

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
October 16, 2007

Dear Colleagues:

Being President of the Academic Council with so many changes in front of us, has been a very time consuming endeavor. I'm not sure that we have everything under control, but the other officers and I are doing our very best to keep shared governance in order.

This month we have several important items to deal with that relate to the restructuring of the campus. Perhaps at the center of these are the Bylaws revisions that will be submitted to the faculty this month. A copy of the Bylaws is posted on the Academic Council web page, along with other information. In order to approve the Bylaws, we need to have a General Faculty meeting and then a mail ballot, thereafter. If all goes well, we hope to have the new Bylaws approved by faculty by late October or early November. The Board of Curators may act on the Bylaws in late November. We have tried to make this process as open and transparent as possible as we have progressed.

I attended the October Board of Curators meeting in Columbia. Among other things, the Board seemed focused on unfilled Chair Professorships, intellectual diversity, and compliance with Federal guidelines on research expenditures. The Board senses the importance of getting our story out to the citizens of the State and also to legislators. In the future, the Board plans to broadcast its Board meetings over the Internet. At this time, audio only will be considered and I do not know for sure when this activity will commence. In 2006-2007, the University of Missouri System graduated the highest number of graduates ever. Chancellor Carney gave a very upbeat report on the state of the campus, including increased enrollment and increased ACT scores. The Board passed a resolution that would not allow University employees to accept gifts. In particular, there was discussion of "lavish gifts". However, I am not sure I have ever witnessed one of these here. The Curators also named a new University Counsel to replace Bunky Wright. His name is Steve Owens and he is from a Kansas City law firm. Finally, the Board passed a resolution thanking Dr. Lamb for his strong statement on academic freedom and the proposed Constitutional amendment. The Board meeting concluded with a closed session, but there was no discussion I heard about the presidential search, except that the Board expected a new president to be in place by the first of the new year.

Doug Carroll and I also attended the Missouri Association of Faculty Senates (MAFS) meeting October 8 and 9 in Jefferson City. The representatives from almost all of the other public campuses were there. We spent Friday evening talking with the Commissioner of Higher Education, Robert Stein, and his co-workers from the Department of Higher Education. Much of the talk focused around the CBHE and DHE roles in implementing the provisions of Senate Bill 389. [Among other things, SB 389 mandates that some form of student evaluations be put on the web.](#) I believe that MAFS, along with other groups and individuals, have been very useful in

helping develop the role that DHE would take in these endeavors. I have some documents about the implementation of the faculty evaluations from DHE. If you are interested in these, please contact me. On Friday, campus reports were given and one campus was quite upset about the fact that their administrators got a 14% raise last year while faculty got a 2.5% raise.¹ The Department of Higher Education spoke about its efforts in curriculum alignment that has involved many faculty members from around the State. DHE is also trying to coordinate with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on core competencies. A representative from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) reported that it is going to reorganize into three different organizations. The Missouri National Education Association (MNEA) spoke about the court decision that now allows for collective bargaining to occur for State employees. It was not clear to me how this could potentially affect faculty members at higher education institutions in the State of Missouri. Finally, we talked about developing a white paper on the importance of shared governance and how administrations need to recognize faculty efforts by providing adequate resources for their participation in such activities.

Academic Council is now taking responsibility for the list of faculty representatives to standing and judicial committees. This list has to be updated and is now available through the Registrar's web page. I thank Laura Stoll, Angie Huffman, and Kurt Kosbar for their work on these.

This month in [Academic Council we will be deciding on revised rules on tenure](#) and promotion on campus. Bruce McMillan chaired the Tenure Committee that developed these rules. We have vetted these rules with the UM Legal Counsel and they seem to be appropriate, provided that the Board of Curators makes certain changes in the collected rules and regulations regarding the role of deans in the process. Academic Council has previously passed a preliminary version. I suggest you take a look at these new guidelines. I understand that, if the rules are passed by the Academic Council at this meeting, they will be implemented this year. This issue is quite critical for us. I believe that we have a good set of guidelines, but would like faculty to buy into these procedures.

Once again, I look forward to working with the faculty as we try to develop systems that work with the new governance system that we have adopted at UMR/MS&T.

Sincerely,

Frank D. Blum, President
Academic Council
University of Missouri-Rolla

¹ On the UMR campus in the past, the deans have provided information on raise distribution to the departments, and the information was disseminated to differing degrees through their offices. In the absence of deans, I think we should have some additional transparency with respect to the distribution of raises on campus.