

# ***Academic Senate***

*Agenda for the Meeting*

***Tuesday, December 14, 2010***

***6:00 p.m.***

***West Campus Community Center***

***1414 Family Drive***

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Announcements

A. President Haneline

3. Reports

A. Reorganization Discussion with Dr. Fritz Erickson, Provost

4. Open Forum

5. Adjournment

Next Meeting: **January 11, 2011 – 10 a.m.**

**Reviewing Our Academic Organization**  
**Fritz Erickson, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs**

**A Suggested Process**

December 12, 2010

**Overview**

Over the past several weeks I engage in some very interesting dialog about the need and process for reviewing our academic organization. I deeply appreciate all of the time and thoughtful input as we consider the unique set of circumstances that lead us to ask the question "Is the academic structure we have today the academic structure we need for tomorrow?" The conversations were lively, direct and for the most part cut right to the heart of the issue. Several questions permeated many of the discussions. "Why do we need to do this and why do we need to do this now?" "If we do this, how do we make sure there is ample opportunity for full and iterative engagement?"

The answers are fairly straight forward. We need to consider our organizational structure now, not because it is broken or there are failures, but because of the unique circumstances we have with the number of vacancies in deanships. It would be a mistake to simply fill dean positions without considering our current academic structure and our future. The primary challenge is not whether we should consider our structure but how we develop a process that not only provides ample opportunity full engagement but promotes a climate where all ideas are welcomed, valued and given full and open consideration. The challenge is creating a process that promotes full, open and respectful debate in the tradition of a community of scholars.

**Goals**

No process can be successful unless there is an agreed upon set of goals that provide us direction and insight into the type of outcomes we desire. I would suggest as a starting point the following. Our academic structure should -

- provide the best opportunity for student success.
- promote a climate that enhances opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration for all.
- support and maintain a commitment to the University's mission, vision and core values.
- maintain the financial health of the university.

**Driving Principles**

To achieve these goals we need to enter this process with a number of driving principles. In other words, in all that we do we need to make sure these principles are at the center of our thought processes and our debate

- No predefined outcome
- All ideas are welcomed, valued and fully considered
- Open and transparent
- Respectful
- A focus on student success
- Iterative with ample opportunity for engagement

## **A Simple Process**

### **1. Identify a Core Review Team**

The perennial challenge in any endeavor such as this is to create a balanced team that not only has the charge to develop a proposal for the university community to consider but balances the need to be representative, credible to the broad university and of a size that is functional. There are a lot of stakeholders in this type of discussion. Certainly all 479 academic programs, all faculty and all staff are key stakeholders. So too are students, employers, and the broader communities and professions we serve. We also have several key groups that are critical stakeholders - SPARC, Ferris First, Dean's Council, the FFA, Academic Leadership Council and Academic Senate to name just a few. The question is, where does the balance lie? I propose a Core Review Team made up of the following.

1 Faculty member from each of our colleges and FLITE	1 Dean
1 Department Head	2 Academic Staff Members
1 Chair of the Academic Senate	1 Chair of SPARC
1 President of the FFA	1 Provost
1 Student	

### **2. Core Review Team Charge and Outcome**

The outcome of the Core Review Team is to present to the campus community and the Academic Senate a proposal for consideration no later than April 15, 2010. While the default position is to maintain the academic structure we have today, if the Core Review Team develops and supports a proposal that differs from our current academic structure, we will visit each college to openly consider the outcome of the review. Every person in every college will have an opportunity not only to be heard but to participate in an open exchange. In addition, we will present the proposal to the Academic Senate for full consideration, debate and a vote to recommend or not recommend to the Provost.

### **3. Core Review Team Commitment**

Core Review Team members must agree to the following.

- Embrace the goals and driving principles
- Be willing to meet 2 hours per week starting with the first week of classes (tentatively Wednesdays 3:00-5:00)
- Attend an initial full day retreat on January 8, 2011
- Attend open forums as they are scheduled

### **4. Rules of Engagement**

- Begin by reviewing the organizational culture within Academic Affairs (Retreat on January 8, 2011)
- Identify and collect data and evaluate what works and where opportunities for improvement exist
- Follow a process where all ideas will be given full consideration
- Strive for consensus but vote as needed
- Must provide the campus community multiple opportunities for input and engagement. This includes the need to hold multiple open forums.