Dear Colleagues,

At the first Faculty Senate meeting in September, the body was surveyed for its view of pressing faculty issues (summarized in the attached document). Some are ongoing concerns of UCFA (or have been recently, i.e. salaries), others perhaps less visible. In an effort to coordinate initiatives across academic governance, I ask for your input on topics to prioritize in our agenda. Please review the attached summary and, ideally, replying to all, highlight the issues you feel should be attended to first this year.

A second item. In preparation for a presentation on campus pedestrian and bike safety at the December 2 Faculty Senate meeting, please send me questions / concerns you feel should be addressed on the topic.

Thank you!
Boyles, Elva

From: Phylis Floyd <floyd@msu.edu>
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2014 9:06 AM
To: Boyles, Elva; Byelich, David; TerryCurry
Subject: Agenda items for Tuesday November 18
Attachments: Prioitized List of SENATE SURVEY TOPICS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.docx;
ATT00001.txt

Dear Elva, Dave and Terry,

Following discussion from the most recent Steering Committee meeting, as well as last week’s Faculty senate, under new business, the committee will begin to address the “issues” list developed in Faculty senate in September (which I distributed a recently) and a process to resolve the most pressing of them. Attached is a highlighted list of the issues to be attached to the agenda.

So, after the routine items, new business:

—Discussion of Faculty Senate Survey and assignment to sub-committees or task forces. (Attachment)
SENATE SURVEY TOPICS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES

FACULTY (UCFA)

- Building a collaborative community
- Accreditation pressure to demonstrate outcomes with respect to student learning, etc.
  - Equality (or lack of) between Tenure, HP and Fixed Term Faculty
- Faculty retention - why are MSU faculty leaving?
- Since 11-12 we've been dead last among our Big Ten peers in salary ranking for assistant professors. Be this an artifact of terminology or an actual reflection of the market, it should be addressed.
- Lack of parking space on campus (cancel plan 20/20).
- The huge increase in administrative staff and expense.
- Health Care.
- Developments with faculty benefits, include future of health benefits

ACADEMIC ISSUES (UCUE, UCGS, UCSA)

- Grade inflation
- Academic standards in the era of grade inflation
- Semester length inequity
- Student-class ratios.
- Cap on admission of China students.
- Better integration of international students into learning environment on campus to benefit them and U.S. students.
- Research and evaluation with a view to giving evidence that our students benefit from their undergraduate education. A response to criticisms of higher education's unsubstantiated claims of improved writing, critical thinking, career benefits, etc.
- Evolving role of online teaching and learning in higher education.
- Curriculum changes to accommodate online learning methods
- Plagiarism procedures
- Lowering the cost of tuition
- The rising cost of undergraduate education.
- Strategies for improving the support for undergraduate education. In statements about the institutions finances, the president has acknowledge the we are relying more and more on tuition (and hopefully alumni donations) to finance the institution. Given this trend she has correctly identified that providing a positive undergraduate experience that is seen as a good value is essential to our future. This conclusion however seems at odds with incentive structure in the institution, which incentives external funding and does not incentives good undergraduate teaching. Related to this issue, it might be time to reconsider the role of graduate students within the university. Currently it seems that the upper administration views graduate students as (almost exclusively) part of the research mission of the university. However, they provide an excellent and underutilized resource to improve the undergraduate experience. If there were more dedicated TA lines, there would be more opportunities for small format sections associated with larger courses. Finally, in the current job climate allowing our graduate students to acquire more teaching experience would strengthen their CVs. In short, the incentive structure, both in how we evaluate and promote faculty and in terms of how we view graduate students, is at odds with the fact that undergraduates are increasingly becoming the economic engine of the institution. It is time to reevaluate.
- De-emphasis on quality undergraduate education (at least from my perspective)
- Upcoming accreditation and increased expectations of faculty conducting/providing assessments of student outcomes (at the programmatic level - not the course level).
- Student retention

POLICIES (UCFA)
• MOOCs
• Ownership of online courses
• Sexual assault awareness and prevention on campus;
• Campus safety
• Campus harassment
• Change back to the quarter system
• Second rate information technology infrastructure and systems
• Technology, Academic Governance, Curriculum

GENERAL

• Do we have any role in the upcoming GEU negotiations?
• Establish a "real" faculty club;
• Relationship of University to Athletic Dept: e.g., if they are so good at raising money (i.e., new locker rooms at stadium), shouldn't they be required to share some of that money with the actual University to fund the library or whatever in exchange for using the University's name, etc.
UCFA Issues (modified and or added to the list circulated) added Nov 18, 2014 from Phylis Floyd

- Faculty growth and retention
- Faculty compensation compared to peer universities
- Faculty lounge, dining room, club to facilitate cross college, disciplinary discussions
- Transparency in university budget: broken down into colleges and showing range of complexities for salaries in certain disciplines and overall faculty composition
- Two day fall break
- Campus parking
- Titles for Fixed term faculty

Recommendation: Committee members poll their respective colleagues for input to prioritize the list developed at Faculty Senate and /for other concerns.