

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

5 September 2024

1:30-2:45

Present: Kip Curtis, Ozeas Costa, Terri Bucci, Shellie Kowalski, Ashley Smith, Andrew Mueller, Joe Fahey, Elizabeth Kolkovich

I. Enrollments / Budget / OAA Monies

Dean Opal reported that enrollment was up very slightly by .5% but that students who chose OSU-M as their first choice was up a solid 40%. He stated that the budget was tight but not dramatically so and mentioned several sources of this year's budget as coming from capital improvement funds, the state, and Columbus campus. Dean Opal also noted the use of OAA monies on campus including the new Brutus Buckeye wall in Ovalwood. He reported that lighting for the path from Buckeye Village to campus has been secured. Eighteen UV lamps will soon illuminate that path in the evening. A committee member suggested that some of the "leftover" OAA monies might be used to construct trail signs highlighting other campus paths and trails. Joe Fahey expressed concerns that the budget of several programs has been seriously reduced and, in some instances, funded only by cobbling together smaller funds from different funding sources.

II. Academic Issues

Discussion turned to the problem of replacing staff members to ensure the integrity and smooth functioning of academic and student services in a time of formidable budget constraints. Discussion ensued whether to specifically hire dedicated DEI and disability / social work staff to replace those who have recently moved on or to look for potential staff members who could combine several positions, for example, combining the job requirements of the disability management position with social work or the DEI position with care management. Andrew Mueller pointed out that fewer and fewer staff are being asked to do more and more tasks. In response, most committee members expressed the view that the focus of the DEI position was too important to be expanded by adding additional tasks to its job description. The committee agreed that if a new DEI or disability /social work position were approved, then the job description would have to be carefully and clearly focused and articulated. Committee members agreed that both Tiffany Mitchell and Michelle McGregor exceeded their respective roles by embracing initiatives that went beyond their job descriptions, but that new hires could not be expected to replicate that level of dedication.

Joe Fahey noted the diverse populations at OSU-M are the highest among the regional campuses. Dean Opal asked the committee for their assessment of racial tension at OSU-M. Committee members responded variously. Elizabeth Kolkovich stated that some black students did not feel at ease with the Mansfield police and suggested social initiatives to alleviate that tense. Terri Bucci remarked that the diversity populations on campus including the Black student

population tend to be isolated. Following up on this remark, Joe Fahey pointed out that while the campus works diligently to increase the number of diversity students on campus, once they are here, there is no social network to support them. He also added that the metrics of determining diversity populations may not be entirely accurate since a number of students at OSU-M also come from rural areas and working-class families.

III. Land Management Plan

Kip Curtis stated that the OSU-M land management plan has not been reviewed during the normal review cycle. He and Gabe Karns plan to present a proposal to the Sustainable Education Learning Committee in Columbus to use the campus landscape and the microfarm project for an engaged sustainability teaching site.

IV. Faculty Assembly Agenda

A. Workday Letter

Committee members noted that learning to navigate *Workday* is neither intuitive nor time friendly and has a steep learning curve. Joe Fahey added that to make it user friendly would require additional resources including “how-to” videos and flowcharts as well as a dedicated point persons to help resolve problems, rather than working through a digital interface for solutions. Elizabeth Kolkovich stated that faculty needs access to *Workday* training to be able to use the program efficiently and easily. Joe Fahey suggested that the Workday letter might be sent to the other regionals for consideration and support, pointing out that the letter would carry much more cachet if it were endorsed by all the regionals. Committee members agreed and Kip Curtis will forward it to the other regional campuses for endorsement.

B. Staffing Letter

After some discussion about the current staffing shortage, committee members unanimously agreed to move both the Workday letter and the Staffing letter forward to the Faculty Assembly for discussion.

IV. Other Agenda Items

Kip Curtis reiterated his wish to initiate a conversation among faculty focused on the spring teaching schedule and collaborative curricular opportunities as well as related issues of mission identity, recruitment, and retention. Joe Fahey and Elizabeth Kolkovich suggested that a smaller working committee composed of executive council members including Cynthia Callahan do the initial framing of this conversation before introducing it in the Faculty Assembly. They proposed a two-step process:

(1) a careful study the spring schedule to determine if there are courses that may complement and broaden each other with the aim enhancing the learning experience.

(2) determine the schedule of these courses to achieve a better curricular synergy.

The 11 September Faculty Assembly will be canceled so that the proposed working committee could meet at the 12:40-1:25 time slot in H120.

The Executive Committee meeting ended at 2:45.

Respectfully submitted,

S. Joyce