

UMUC FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL (FAC)
REPORT TO THE FACULTY
August 2009

The UMUC Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) meets monthly to consider issues of concern to faculty. Here is a report of the status of those issues. Faculty will be updated on these and other issues throughout the year.

Course Development

The last FAC report included information about course development at UMUC. After that information appeared, the FAC became aware of new information about an effort that is underway at UMUC to develop courses with a scalability of common course elements while allowing flexibility for individual instructors. A committee consisting of members from the Office of Instructional Services and Support and the School of Undergraduate Studies (SUS) spent much of last year reviewing the process and recently produced two new manuals—one for academic directors to use in planning for new courses and course revisions; the other for course teams that develop courses, learning objects, and faculty guides. The provost will review and share those manuals with FAC and ultimately decide whether to adopt them. For more information, visit the FAC blog at <http://www-apps.umuc.edu/blog/fac>.

Midterm Pay for Adjuncts

Last month FAC recommended a new policy that would require UMUC to pay adjuncts part of their earnings 30 days into the term. The Provost has discussed the initiative with a few administrators but has not yet reached a decision. He asked for clarification as to whether the request was to receive half of the earnings at the 30-day point or 30 days of pay at the 30-day point. FAC believes either would be acceptable, so long as adjunct faculty members do not have to wait more than a month to receive the first installment of their earnings, as they currently do.

Notifying the Faculty of Changes in Contract Dates

Nine-month collegiate faculty members (“NOLs”) did not receive their annual contracts during the timeframe they have received contract announcements in the past. If the procedure has changed, the faculty should be informed of the change. The administration wants to find a better way to see that people receive their contracts on time. Also, the Provost wants to publish a calendar so that faculty members will be able to keep track of important contract dates more easily.

Early Proctored Final Exams in Europe

During this summer term in Europe, instructors were told to present their proctored final exams during week 8 of a 10-week term. The reasoning is that European field representatives are busily registering students for the upcoming fall semester during week 10 of the summer term and cannot proctor and register students at the same time.

The following are some possible solutions offered by FAC:

- a. Make the midterm the proctored exam for the summer term.
- b. Cut the summer term to eight weeks. In doing so, the summer term would have to be advertised as a term of intense study, similar to traditional summer terms in stateside universities.

The provost will speak to the director of the European division before making any decisions. He was interested in the idea of offering proctored midterm exams. FAC noted that a proctored midterm exam in all divisions would make the university more efficient.

FAC Participation in Faculty Handbook Revision

FAC has been given an excellent overview of the revision process currently underway. Several FAC members wish to ensure that important policies are added to the handbook. These include:

1. The new definition of academic rigor
2. The five-course, four-course, and three-course contracts for limited numbers of adjuncts
3. The policy for transferring from foreign divisions to the stateside program

FAC has requested that a FAC committee review the handbook to make additional recommendations. The provost's response was that FAC should make suggestions or recommendations after the administration works through its initial phase of the updating process. Those FAC recommendations could be accepted or vetoed by the administration.

999s for Faculty

A FAC member noted she had talked to the provost about setting up independent 999s where faculty could communicate with their elected representatives. Adjuncts could communicate with adjuncts, graduate school faculty members could communicate with other graduate school faculty members, and so on.

This idea was put forward to the provost, who thought it was a worthwhile endeavor but said he didn't know how logistically to handle such a large task. SUS and the Graduate School of Management and Technology (GSMT) versions of 999 would be very difficult to engineer due to the large numbers of faculty members.

FAC also suggested faculty forums based on the model found at Town Hall meetings. This kind of forum would provide an opportunity for members of the faculty to convey their various concerns and recommendations to FAC. The provost thought it seemed like a good idea but did not go further.

CAX Problem in Asia

The Cost-of-Living Allowance Index (CAX) problem in Asia has been resolved, but the provost says he hasn't yet been informed by the director of the Asian division about the steps the director will take to notify the faculty. FAC will follow up with an e-mail within a couple of weeks to ensure some sort of explanation appears.

Advertising in Europe and Asia

Can UMUC rework its advertising campaigns in Europe and Asia? The messaging in the ads should convey to potential students that UMUC's faculty members are very experienced, that UMUC has a 60-year record of delivering excellent educational opportunities in the foreign divisions, and that a UMUC degree has greater value than the degrees offered by the faster, easier, and cheaper institutions.

The provost thinks the recent UMUC ads are good, especially the television ads featuring members of the faculty. He also said staff members in Adelphi are ready to help the staff members in Europe. The provost mentioned he had put this topic on his agenda of things to discuss with the directors of the European and Asian divisions.

FAC Executive Committee

Bruce Hull, chair

Theo Stone, vice chair

David Ramsey, secretary

Betty Jo Mayeske, at-large executive committee member

Faculty Advisory Council Web Page

www.umuc.edu/gov/fac

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This report was prepared by Terry Hinch and Debra Rosenthal, August 26, 2009.