) that overload be assigned on a rotation basis, similar to what is done for summer rotation. ACTION: Gross will share with the Academic Deans the suggestion about rotating overload assignments.

ITEM 8 (F) Length of Classes/Schedule – Atwood questioned who is responsible to ensure the contact hours are consistent throughout the schedule to meet the credit hour requirements for a course, noting that there was a summer class taught by one instructor that did not meet the same length of hours as an equivalent course taught by another instructor. Gross responded it was his belief that the incident that occurred over the summer was an innocent error, and, the responsibility lies with everyone (Academic Dean, Faculty Member, Scheduler, etc.), but when problems occur, it is ultimately the Academic Dean and Gross that are accountable. Gross added it may start out as a clerical error in the preparation of the schedule, but if a faculty member becomes aware of the discrepancy, the faculty member also has a responsibility to bring the discrepancy to the Academic Deans’ attention so the error is corrected. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 9 (A) Facilities Update – In Schmall’s absence, Supalla shared information under Finance and Facilities, including an update on the WorkForce Center co-location project, HealthForce move to Heintz Center, update on the Safety Officer search, shifting of responsibilities in the absence of the Intermediate Accounting Officer, annual audit, and also requested faculty participation on various committees and subcommittees for the upcoming year. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 10 (A) Textbook Ordering – Gross indicated there are still looming questions about complying with the new legislative mandate on textbook ordering timelines, specifically as it relates to customized textbooks, added sections, and changes in faculty assignments. Gross also provided an example where students purchased textbooks, but then a different instructor was assigned the class at the last minute and the students were expected to return the original textbooks and purchase a different book, which resulted in a cost to the Bookstore. Gross also shared an example where students were unable to return textbooks because they were bundled and/or an access code was opened before they were returned the Bookstore, resulting in a cost to the student. A discussion followed on both the cost of such changes to both the student and the College, and the academic freedom of faculty to select a textbook that best fits their teaching style. Tweeten questioned how often textbook changes occur, and how much of an expense to the Bookstore/Student does it cost with the process change. Vrieze responded she didn’t believe the issue was about cost, but rather the issue is about academic freedom and faculty may teach a certain way, and they need a textbook that reflects that teaching style. Israelson reminded everyone that the 45 day deadline is a legislative mandate (not a local directive), and he is hopeful that more thought is given to the issue during the next legislative session resulting in a refinement of the legislation for clarity in the future. ACTION: Both Gross and Faculty will do what they can to work through this isolated issue.

Adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: September 25, 2012 – 2:00 p.m. – SS209