



COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM FACULTY

Chair's Report (CUSF) April 2017

For the April report, there are two commentaries and a carryover from last month. The first commentary focuses on the recently completed senate chairs survey on the state of shared governance in USM. The second commentary focuses on the development of a joint resolution for a System ombudsman. The carryover resolution involves the implementation of the UMUC reapportionment.

1704.1: Chair's Commentary – State of Shared Governance in USM during 2017

CUSF completed its survey and report of senate chairs on the state of shared governance in USM institutions. This year 11 of the 12 institutions participated. Overall, the state of shared governance on campuses is good. In the survey, Question #1 served as an overall measure of the state of shared governance on the individual campuses. Seven of the senate chairs agreed with the statement that “*Shared governance was alive and healthy on their campus.*” Four of the senate chairs strongly agreed with the statement. Two campuses neither agreed or disagreed. For these two schools, there was usually a mitigating circumstance such as hesitancy to evaluate a new president. Two schools disagreed with the statement reflecting shared governance issues or some potential problems on campus. In general, these schools suggested that their president may be bypassing them or not including them in the decision making process.

The survey and report will have a significant impact. This is the first year that the survey has been completed on schedule. Along with the survey data, the report is sent to the Chancellor in the beginning of April for use in his annual evaluation of the presidents during April. In addition, the information will be used in the five year review of institutions for the BOR.

In terms of shared governance across the country, this survey and its use in the evaluative process is highly significant. It helps make CUSF and USM leaders in the field. David Maxwell, President Emeritus of Drake University and Senior Fellow of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) conducted for the Association a study of ten case studies on shared governance in university systems across the country. USM was one of the ten case studies. In my interview with David and if I remember correctly, he indicated that the only other system doing anything similar to what we are doing is SUNY. Also, at the beginning of fall semester 2016, the Chancellor sent copies of the survey instrument to his counterparts indicating what we are doing in Maryland. Shared governance is always a work in progress. However, the survey and its use by the Chancellor in his evaluation is highly significant and helps make USM one of the premier systems in the country.

1704.2 – Ombudsman

In 2013 under the tutelage of Richard Manski at UMB, CUSF passed a resolution requesting USM to provide an ombudsman for the campuses. Understandably, at the time it was noted that System did not have the positions or resources available to hire an ombudsman. An internal solution was sought where one of the staff at System would take on this role if needed. Since 2013, three institutions (UMCP, UMB, and FSU) have created ombudsman positions on their campus.

Separate from the CUSF action, the staff (CUSS) have recognized a need for an ombudsman on the campuses. Also, the students and student Council have recognized the need. The three Councils are working together to advance a joint resolution paralleling the original resolution passed by CUSF. The CUSF resolution is provided below.

Initiative 2 - Establishment and placement of a system wide ombudsman. Standardized reporting can be an effective mechanism for faculty to participate in the evaluation on the state of shared governance for each campus and campus sub-unit. When effective shared governance is in place, reporting can be quite effective as a tool to optimize and further improve campus governance. However, when shared governance is not working or if elements are systematically ignored it is possible that even a standardized report will not be able to detect any problem. In a setting where shared governance is ineffective an alternate mechanism and pathway for reporting may be needed to fulfill the USM governance policy mandate that shared governance is necessary and important for the well-being of the USM and its institutions and the Presidents shall assure that shared governance is appropriately implemented in all sub-units. An ombudsman would provide an effective and appropriate mechanism to remedy a condition where reporting is insufficient. An ombudsman service can establish and provide a process that ensures confidentiality of individual and group communications, organizational neutrality and independence. (Source AHRQ RFP06R000099) An ombudsman service can provide mechanisms that encourage faculty to voice concerns and provide constructive dissent early and to assist faculty on how to address issues of concern constructively. An ombudsman would promote appropriate shared governance by maintaining a culture that welcomes good faith dissent, and encourages resolution of conflict at an appropriate level through direct and confidential negotiations. (Source AHRQ RFP06R000099) An ombudsman though training and experience would be positioned to provide advice and guidance to faculty and when appropriate provide faculty with the needed information to better understand the issue and when appropriate provide a path for resolution. If the matter is of a personal concern an Ombudsman would also be trained to provide general advice or trained to refer the case to an appropriate Employee Assistance Program (EAP) consultant. An ombudsman has the capacity to protect both faculty and the system. For instance, if a concern appears frivolous an Ombudsman could provide advice to the faculty and provide strategies about how best to approach and cope with the perceived problem or refer the case to EAP. If the matter of concern is general in nature and relates to governance an Ombudsman would be positioned and trained to provide mediation or escalate the concern to a Dean, President or Chancellor as needed and appropriate. **CUSF Motion 1212**

In summary, there is an identified need for an ombudsman on USM campuses. CUSF recognized and acted upon the need in 2013. The students and staff have also recognized the need and are acting upon the need. Three campuses have recognized the need and have acted upon the need. At the recent Senate Chairs meeting, the attending senate chairs confirmed the need for an ombudsman on the other campuses. The need has been established. A suitable means to make ombudsmen available on the other campuses is needed also.

1703.4 – Chair’s Commentary: UMUC Reapportionment

At the January meeting, reapportionment was completed. UMB went from five to six representatives and UMUC went from three to two. All other institutions remained the same. Also, UMB gaining one and UMUC losing one are not linked with each other. The gain and loss are independent of each other. The issue is not about the reapportionment, it is about when it should occur, particularly for UMUC. UMB would gain an additional seat next year.

In consultation with Bill Chapin and the Rules and Membership committee, ExCom is making the recommendation to Council that the change in UMUC representation take effect beginning fall semester 2017. ExCom discussed the matter and passed a motion to this effect. In addition, I have discussed this with Theo Stone, Senate Chair of UMUC, and they have developed a process for this eventuality. It is recommended that Council pass the motion to this effect.

There was an issue regarding whether adjuncts can serve as a member of Council. In consultation with Bill Chapin, Chair of the Rules and Membership Committee, The Bylaws indicate that apportionment of members is based on the number of full-time faculty members. The CUSF Constitution states that the membership to the Council is determined by the individual campuses. Although apportionment is based full-time faculty, there is nothing to preclude campuses from selecting representatives such as adjuncts who are not full-time faculty.