Faculty Council Annual Report for 2013-2014
Submitted by Tim Melchert, Council Chair, April 25, 2014

Faculty Council Members: Eugenia Afinoguenova, Jose Blosio (resigned from Marquette at the beginning of the Spring semester and not replaced), Sharon Chubbuck, Tim Melchert (chair), James Marten, Barbara Silver-Thorn, Dawn Smith, Bharatendu Srivastavia, Alex Stewart, Darren Wheelock, Lynn Whittenberger, Mary Jo Wiemiller

Meeting Dates: Oct. 15, Nov. 12, Jan. 23, Feb. 20, March 20, April 24

Committee Work and Accomplishments:

The regular business of the Faculty Council changed abruptly after Fr. Pilarz resigned as president of Marquette in Sept., 2013. Most of the focus of the Council during the Fall semester turned to how we might contribute to leadership stability as the university moved forward under an interim provost and interim president, while at the same time also searching for a new president. At the Oct. 15 meeting of the Council, the members unanimously endorsed the following motion regarding the role of the provost at Marquette.

The Faculty Council supports the role of the provost as described in the Opportunity and Challenge Profile document. That document describes the role of the provost as “the ‘number two’ leader on campus under the president” (p. 3) who has responsibility, among other things, to “Set university priorities for budgeting, resource allocation and fundraising in support of the academic mission” (p. 4). We urge Fr. Wild to embrace this description in his role as Interim President, and we further ask that this description of the role of the provost is clearly incorporated in the search process for the new president.

The Council asked that the Senate similarly approve the resolution, which they did at their Oct. 21 meeting. Interim President Fr. Wild then publicly endorsed what he called the “strong provost model” the very next day (Oct. 22).

The Faculty Council also asked to have input into the search for the next president at MU. The Council was pleased to quickly receive a response (dated Oct. 21) from John Ferraro, the Chair of the Presidential Search Committee and Board of Trustee vice chair. Nearly all of the Council members were able to participate in the input session that was held on Nov. 5.

The Council passed a resolution requesting that all academic units complete their Senate elections and appointments prior to March 1 of each year so that the Senate can hold its elections for officers and other positions before the end of the Spring semester. The Senate will probably need to give annual reminders of this request to the academic units into the future.

The Council decided to hold its Annual Faculty Forum with the Interim Provost rather than the Interim President since Fr. Wild was not planning on continuing beyond the end of the academic year and because we were very interested in how the “strong provost model” would be implemented moving forward. Therefore, Interim Provost Callahan was asked if she would
answer questions submitted by the Council on this subject. She agreed and the forum was held on March 4.

In January, the Senate charged the Faculty Council with considering the possibility of restructuring and reorganizing the standing committees that report to the Senate with the aim of improving efficiency and productivity. Beyond the planning of the faculty form, this issue then formed the main topic of business for the Council for the remainder of the semester. We examined the membership and responsibilities of all the standing committees of the Senate (i.e., in addition to the Faculty Council, the Faculty Hearing Committee, the Committee on Academic Policies and Issues, the Committee on Faculty Welfare, the Subcommittee on Part-Time Faculty, the Committee on Diversity and Equity, and the Committee on Committees and Elections). We examined the annual reports of each of these committees over the past several years to assess the amount and nature of their work. We contacted the chair of the Committee on Faculty Welfare and the co-chairs of the Committee on Academic Policies and Issues to obtain feedback regarding the advisability of folding the work of those two committees into the responsibilities of the Faculty Council. At each meeting of the Senate in the Spring semester, Senators were updated on the progress of our discussions on this issue and were asked for feedback.

After extensive discussion, there was strong agreement that these committees could be reorganized in a more efficient and effective manner. The Council unanimously approved the recommendations found below at our last meeting of the year (April 24). The full text of our report on these recommendations is reproduced below because of the importance of the issues and because we asked that these recommendations be taken up by the Senate at the beginning of the 2014-2015 year.

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Faculty Council Proposal Regarding the Reorganization of Standing Committees Reporting to the University Academic Senate

April 24, 2014

The rationale for recommending a restructuring of the standing committees that report to the University Academic Senate (UAS) is based on three main concerns: (1) there have been numerous complaints in recent years that there are too many committees that faculty need to cover, an issue which is especially problematic for those in smaller colleges; (2) the work of some of the committees has not been particularly substantial; and (3) multiple committees with similar or overlapping responsibilities appears to result in a diffusion of responsibility and less effective communication and advocacy. To address these concerns, the Faculty Council recommends that the standing committees that report to the UAS be reorganized along the lines described below. It is believed that these recommendations will result in more engaged and informed involvement by committee members, improved review of questions and issues that arise, and more efficient and productive use of committee members’ time. The overarching goal of these recommendations is more effective shared governance at Marquette.
The reorganization of the standing committees of the Senate needs to be considered carefully given the possibility that changing the committee structure could have unintended negative consequences. Therefore, the Faculty Council asks that the Senate provide ample time for deliberating on this proposal. We recommend that the following recommendations are not brought up for a vote until the beginning of the 2014-15 academic year. If approved by the Senate early in Fall, 2014, the Faculty Council could then be charged with developing revisions to the Senate statutes and bylaws that would implement the recommendations. If those revisions were completed by the end of the Fall, 2014 semester, then the Senate could bring them up for a vote before Senate and committee elections are held in the Spring, 2015 semester. The earliest implementation of these recommendations would then occur in the 2015-16 academic year.

The Faculty Council approved each of the following recommendations by a unanimous vote on April 24, 2014.

1. **Faculty Council**
   
   a. Change the membership of the Faculty Council (FC) to include 12 voting members and 2 ex-officio members. The voting members will be comprised of 1 member from each of the 10 academic colleges and schools except for Arts and Sciences which will have 2 members. In addition, one voting member will be elected from among the librarians. The vice-chair of the Senate will continue as an ex-officio member, and the chair of the Subcommittee on Part-Time Faculty will also serve as a second ex-officio member. (The FC is currently comprised of 9 at-large full-time faculty members, 2 Senator liaison members, 1 at-large part-time faculty member, and the ex-officio vice chair of the Senate.)
   
   b. The FC will form an Executive Committee comprised of a chair, vice-chair, and an ex-officio co-chair. The chair and vice-chair would be elected from among the FC members, while the vice-chair of the Senate would serve ex-officio as the FC co-chair. The FC Executive Committee would be responsible for setting the agenda of the FC. The FC vice chair would be expected to assume the responsibilities of the chair the following year so that there would be some continuity of leadership in the FC from year to year.
   
   c. The FC chair would be expected to attend the UAS meetings (along with the FC co-chair) to help ensure effective communication between the FC and the UAS.

2. **Faculty Hearing Council**
   
   a. Continue the Faculty Hearing Committee in its current format as an independent subcommittee of the Faculty Council comprised of 7 at-large members.
   
   b. Add the requirement that a minimum of 5 members vote on actions taken with regard to grievances. When the number of faculty available to vote falls below 5 due to recusals, sabbaticals, leaves, or for other reasons, the chair of the Faculty Hearing Council will appoint replacements.

3. **Committee on Academic Policies and Issues**
   
   a. Disband this committee. The responsibilities that currently fall under this committee would be subsumed under those of the reorganized FC.
b. The Senate should note that eliminating this committee will reduce the forums where students can have their concerns and issues heard. Students will continue to have representation on UBUS, UBGS and the Senate, and those bodies, as well as the Faculty Council, will continue to invite concerns and issues raised by students. Nonetheless, CAPI will no longer be available as an alternative forum for hearing student concerns and issues.

4. Committee on Faculty Welfare
   a. Disband this committee. The responsibilities that currently fall under this committee would be subsumed under those of the reorganized FC.

5. Subcommittee on Part-Time Faculty
   a. We recommend that this committee remain structured largely as it is currently. It would continue to represent the same types of interests and concerns, but would report to the FC instead of the Committee on Faculty Welfare (as it does currently).
   b. We recommend that this subcommittee elect its own chair. The chair would also be an ex-officio member of the FC.

6. Committee on Diversity and Equity
   a. We recommend no changes to this committee.

7. Committee on Committees and Elections
   a. We recommend no changes to this committee.

The Faculty Council makes no recommendation regarding restructuring or reorganizing the Senate at this time. There has been some interest in reducing the number of senators representing smaller colleges and schools, but this has not risen to the level that the Faculty Council wishes to make a recommendation for change at this time.

The restructuring of the committees as proposed above would result in a reduction in the total number of committee member positions. Implementing the changes found in Recommendations 1 through 4 above would result in a decrease from 39 faculty positions currently to 21 positions. In addition, 2 student positions would be eliminated (on CAPI).