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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)
Monday, February 25, 2019 3:15 pm
4006 Fleming Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340

Present: Atzmon, Beatty, Carlos, Conway, Malek, Lippert, Marsh (chair), Schultz, Spencer, Potter, Schneider, Snyder

Absent:

Guests: Chief Human Relations Officer Laurita Thomas, Richard Holcomb, Senior Director (Benefits Office), Members of the Press

3:15: Call to Order/ Agenda Approval/ Approval of Minutes

The agenda was approved.

The minutes for February 11 were approved.

Chair Marsh reported that he and Professor Beatty met with leaders of UM-Flint and UM-Dearborn faculty governance on Friday, February 22.

There is no SACUA meeting next week due to Spring break.

Chair Marsh will meet with President Schlissel at 10:00 on Monday, March 4. He invited SACUA members to suggest topics for discussion.

Chair Marsh announced that there is now a healthy slate of candidates for the SACUA elections, with five candidates from the Medical School; three from the College of Literature, Science and the Arts; one from the College of Engineering; and one from the School of Nursing. Professor Schultz asked about the deadline for the posting of candidate statements in the Record. The Record would like everything in by Friday, March 1, 2019.

3:20: Immunization Requirement

Professor Atzmon said that while measles had been eradicated, the disease is coming back with the result that a number of universities now require immunizations. The University of Michigan only recommends immunization. Professor Atzmon asked if the result of this policy would be that the University might become a magnet for the non-immunized (Washtenaw County has a high rate of non-immunization). The University of California system, the University of Washington and University of Texas system, by way of contrast, all require immunization. Professor Carlos explained the way vaccinations work, noting that they don't just protect the immunized person, but protect the population as a whole (known as herd immunity). She said some people face an ethical dilemma in having their children risk vaccination to protect some one else. Professor Carlos added that faculty tend not to practice immunization. Chair Marsh asked if Professor Atzmon envisaged a requirement for faculty and staff to be immunized. Professor Carlos said that the herd immunity requirement for measles requires 90-95% immunization because it is highly contagious (it is 80-90% for polio, which is less contagious) (<https://www.vaccines.gov/basics/work/protection/index.html>). Chair Marsh will bring the issue up with President Schlissel at his meeting on Monday. Professor Carlos said that the Medical

School requires flu vaccination, and that it has operating protocols that are making it increasingly onerous for individuals who have not have received the vaccine.

3:30: Chief Human Relations Officer Laurita Thomas

Chair Marsh introduced Chief Human Relations Officer Laurita Thomas and Richard Holcomb, Senior Director of the Benefits Program. Ms. Thomas discussed issues upon which Human Resources has been working in in response to community demand. These include reduced-price admission to gyms, retirement counselling and restraining the cost of employee benefits. Ms. Thomas said the University has developed relationships with gyms in areas in which faculty live to reduce the cost of memberships. She said retirement counselling aimed at helping individuals understand their resources has been increased, and that there was no increase in the cost of benefits in the past year. She said the increased health of the campus community due to their participation in the MHealthy program, and Mr. Holcomb's work with Michigan medicine.

Mr. Holcomb said that University community members had expressed interest in coverage for In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) as they were tending to start families later in life. Three and a half years ago, when he began to explore this issue, this was not a covered benefit in the University's health plan. He worked with Professor Tim Johnson, then chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, to create a potential benefit. After a three-year pilot it was determined that coverage could be offered without impacting the cost of the benefits program as a whole (he noted that of the 147 families that had participated in the pilot, one third had successful outcomes). He believes the plan is especially attractive to people joining the university. He is working with the Medical Benefits Advisory Committee to develop a plan for gender dysphoria.

Ms. Thomas said she is proud of expanding the University's parental leave plan, noting that response to the program has been very positive. In general terms her goal has been to develop high quality, cost-controlled programs. Looking to the future, Ms. Thomas said she is retiring in October 2019 and is pleased with customer service data suggesting widespread satisfaction with the benefits program. She added that there are many changes in the world which will have an impact on the delivery of Human Resource (HR) services. Amongst these are improvement in the application system for staff, new ways to enhance the acquisition and retention of talent, a major investment in new technology, more data on faculty and staff so as to improve services, and better understanding of the potential benefits and pitfalls of increased use of Artificial Intelligence. She noted that there are five generation in the University's work force ranging from people working in their late 70s and 80s, "Baby Boomers," "Generation X," "Millennials," and "Generation Z." Each generation has different needs.

Ms. Thomas said that one of HR's primary areas of emphasis is the improvement of workplace climate. She said HR is using anecdotal information to find ways of improving the work environment, and has worked with President Schlissel to gain a greater understanding of sexual misconduct, especially when it comes to handling reports of sexual misconduct.

In conclusion, Ms. Thomas said HR needs to be available to meet the demands of health and wellbeing, prioritizing resilience, well-being and stress (burnout) reduction. She noted that stress is routinely one of the top three issues identified by faculty. Mr. Holcomb added that mental health issues are prevalent in the community with the result that the University is expanding services, even including community members who are not currently in Ann Arbor for whom there is an out-of-state counselling service.

Chair Marsh asked Ms. Thomas to whom she reports. She replied that she reports to Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Hegarty, to Provost Philbert and to Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs Runge. She said she is also responsible for UM-Flint and UM-Dearborn.

Professor Lippert asked if there was gender inequity in retention. She is concerned that there is insufficient discussion of the university's role in creating stress for employees and would like to see climate improve for faculty, students and staff. She is also concerned that the HR office circulates reports based on unconfirmed charges against an individual. Ms. Thomas replied that HR takes a centralized approach in seeking to address and achieve a culture of respect though she is aware that that some schools are working on their own to create a more civil environment. She noted that most people learn from dialogue.

Professor Carlos noted that the search for "civility" is an ambiguous tool for promoting work place happiness, and that people who espouse unpopular ideas may be accused of incivility and lack of professionalism as a way of silencing them. To promote intellectual freedom the University must provide a safe space for the discussion of difficult questions. She asked Ms. Thomas how she viewed this tension. Ms. Thomas allowed that HR is struggling along uncharted paths.

Professor Beatty said she and Librarian Spencer have been looking at revising grievance procedure as a way of streamlining the process, and asked if guidelines could be provided for faculty grievance monitors. Ms. Thomas asked if they had consulted ADVANCE, while also noting that HR is in a period of transition as the search for a new director is underway.

Professor Schultz asked about the success of the M-Healthy program. Ms. Thomas replied that, in the first five years, HR believed that it could demonstrate success, that participation would lower health-care costs, through quantitative data. She noted however, that a survey produced by Johnson and Johnson revealed the difficulty in showing quantitative improvements. On the other hand, she knows lives have been saved through the University's investment in the health and wellbeing of the community, for example through increased medical screening which can prevent serious health issues before they occur (such instances are not amenable to quantification). At the present time HR will focus on chronic diseases for which the targeted improvement has not been met. Mr. Holcomb added that, given the number of programs, the search for relevant information is challenging and HR is trying to make it easier to find information. He noted, for instance, that HR did not have trouble filling up its MHealthy classes. He added that HR expects 18,000 people to go through the health screening process in the 2018-2019 academic year, and that in the 2017-2018 academic year 19,082 people went through the screening process and there were 12,289 participants in Active U. He said HR looks at data for people accessing programs and services, and could use help making this more attractive.

Chair Marsh asked about the proportion of University community members participating in these programs. Holcomb replied that there are 35,000 unique participants in a given year. Ms. Thomas said that the University is in the top tier of universities when it comes to community penetration. Marsh asked if staff participate at a different rate from faculty. Ms. Thomas said faculty participation has been lower but is improving, perhaps because of the reduction in the cost of health club memberships. She noted the importance of convenience, and allowing faculty to use their preferred health clubs.

Professor Beatty asked about changes in the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE), noting that three SACUA members had met with the outside review group in August. She wondered when the final report will appear. Ms. Thomas said the publication of the report is forthcoming, while, following upon recommendations from an internal review, the University was making it easier to report sexual misconduct (as evidenced by the University's home page where people can access information about reporting and other resources, and report any issues by using the prominent link at the top of all university web pages). She also pointed to a pilot program geared to education on and awareness of sexual misconduct, which had been initiated by nine units on the recommendation of the internal report. The internal report also recommended leveraging the resources of the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching to enhance learning and behavior change. While recognizing there was much work to be done to improve the University's culture,

HR is deferring to the external committee for advice on how to enhance OIE functionality, noting that guidance from the Office of Civil Rights, which the University has followed, is changing. She added that the University keeps up with peer institutions through the American Association of Universities HR Institute. She said the University had the largest OIE office in 2017, but that this was no longer the case in 2018 as a result of the Me-Too movement. The fact all universities are trying to respond to the concerns raised by Me-Too means that all schools are currently looking for people to serve as investigators, and there is a shortage. The University is both looking to bring new people up to speed and to find a new director of Academic HR.

Professor Lippert drew attention to the resolution the Senate Assembly passed at the February 18, 2019 meeting setting standards for due process, saying the Assembly expects support from HR in meeting those standards. Ms. Thomas thanked Professor Lippert for her input.

Professor Malek expressed the need for more granularity in examining a changing culture, and the importance of defusing tension in the community. He has looked at what happens to people who are accused by OIE and are awaiting a conclusion to an investigation. Chair Marsh drew attention to several cases in which investigations have lasted for a year. Ms. Thomas said such cases are rare, that HR is committed to do things swiftly but allowed it can be difficult to meet ideal standards when the people who conduct interviews are scarce, noting that the requirement for two interviews is lengthening the process. She said HR wants to enhance the functionality of the office so investigations will be completed more efficiently in the future.

Librarian Spencer drew attention to bullying in the work place that can go on for years and the use of code words to occlude the reality of the situation. She has observed that victims of bullying do not know where to go, and that people feel the University offices exist primarily to uphold the wellbeing of the administration with the result that people suffer in silence. She asked how Ms. Thomas would encourage an employee who finds him/herself in this situation. Ms. Thomas replied that culture change is difficult, that central leadership can provide some direction, but change has to happen at the unit level. She said there is absolute commitment on the part of the deans to work on sexual misconduct more directly, but that with a multi-layered approach to improving climate, there are many different areas with different concerns. She believes that if HR listens to people tell their story it can map a strategy. From a central point of view HR can create a list of resources, but the change has to be at the unit level.

Professor Conway said in her unit people are pleased with the benefit package, but when it comes to OIE there is a perception that the climate, influenced by sexual harassment and “finger pointing” in general, has reached crisis level. Her sense from faculty colleagues as well as staff is that reports are often inaccurate, which slows the process. Ms. Thomas said HR is not happy with the level of service, but the problem results from increased number of reports.

Professor Potter said it is often the case that unit administration is the cause of climate problems. Ms. Thomas replied that, on the staff side, HR recommends employee engagement surveys with 360-degree feedback, with the result that HR is able to identify units that require help. HR works to identify patterns. If HR can’t fix the problem through education, it has resources to make changes. Her office can provide structural support and guidance. Professor Potter pointed out that people are still miserable while the administration looks at the situation.

Professor Malek said he perceives increased mission divergence within the University with the result that there are individually tailored performance standards with the result that there is not a common University culture.

4:30: The Faculty Handbook

Chair Marsh said the University is posting an abridged faculty handbook (http://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/handbook/FacultyHandbook_abridged_2018-20.pdf) that

has left out the grievance process and the ombuds. He asked about SACUA's views on this. Professor Lippert said the full version of the faculty handbook is not available. For the UM-Flint and UM-Dearborn faculty this a crisis because there is a new statement that undermines the decades-long tradition that there is one faculty for the three campuses. When a member of the UM-Flint faculty looks at the handbook there is a statement "Although this handbook is written for Ann Arbor faculty, it includes information about University of Michigan-Dearborn and University of Michigan-Flint," which introduces lack of clarity resulting the removal of protections in the faculty code from the faculty at UM-Flint. Chair Marsh will raise the issue with the Provost and include a link to the full handbook on the faculty senate home page.

Professor Schultz said that the full handbook is still visible at <https://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/handbook/>.

4:45: Tricampus Committee Resolution on Appointment of Deans

This will be discussed at a later time

4:45: Matters Arising

[Consultation of faculty governance groups]

5:06: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
David S. Potter
Senate Secretary

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:
Governing Bodies in Schools and Colleges
Sec. 4.01 The University Senate

"...[t]he Senate is authorized to consider any subject pertaining to the interests of the university, and to make recommendations to the Board of Regents in regard thereto. Decisions of the University Senate with respect to matters within its jurisdiction shall constitute the binding action of the university faculties. Jurisdiction over academic policies shall reside in the faculties of the various schools and colleges, but insofar as actions by the several faculties affect university policy as a whole, or schools and colleges other than the one in which they originate, they shall be brought before the University Senate."

Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs:

Senate: "In all cases not covered by rules adopted by the Senate, the procedure in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed."

Assembly: "The Assembly may adopt rules for the transaction of its business. In appropriate cases not covered by rules of the Assembly, the rules of the University Senate shall apply."

SACUA: "The committee may adopt rules for the transaction of its business."