

## Council of Chairs and Directors Meeting

Nov. 1

SSB 400

1-2:30 p.m.

Layton Curl called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

### Announcements:

1. The summer note from the provost is ready to be delivered to all. It appears to reflect our concerns.
2. Lori Kester's group is seeking enrollment targets. These are non-binding goals that would be used to help in developing tools to aid us in tracking enrollment. This is not top down. We will not be held accountable by higher authority on this issue, and we could have a negative growth rate if it reflected likely targets.
3. The Vice President of Student Affairs position will need a chairs representative for the screening committee. Deanne Pytlinski agreed to serve. She was selected by acclaim. We thank her for her willingness to serve.

The next topic was the Department Chairs Administrative Time. A document prepared by Bill Henry that reflects the FTE and the available time for DCAT was shared with the group. Henry conducted a regression analysis to determine the administrative applicability of FTE to the DCAT. Henry had determined this was the best metric to use.

Discussion followed on questions about how the model was built, checks on the accuracy of the data presented and how the new model would represent compared to the previous set up.

Administrative time under the new formula would be calculated every three years. The previous one was done every 10 years.

Discussion followed on how would we measure what has been reassigned time for other faculty in a department. The proposal would not square with the handbook, but that could be addressed. Several chairs then requested that the spreadsheet be distributed. The formula for FTE computation was also included in the packet shared at the meeting.

Chairs will be asked for their feedback on this item in the next two weeks. A poll of chairs will be conducted and responses to the poll will be due from chairs by Nov. 10. Meanwhile, it will be reported that chairs are much more positive about this plan than the last one.

### Topic: Removal of a chair

In the wake of mid-semester removal of a chair, the executive committee drafted language for the removal of chairs. The president has seen this proposal. The immediate reaction was favorable from the president.

In addition, the CLAS chairs have prepared a letter to commend the former chair on work as a chair. This letter was shared with the assembly.

Discussion on the draft presented on the process for the removal of a chair followed. There was a question about whether this would apply to the directors of institutes. Comments indicated that the positions of director was analogous to chair. Still, not all directors were tenured. The existence of due process was commended by the chairs.

Topic: Address from President Dr. Janine Davidson

Davidson opened with comments on appreciation of having this time with chairs. The president followed by framing the conversation with concerns about holding the line on the American Dream. This is one of the places holding the line.

Some highlights from her comments: students are our mission. Shared governance, leadership and empowerment were all mentioned as issues. Rubber meets the road in the classroom, which makes the role of chairs of critical importance. Expressed the surprise of items that are not delegated down in the institution. What are the policies and resources needed to get these issues delegated. Respect and trust are needed. We will need to have some willingness to trust. An inclusive leadership summit is planned for next semester.

What is the role of chairs in the institution? The president commented on the surprisingly not top-down administration in the Pentagon. She appeared to suggest that we needed to do this at MSU Denver.

Discussion moved to the removal of chairs policy. The president said she did not realize that she was the approval authority for chairs until this issue appeared. She said her sense is that if you are going to have empowerment at lower levels, then those levels need to be responsible, accountable and fair. People don't always do the right thing. If a recommendation comes that a chair should be removed, that should come from the dean. This should allow for an appeal to the provost and then on to the president. This does not work where the president is also the first line of approval in choosing a chair.

President Davidson noted that she preferred a model where everything is directed toward the goal of having an idea of what is not allowed and your good judgment leads to what happens. Chairs followed with comments on the removal process and the lack of steps that often appears in the handbook. A suggestion was made that there might need to be some sort of review committee regarding the performance of chairs. The president asked about what process might need to be put in place to determine removal of a chair.

Regarding the chairs' authority, the question was asked about what can we do to actually have authority? For instance, we have no way to discipline tenured faculty. What is our stick?

The president affirmed her belief in the value of tenure. A tenured professor should have the ability to say whatever they need. Having tenure gives you freedom professionally. The president also commented that freedom was not a license to be abusive. The president would support chairs in stomping out abusiveness.

The president said she owed the chairs a revised policy. The idea to add a committee of chairs step was suggested. Judgment still needs to be a component of the process. Chairs exercise judgment, but we still need a process of evaluating that judgment.

Evaluation process was another consideration. We need a process where chairs are not just being evaluated when something goes wrong. Now, our reviews come in the tenure process, but they stop there, unless they are addressed in post-tenure review.

Chairs face a conundrum. On the tenure track, you can make a case. With tenured personnel, what can you do? We need to think about this. What do other schools do? The president returned to a belief that as leaders from the chairs up it should be us on one side and the problem on the other. If a problem is about to blow up, the president should be aware before it explodes.

The president learned from the removal that she needs to not have first-line authority on chairs, and we need a full effort to fix the handbook. We need to figure out a way to work on that. The handbook needs to be updated and reflect the ethos that if it doesn't say you can't do X, Y or Z, then you use your judgment. That judgment, however, will be evaluated.

Curl concluded the meeting and presentation by mentioning that he will be sharing the DCAT issue with everyone. The president then encouraged us to engage in the inclusive leadership.

The meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.