Rochester Community and Technical College
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Faculty Shared Governance Council
Minutes for September 24, 2013 – 2:00 p.m. – SS209

Present: Atwood, Gross, Israelson (Chair), O’Kane, Schmall, Tweeten, Vrieze, Kingsbury (Recorder)

ITEM 1 (A) Presidential Search – O’Kane announced that her responsibility as Interim President is to focus on the work of the College, and Engelmeyer has been assigned the responsibility to serve as the liaison to work with the search chair (Scott Olson) on the College’s Presidential Search. It was also reported that the make-up of the search team this year will include all new members, and interest will be solicited by employees, students and the community within the next few weeks. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 2 (A) 100th Anniversary Celebration – O’Kane reported that the College will be celebrating a 100th Anniversary in September of 2015, and the Foundation has accepted the responsibility to focus on the celebration, while the College uses the event as a marketing tool to recruit. O’Kane added funds originally allocated for the Celebration will now be re-allocated for other strategic initiatives that more directly focus on teaching and learning. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (F) Class Sizes – Israelson reported that some faculty have shared their understanding that the class size increases implemented under the former Vice President of Academic Affairs was only to be a temporary solution for economic reasons. Gross responded the topic of class sizes was raised recently at a Program Leader/Division Coordinator meeting, but that he was not aware of any agreements made by his predecessor. Gross added some faculty have communicated their interest in resuming the honor program classes; adding he is open to having conversations regarding appropriate class sizes for those classes. In addition, Gross stated that many conditions could have led to the action of increasing class sizes at the time, and he believed similar conditions probably exist today. O’Kane stated financially the College is in good shape for FY14, but there are too many uncertainties for next year to make any decisions now on reducing class sizes. O’Kane also noted that class sizes may affect faculty workloads, but there has been no research to indicate class sizes affect student success. O’Kane and Gross also stated that if the faculty believe it would be beneficial for Leadership to attend a Faculty Senate meeting to discuss the budget, they are both open to an invitation to attend. ACTION: Vrieze will share a copy of the e-mail communication announcing the class size increases from 2011. O’Kane will share data from Minneapolis Community and Technical College that there appears to be no correlation between class sizes and student success.

ITEM 4 (A) College Advisory Team – O’Kane walked through the current committee structure that includes all-college committees, subcommittees, and rapid response teams, but noted that there currently is no structure in place that brings all union leadership around the table with Administration to discuss topics of the College as a whole. O’Kane added that she had initially considered creating an advisory team that would be campus-wide as an avenue to vent ideas as a pilot under her tenure, but with the amount of time it would take to establish, she no longer believes realistically that is possible during the remaining time she has as interim president. Israelson concurred that it would be difficult to establish such a structure in the time remaining, and added that it is already difficult to recruit faculty members to serve on the already existing committees. Tweeten stated she often struggles with the silos that exist in the All-College Committee structure, and added an advisory team may help disseminate information so it is valuable for the campus as a whole. O’Kane stated that there are other committee structure models throughout higher education, and with college communication becoming a vital few project under AQIP, she would be willing to further investigate other structure models. Gross added he also has contacts that he would be willing to talk with to get ideas for committee structures. Israelson responded that the faculty are open to discussing further if it makes the committee structure more effective. ACTION: Gross and O’Kane will further investigate college committee structure models in higher education.

ITEM 5 (A) Budget Update – O’Kane distributed a handout that highlights the current enrollment profile, adding the data was also shared recently in the College Crossings. Schmall distributed a financial spreadsheet that reflects the effects of the FYE decline, emphasizing that a 5% change in FYE equates to approximately $1.1 million dollars to the budget bottom line. O’Kane stated that career and technical programs are often discussed when enrollment declines, but in reality, liberal arts accounts for approximately 65% of the College’s enrollment; and of the 5% decline for fall semester, liberal arts disciplines account for approximately 75% of the total FYE lost. Tweeten responded developmental education faculty understand and see the decline, but faculty as a whole need to be aware of the data. O’Kane questioned what the percentage of liberal arts credits equate to developmental education, and
Gross responded he was working on acquiring that data. A discussion followed on assumptions as to why the enrollment decline (i.e., economy, low unemployment, etc.). Schmall also distributed staffing graphs reflecting how RCTC measures up against sister MnSCU institutions of similar size. O’Kane stated that the College faces challenges in the upcoming years, but also assured the faculty that decision making will be driven only after a clear picture is created with informative data; adding a conscious effort will be made to fund strategic initiatives that directly impact enrollment and student success. ACTION: Israelson will encourage the faculty to review the enrollment profile data published in the Crossings. Schmall will add a legend to the staffing graphs to define the data points.

ITEM 6 (A) Faculty Layoff November 1 Deadline – Gross shared the process that will be followed in determining whether there will be any faculty layoff notices issued before the November 1st deadline; adding he is optimistic about enrollment, but realistically (considering the trends) he understands financially he needs to think pessimistically for the upcoming year. Gross stated there will be no snap decisions made with regard to program closures, but rather the plan is to review a three year trend, specific by department, and he invited faculty to participate in the data analysis. Israelson expressed his appreciation to Gross for inviting the faculty to be part of the review process. Atwood questioned if staff would also be considered in the equation as it relates to layoffs. Gross assured the faculty that everything will be considered, however faculty layoffs require an early notification; consequently, those discussions are necessary now to meet the November 1st deadline. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 7 (A) House Capital Investment Committee Visit – O’Kane reported that the House Capital Investment Committee will be visiting the campus on October 8, 2013 to learn about the MnSCU/RCTC Capital Bonding requests, including the Plaza/Memorial Hall project. O’Kane thanked Israelson for being a part of the presentation through a testimonial at the visit with regard to how the projects impacts students. ACTION: Faculty will share through Israelson input on the project, and the impact to students and learning.

ITEM 8 (A) Charting the Future Draft Report/Dialogue Forums – O’Kane encouraged faculty to participate in one of the upcoming Charting the Future Dialogue Forums, and to share their input through the online website. Israelson responded that the absence of transfer in the report is of concern to the faculty, as well as the reference on changes to modify existing bargaining agreements. O’Kane agreed that the lack of transfer in the report was a concern of hers as well, adding it could easily be a seventh priority. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 9 (A) November Staff Development Day – O’Kane announced years of service awards will be recognized at the November Staff Development Day, and requested faculty input on themes for breakout session. Tweeten responded it would be beneficial to hear from students on how they moved through the system, and also best practices as it relates to retention. Gross requested faculty volunteers to help plan the day’s activities. ACTION: Israelson will forward to O’Kane and Gross faculty names interested in serving on the planning committee.

ITEM 10 (A) AQIP Strategy Forum – O’Kane announced who would be participating in this year’s AQIP Strategy Forum team, noting the goal of the forum is to identify what the College wants to focus on, and determine the direction the College will take to achieve effective outcomes. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 11 (F) Counseling Office Coverage – Atwood reported that a faculty member had an irate student that needed the assistance of someone in counseling/advising; unfortunately, when the student was brought to the department, everyone was out of the office, including the support staff. Atwood questioned if there was a defined protocol that should be followed during such student emergencies. Gross agreed that the proper steps to follow include walking the student to the advising/counseling area, and if the student is in a crisis mode, connecting them with a counselor; however, he would need to visit with the Academic Dean of the area to determine what happened in this particular situation. Atwood added that this particular student was adamant that she not meet with a male counselor, which also raises the question of what protocol to follow when the College does not have a female counselor. ACTION: Gross will follow-up with Ginny Boyum on the situation and report back to Atwood and Israelson.

Adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: October 22, 2013 – 2:00 p.m. – SS209