Rochester Community and Technical College
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF)
Faculty Shared Governance Council Meeting
Minutes for November 25, 2014 – 2:00 p.m. – SS209

Present: Atwood, Gross, Israelson (Chair), Martinez, McClellon, Schmall, Vrieze, Kingsbury (Recorder)

ITEM 1 (A) Program Closure Update – McClellon reported meetings have taken place with the advisory boards for both the Equine and Occupational Skills programs, and both have requested their program status be changed from closure to suspension in order to allow them time to revamp the programs. Occupational Skills plans to review existing agencies in the community to determine a way to work with those agencies to serve the students, understanding the program would close after a one year suspension. The Equine Advisory Board members have proposed the program be allowed to continue to enroll students, and be given until 2016 to prove the program can be successful. McClellon stated the issue with Equine is beyond recruitment, but rather deals with the retention of the students after they enroll, and Pyfferoen and Gross have been charged with establishing measure to be used in determining what would be expected of the program. McClellon stated she has received several comments from community members supporting the Equine program close, but she is willing to hold off on making a final decision until after further review and consultation with the advisory board. If the two programs close, McClellon reiterated a teach out plan will be in place for currently enrolled students. ACTION: Administration will continue to review the status of the programs and provide an update at the next meeting.

ITEM 2 (A) Strategic Planning Update – McClellon reported six consulting firms originally indicated an interest in submitting a proposal for the Strategic Planning RFP, but only three actually submitted proposals by the deadline. Israelson questioned what the role of the consulting firm will be in the process, as well as the role of the task force members. Schmall responded the first step is for Cabinet to decide if all three vendors will be invited to present proposals as a way to understand their methodology in working through the strategic planning process, then the faculty and staff that participate in the presentations will be given an opportunity to share their feedback on the vendors, and the task force will make the final decision on which vendor/proposal to accept. The actual strategic planning process will begin in January, and include confidential forums with various constituency groups, including community members. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (A) SEMC Update – McClellon announced Martinez was added to the SEMC steering team as a faculty leadership representative, and asked Martinez how he felt the meetings were going. Martinez responded the discussions have been interesting, especially having an opportunity to hear the perspective of non-faculty on topics, and the overlap in the processes also provides different perspectives on issues. Martinez also added the plan is to have minutes from the meetings shared through SharePoint was great, but added items relating to curriculum still need to go through AASC, and non-curriculum items need to go through FSGC (i.e. statements like 100% of the faculty will use D2L can be made, but aren’t realistic expectations.) Martinez also stated it would be helpful to bring issues to FSGC first to get faculty perspective on policies, then take to SEMC, and return back to FSGC for an official faculty position. Gross confirmed policy changes will go through the proper meet and confer process, but added the Academic Affairs Work Group will also actively engage the faculty points of view just because they meet more frequently. Martinez agreed it is good to get the input of other, but to ensure the implementation of any policy change is going to be effective, there needs to be trust and transparency in the process; reiterating discussions can’t be just at SEMC, but needs to incorporate AASC and FSGC. A discussion followed regarding policy and procedure changes, and the rationale for those changes include such areas as risk management, liability to the College, and often just fall under good business practices. Another discussion followed on the role of the representatives on SEMC and the Work Groups, and how information is communicated to the various constituency groups. Martinez stated he believes it is not the responsibility of the faculty on the committees to share what is being discussed, but rather the communication should be through the minutes of the work groups and the minutes of FSGC; and then when faculty have questions, the faculty may bring those questions to the attention of the faculty leadership. Israelson added committee updates are discussed at the Faculty Senate meetings, so there is a report out of what is happening in the meetings. Israelson questioned what types of policies or processes may cause a risk management issue. Schmall and McClellon shared examples, such as the need for mandatory P-Card training, Employee Emeritus Policy (which may violate the State of Minnesota Code of Conduct), and fundraising by certain groups (which may violate federal regulations for grants). ACTION: Information Only.
ITEM 4 (A) Institutional Effectiveness – McClellon provided an update on her plans to establish a Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer position, and appoint an interim in the position for an 18 month contract. McClellon reminded everyone the position would be responsible for many key areas of the College (institutional research, strategic planning, accreditation, and grants). Martinez questioned if it would be possible for a task force to review the person’s resume before McClellon made the appointment, noting the more transparent the appointment, the higher the trust level. Atwood added faculty understand the President has the authority to make personnel changes in the organization’s structure, but the more people involved in the review process, the more the transparency. McClellon agreed to establish a small group to review the individual’s resume, but noted Administration hires faculty to teach, and trusts the faculty to do that; and the President is hired to lead, and would hope to be given the same trust to do that; but ultimately it is the president of the college that is held accountable for what happens at the College. Martinez stated the minutes from the September and October FSGC meetings have not yet been published, which is causing some mistrust, and the more administration communicates, the stronger the trust and the easier it is for everyone to understand the reasons for change. Other than meeting minutes, McClellon questioned what other mechanisms should be used to help communicate changes occurring, noting a lot of issues come up on a daily basis that don’t occur during a meeting, but rather through the regular course of doing business; and when issues arise, especially those that may cause a risk management issue for the College, the issues are immediately addressed without a meeting or minutes to communicate the change. Martinez responded the current communication vehicles are meeting minutes, Crossings, e-mails, and being visible on campus, noting meetings and conversations need to include a two-way communication. Israelson agreed the President doesn’t need to obtain faculty approval to make changes, such as adding a structure for institutional effectiveness, but if the faculty and staff know ahead of time the needs, the acceptance of the change goes smoother. Schmall stated it may be just communicating the needs of the College and the fact we have nobody or no position in the current College structure to take care of those necessities.

ACTION: A task force, which will include Schmall and a member of FSGC, will review the vita of the individual being appointed Interim Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer before McClellon officially makes the interim appointment for an 18 month period.

ITEM 5 (A) SLATE Council – Gross reported the SLATE Council plans to focus on restarting the lunch and learn sessions and rebuilding the assessment efforts. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 6 (A) Academic Program Review – Gross provided an update on the Academic Program Review, including the use of data galleries, which were developed by a faculty member. Vrieze and Martinez agreed the galleries have been very useful, and Israelson added the steps taken have drastically made improvements from what was done previously. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 7 (A) Space on Campus – Schmall reported a task force is being established to review the use of space at the Heintz Center, and the leadership of RCTC and WSU are also reviewing space needs, noting reports have reflected space on campus is currently underutilized, and the plan is to locate people appropriately. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 8 (A) Library Hours – Gross distributed information on the possibility of modifying the library hours, including a proposal to close the library at 9:00 pm, Mondays through Thursdays. Gross added, however, that the hours of the library are interwoven with technology and the learning center, so a broader conversation is needed before a recommendation will be made. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 9 (A) Friends of the Family Fund – McClellon announced the Friends of the Family Fund established through donations by employees was moved to the Foundation a few years ago, but it has been determined that the Foundation is not appropriately authorized to run such funds through their financial books; hence the Foundation has stated the balance in the account must be dissolved, and since it was started by the three local unions (MSCF, AFSCME, and MAEP), the Foundation needs to decide what the unions want done with the dollars. McClellon reminded everyone that if those that made donations into the account wish to have their donations returned to them, it would be classified as income for tax purposes. ACTION: McClellon will coordinate a meeting between the three unions and the Foundation to determine how to disburse the funds.

Adjourned at 3:37 p.m.