Presiding Officer Richard Bogartz called the 741st Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate to order on October 9, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in Herter Hall, Room 227, and began by reading “A Moment of Happiness” by Mewlana Jalaluddin Rumi.

A moment of happiness,
you and I sitting on the verandah,
apparently two, but one in soul, you and I.
We feel the flowing water of life here,
you and I, with the garden’s beauty
and the birds singing.
The stars will be watching us,
and we will show them
what it is to be a thin crescent moon.
You and I unselved, will be together,
indifferent to idle speculation, you and I.
The parrots of heaven will be cracking sugar
as we laugh together, you and I.
In one form upon this earth,
and in another form in a timeless sweet land.

A motion was made and seconded to suspend the Rules of Order to allow Provost Newman to make announcements as she had to leave early.

Katherine Newman, Senior Vice Chancellor and Provost for Academic Affairs: Thank you, colleagues. I’m not going to take very long. I don’t get to stay with you for this whole meeting because I’m on my way to the HERS Institute. So I have to leave in 15 minutes. I thought I might tell you a little bit about some of the things that the deans are working on and that will be coming to the various appropriate Senate committees shortly -- some things we’re very excited about that have to do with improving undergraduate education. We have an idea afoot to try to create something like a freshman seminar program that would become universal for all of our students; small seminars like 19 and under, and we are talking about the possibility of inviting advanced graduate students and post-docs to participate in this program because it would be a very large number of new seminars. These would be one-credit courses that require no prerequisites, and they do not replace any courses that faculty are teaching right now. They might be, for example, something like, in the School of Public Health, the Ebola epidemic -- what do we know and what do we not know; or, in the History department, the bloody Tudors and English dynasty. Something that is of interest, and meaty, and solid, but does not require prerequisites so students coming in in their very first semester of their freshman year can do something really interesting and engaging in a small setting where that feeling of being part of such a large university might be suspended for a little bit, and give them some of the kind of intensity and intellectual experience that students at much smaller universities have as a matter of course but which are difficult to provide here. The deans have been very enthusiastic about this; we’re working on a lot of details; we think this is going to be helpful as a source of support for our doctoral students, most of whom will be, if the stars line up, teaching somewhere else the following year. We are talking about fairly advanced students who are enthusiastic about their mission as purveyors of the disciplines we all care about, and post-docs who are often looking for teaching opportunities when they finish and probably have not had much teaching experience along the way. It is difficult for them to compete, but we think this will be helpful for them in competing and certainly a blessing for our undergraduates, who often find that their first year is dominated by courses that are very large, where they don’t have this kind of intimacy and experience.

We are also working on an experiment in the spring semester that is focused mostly on STEM courses. We have five faculty members who have kindly volunteered to work on the creation of problem banks, which will be a source for peer leaders. Peer leaders are students who took a course (say Chemistry 111) the previous year and did very well, and who could be helpful in creating working groups, problem-solving groups among students who are taking Chemistry 111 this semester. So we are going to try this as an experiment in five STEM courses in the spring. Carol Barr and Gabriella Weaver are leading this, along with Martha Stasson on the evaluation side. We think this could be a real winner for UMass, and if we are successful in showing that it works, meaning that the learning curve goes up, then we will be looking for substantial grants to support a much broader implementation. So, again, a kind of small-group setting. These are not graded; these peer working groups have nothing to do with assessment. And the problem banks are completely separate; separate mechanically but conceptually linked to what the instructor is doing in that course week-by-week. Right now, there are five of your colleagues who are working on problem banks this fall, which will go into operation in the spring in five courses: microeconomics, two chemistry courses, one
mathematics course, and one biology course. So they have volunteered to try this out, and we are going to see whether or not this makes a difference in the abilities of students to master more complex and deeper ways of thinking about the skills the faculty are trying to introduce them to in the courses in the spring.

So those are just two things we are working on and that we think will enhance undergraduate education, create that small and more intimate feeling that students in more resource-rich universities routinely get, but which is often not possible as much here. Other than that, it’s been a very busy time as we are all engaged in thinking about the budget model, we’re working on understanding more details which are needed for the various committees to understand better how it might work. That is very much a work in progress, but we are making some progress, and I am sure that there will be more to report on that going forward.

A. FUTURE OF CAMPUS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE: PANEL DISCUSSION

PANELISTS: Julie Buehler, Vice Chancellor for Information Services and Strategy and Chief Information Officer
James Kurose, Computer Science
Steven D. Brewer, Biology
Jon Olsen, History

Richard Bogartz, Presiding Officer, displayed a modified version of Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs,” with WiFi depicted as the foundation underneath the model.

Julie Buehler, Vice Chancellor for Information Services and Strategy and Chief Information Officer: First of all, thank you for inviting me back. I appreciate the time you allow us on this agenda. I want to start by saying “thank you” for your support on the Data Center Project. When I talked about how broken it was and shared that with you, you helped to get some support so that now we have the Project underway so that we can get that fixed over the next few years.

I also want to talk with you about some of the work we did this past summer. Just like we did an assessment of the Data Center, we did an assessment of the networking capacity on campus this summer. I want to thank many faculty members who I called up over the summer. We had specialists who were studying networks and data centers, and we asked them to come in to help us the current state documentation. Every single person I asked helped us. So I want to thank all of those folks.

I’m going to let the folks who are up here introduce themselves as we pass the mic. I’m going to speak for just a few minutes about what our network assessment showed us, and then I’m going to share the mic with my faculty colleagues. They are going to talk about their lens on infrastructure.

This summer, we started to look at our network as a whole, and I think that has been a relatively new practice on campus. Just like a lot of other exercises where we look at things from one school at a time or as things broke, we really stepped back and looked at the overall campus, and we said, “Is the campus networking, both wired and wireless, meeting our current needs and is it set up to meet our future needs as we start to carry out the campus plan?” And the overall answer is, “It’s not positioned today where it needs to be.” Is anyone shocked by that? I was told you wouldn’t be.

I want to talk for just a few minutes, and I’m going to not get technical. If I lose anyone, just let me know. There are multiple layers of the network. We have wired and wireless, and you have probably seen the connections that you have on your actual machines. But networking, even with wireless, has to connect into a wired connection, just like it does at your home. So at home, if you have wireless, you usually have a machine that is connected to the wired and it sends out a signal. You have your connection that you see, and that connects to your building network. Your building networks all connect to what we call the campus core. The campus core connects to a campus backbone. The campus backbone connects to UMass net, which then connects us to the Internet. You don’t have to memorize all of that; there will be no quiz. What you should know is that we are in pretty good shape as it relates to Internet, UMass net, and the campus backbone. But we have significant issues with our campus core and our building connectivity. The core is what we are most concerned about because all traffic from this campus flows through this core -- anything that you might work on your computer that goes from one building to another, to the data center, or out to the Internet -- that aspect has aged. The cost to fix it is $30 million. Most of the equipment that we have today is over 15 years old. So one of the things that we talked about regarding how to present this to you in a way that is not shocking, is to think about “Would you put up with that kind of connectivity in your house?” In addition to that, the buildings are in various states of repair. We did a red, yellow, green map, and there are a lot of reds out there. So, over time, we are going to have to create a plan to upgrade and get more greens. And we are going to have to develop criteria for doing that.
I think it sounds like an awfully big number. We have been talking with Chancellor Subbaswamy and working with him, and we are working with the President’s Office, to see how we can fund that capital. We are also working to see how can we keep it healthy after everything is repaired. If we do not fix the core and we start doing building upgrades, the core will tip over and it is actually breaking frequently. I am sorry that I am here frequently telling you things are broken. The good news is that once we can describe current state, we can start to get to that plan of how to make things better in a cohesive way. So that is what we are here to do. That is all I intended to say.

**Senator Steven D. Brewer:** From the point of view of the College of Natural Sciences, the network infrastructure that connects our buildings together, and provides the “on-ramp” to the Internet, is critical to providing effective support for teaching and research. The College and its departments were early leaders in making difficult investments to build and provision network resources — and to hire dedicated staff to support them. Even before there was an OIT, we were pulling network cable and linking computers together. In several older buildings, we still maintain our own cable plant, which we’ve upgraded from thick wire to thin wire to twisted pair -- from 10 megabit shared to 100 meg to gigabit full duplex, which is what most desktop computers can run today. And we’ve run our own fiber backbone at higher speeds in a number of places to alleviate bottlenecks.

Bottlenecks happen when there’s more data coming into a segment than will fit. When that happens, the network becomes unstable, as packets are lost, time out, and need to be re-transmitted. It isn’t just that the network slows down, but rather that connections get dropped altogether and fail.

As new buildings have come on-line, like the ISB and the LSL, we’ve been working toward forging a partnership with OIT that will enable us to contribute to the design of the building infrastructure and to use it effectively to support our research and teaching laboratories so that our students and faculty can be productive and access the services they need.

However, our speedy internal networks and shiny new buildings are connected together with a campus core infrastructure that is increasingly showing its age. When our servers and clients were all in the same building, this was less of a concern. But as we move toward a future where our departments are spread across multiple buildings, the interconnections become increasingly critical. Here are a couple of examples:

Currently, to provide teaching lab computing support between Morrill and the ISB, we maintain separate servers in each building and replicate 311 gigabytes of lab computer software images between the two buildings. That way, we can synchronize data between buildings only when necessary and all of the client computers in each building have a local connection to a server to perform nightly updates. It’s been an effective workaround, but it can’t scale.

In our Bioimaging class, students using 9 fluorescent microscopes routinely collect 2.8 megabyte images every few seconds for minutes -- or hours -- to study cell growth, division, or other processes. When we were all in one place, we could architect our local infrastructure to provide the support that was needed. But increasingly, we want our students to be able to access and work with their data anywhere. Try copying one of these “stacks” of images over your wireless connection and watch what happens.

We’re moving toward an age of “Big Data.” Students and faculty with ever-faster computers can generate and work with vast quantities of data. To work with big data, you need to be able to get it, copy it, manipulate it, and move it around in real time -- from anywhere. To be a destination of choice, we will want our students and faculty to be able to play in this field. We support building the network infrastructure we need to make sure that UMass Amherst will remain a destination of choice going forward.

**Professor of Classics, Eric Poehler:** I’m here to represent the Humanities side of this computing issue, which may not seem to be one of the larger concerns, but I am here to say that it is a growing one and one that is important today. There are a couple of examples that come just from my work that show how important it is to be able to transmit our digital work around the University, among members of our team, and outward to the world. We really rely on that and, as that ability goes down, our ability to do our work -- which is why we are here -- goes down as well.

There are a couple of areas that I have worked on in the Humanities area that I would like to share with you. One that transcends all of Humanities disciplines is that the new narrative format in our world is video. We can no longer simply rely on text as the way that we transmit and give information to each other. Text is great, but it doesn’t share all of the information and it’s not the only way people capture narrative anymore. So now we have to start thinking about huge volumes of data compared to what it used to be when it was only text; now it is text that is enclosed in a huge amount of information. Think about how many videos, as you watch the news, come from cell phone cameras. All of that is now current humanistic data that can be studied; and we need it, not just as bits and packets, not just as transcriptions, but all of the richness that is enclosed in it.
Even dealing with text, however, or dealing with small text files… Some of the work that I have been doing on looking at the landscape of an ancient city, the ancient city of Pompeii, and doing a network analysis of the streets there -- compiling the 2,500 destinations and routing each place to every other place in the city -- requires the construction of simple text files that, when combined together, become 3.5 GB in size. That is just the text files for one ancient city in a Humanistic discipline. I will also talk about the images we capture in Archaeological work that has become known as photogrammetry; the stitching together in three dimensions of images in order to create, not just a virtual representation of what the place looked like, but a virtual representation of how the space is actually shaped and its real dimensions. This is a great step forward for us in the way that we are able to produce rich work and document the ancient world.

In two ways, we really need better connectivity and infrastructure to make this happen. One is the simple storage and collection of information. I have a team of 15 people, all of whom have an iPad, and all of that information needs to flow into single locations and be distributed back out. That is just the collection and storage of the imagery. But the processing power to run these photogrammetric programs is a need in itself. To get around that, we often use servers on third-party websites; we have to send hundreds and hundreds of megabytes of images up to use someone else’s processing power to get our results back. This, again, is where we are going to tax the network to do our work.

Finally, it occurred to me, having taught a digital Humanities class, that what I am asking students to do more and more is to be engaged with the Internet; to engage with scholarship as a digital thing, and to “do” scholarship is also to do scholarship online in many ways. So I ask students to sign up for third-party websites, put content on the web, ask for server space, create your own areas, and build a product as well as an argument. If we are going to continue to do that, we need to scale the infrastructure for students to be able to express themselves in those ways; in Humanistic ways.

**Senator James Kurose:** Interestingly, I actually do not want to talk about technology, although I would recommend COMPSCE 453: Computer Networking, that I actually teach, for anyone who is interested in the technology side. Actually, I do not want to talk about research because I think my colleagues here and all of you understand that, more and more, computing, big data, the movement of image video, large data files has just become absolutely necessary from the research side.

What I want to talk about is teaching and the strategic plan. I think if you look through the strategic plan and you look ahead about where the campus wants to go, different modalities for teaching, experimentation with things like learning through blended courses, any time/anywhere learning, international programs where we are doing joint courses with universities overseas…all of those kinds of applications and the kinds of things that we want to do as a modern 21st-century teaching university, not to mention research, require connectivity out to the edges. I think that’s what Julie is talking about: being able to go from the classrooms and all of the buildings (starting from there), and getting to the campus backbone, and then from there to the Internet, and from there to [the world]. I think that, from a teaching standpoint, if we want to experiment and innovate, and do those kinds of things that we have talked about in the strategic plan on the teaching side, this kind of infrastructure is really needed. It’s not “sexy” to talk about pipes or electricity -- that is kind of what we are talking about here -- we are talking about the “guts” infrastructure to move things around, move data around, so we can do the kind of teaching that we want to do.

**Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate:** Julie, you must have a plan for moving forward here, and it must be very expensive. Would you talk a little bit about that?

**Vice Chancellor Buehler:** So, just like we did with the Data Center, we look at what is the most critical thing that we need to do and, realistically, how long it will take to do the most critical piece. In this case, the most critical piece is the core. What we are looking at right now is a $30 million investment over a three-year period. So what we are doing right now is looking at how we would break down your one-year, two-year, three-year, so we can start seeing benefits as soon as possible, and we are pursuing funding on that critical piece.

At the same time, we are looking at the building connectivity, which is separate. We do some replacements anyway on the building side, but we haven’t stepped back to ask “What is the criteria for when we choose to upgrade a building?” So we need to develop that over the next year as part of our plan. I understand several people have referenced to me a classroom study from a few years ago of how to look at what classrooms to upgrade when. I would imagine that thinking about the process would be similar; when do we look at what buildings to upgrade? So we will be working on that aspect in parallel, and we will want involvement from the community on that.
We are trying to get a price for every building, to do the building connectivity upgrade. The reason you do that is that it allows people to get grants. So, maybe you might need a year three upgrade. If we can tell you the price, you might be able to get a funder to pay for that and do it sooner. The down side right now is that, if everyone in this room were able to get funding for their building and we tried to do the buildings first, the core would tip over.

So we have to have more discussions right now about how many buildings we upgrade and at what time. But the plan is to do the core and then do the buildings. Once we have the criteria for buildings, the plan is to get to a state where we can keep current. So we won’t have these big investments but we will see investments every year, and we will be able to be transparent about which buildings we are doing and why.

**Secretary May:** Since I have heard a little bit about this before, I want to follow up to make sure that other people have an idea. Is this being integrated into the capital plan? These are big numbers -- $30 or $80 million dollars of the budget. Is this coming out of the capital side, coming out of the President’s Office; where are these funds coming from?

**Vice Chancellor Buehler:** We are pursuing capital funding right now. Chancellor Subbaswamy and I are working with the President’s office. Across the system, there has been a series of new CIOs who have been hired, and we have found that there are gaps on many of the campuses. We have been working with James Sheehan’s Administration and Finance Office, with Chancellor Subbaswamy and the President’s office – they are trying to sense across the entire system of how big the number is. We are working to see how we can get the funding plan in place. We are well aware that there is not a pot of money, and we are destined for less. But it is capital that we are going after.

**Secretary May:** I think that everyone would agree that we are deeply into this now. I know that there is some debate about what the percentage is. Would you mention the percentage of the campus budget that goes towards IT and how that compares with our peers, and give us an idea of where we stand?

**Vice Chancellor Buehler:** First let me say that it is not easy to compare one institution to others, so I always have to qualify with that. For example, some schools include space costs when they determine their IT costs while others do not. The indicators are that we are spending less than our peers on technology in general, as well as on networking. We need to figure out how to adjust that. There have been some discussions and, even across the UMass system, there have been some differences. For example, some of the other CIOs charge a technology fee to students to keep residential life networks modernized. We have not had that specific fee, so there has been some dialogue regarding whether or not that is valuable, whether or not that should be pursued. We are looking at those options.

**Secretary May:** That is helpful. There should be some questions out there. We take this for granted. I think that the last big investment was when we adopted PeopleSoft as a system-wide initiative. There was skepticism when that was instituted but, in any case, that was 15 years ago I believe. In the world of technology that is the equivalent to something like 50 years in terms of, say, building depreciation. So even that system, I believe, has fully depreciated. I think that was $80 to $100 million when that was instituted.

IT on this campus has more or less operated on scraps; money that was left over at the end of the year was somehow invested in IT to solve a few of these problems. There has not been a systematic approach in the last decade or so to be intentional about making sure that we had the capacity to deal with all that we were asking the IT infrastructure here to do. Now we are faced with the situation where, if we do not take action in this situation, the system will fail us. It will not only not meet our future needs, which are substantial, it will not meet current needs. We have students coming to campus who want to download movies as well as instructors who are involved in research that involves big data sets, classes that are much more online than they used to be. So we have to do something. The faculty needs to be aware that this is going to be a big expenditure.

**Senator Susan Whitbourne:** I am very much in support and a heavy user to downloading materials from everywhere. From home, specifically, I have certainly noticed that, as I make demands of my network, it drains resources. So I can only imagine what this is like.

However, I was wondering about the feed-in to Amherst. You have no control over what we get in terms of the lines that come into UMass as they pass through our neighborhood. So that was a question I had. I also have a question, which I know you can answer; it’s just a statement. I feel like people blame OIT for things when really they don’t understand that this is a structural problem that you are really working hard to fix. I do think it is important to get the word out that, when people complain about OIT and the Internet being so slow, it is good data to support the importance of trying to do what you are proposing.

**Vice Chancellor Buehler:** So, two thoughts. Jim, can you help me with the pipe-in?
James Mileski, Director of Enterprise Infrastructure: Our current Internet access is two 10 GB Ethernet connections to multiple ISPs (Internet Service Providers). We have multiple connections going to two different locations: Springfield and Boston.

Our core equipment is actually 15-year-old equipment that manufacturers no longer support, so we cannot get spare parts. As equipment comes out of service, we spare those parts in our storage area, and we also have to buy parts on eBay because they are just no longer available.

Senator James Kurose: I just want to make a comment. There have been proposals that have actually been funded coming out of this University to actually upgrade, through the National Science Foundation, our connectivity both to Boston and the MGHPCCC. John Dubach and Mike Zenk of our ECE Department got a $780 thousand CCNIE grant to buy equipment to upgrade some of the GB bins that Jim was just talking about.

Director Mileski: One of the things that grant did is upgrade our connection from the Amherst campus to the MGHPCCC, where a majority of our research is currently housed. However, the connection from the individual buildings to the core has not been done in most cases, and our existing core needs to be upgraded.

B. UPDATE AND PLANS FROM THE JOINT TASK FORCE ON STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT (JTFSO)
   NANCY COHEN, BRYAN HARVEY AND AMILCAR SHABAZZ, CO-CHAIRS

Senator Nancy Cohen, Co-Chair of the JTFSO: Just an update. We had our first meeting last week. The data and planning guide we discussed last time are on the web. If you have not seen it, please peruse. What we did was try to get organized for the semester and outline what we think we will need to be working on during the semester. Some of the items that were discussed at our last meeting: (1) A review process for the unit plans once they are developed. How are they going to be reviewed and what kind of mechanism will there be for input across different levels, across administration, between different units? So we are going to discuss that and identify some mechanisms; (2) Being involved in any kind of Budget Council discussion; (3) Continuing our work on diversity, access, and inclusion, internationalization, and engagement.

C. UPDATE AND PLANS FROM THE JOINT TASK FORCE ON RESOURCE ALLOCATION (JTFRA)
   ELIZABETH CHILTON AND TIMOTHY ANDERSON, CO-CHAIRS

Professor Elizabeth Chilton, Co-Chair of the JTFRA: This will also be a short update. I don’t have much to report since our last Faculty Senate meeting. Last time, I reported that, over the summer, the Budget Office was working closely with the deans and their staff to assess the model that JTFRA examined last semester. Over the summer, what they were doing was assessing both the data that was included in the model and the drivers that were used for the allocation. Huron is not involved, as we mentioned at the last Faculty Senate meeting, so the Budget Office has really taken on a great deal of work to both verify the data. It is an enormous amount of work because the way that we do our bookkeeping isn’t necessarily similar to the idealized model that Huron and JTFRA were looking at. So there is a lot of work to “translate” how we keep our books into looking at an idealized model. So that work has been happening all summer, and I know that the Chancellor has been intimately involved himself; he has really gotten his hands in there and working with the Budget Office to make sure that there aren’t things in there that will surprise us, that we are not incentivizing things that we are not trying to incentivize. In the next week or two, JTFRA will meet with the Chancellor to learn some of the observations that have come out of that work, and continue to not only look at the model, but the larger system. The JTFRA report in May really underscored the fact that, while we might have a resource allocation model, there are a lot of elements in the system to support that model that also need to be developed. I think that maybe the Rules Committee has something to say about colleges having support for budget processes, and that is something that is on JTFRA’s agenda as well.

D. BYLAW CHANGES


MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Bylaw Changes, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 15-003.

(Inasmuch as these are changes to the Senate’s Bylaws, this is the first of three readings of this motion. It will be read again at the 742nd and 743rd regular meetings of the Faculty Senate and voted on at the 743rd meeting. The motion may be debated and amended at all three meetings.)
Presiding Officer, Richard Bogartz: The Rules Committee does not have something to follow up Senator Chilton’s remarks. What we did on the Rules Committee was to put forward a set of Bylaw Changes. One of those Bylaw Changes has to do with the establishment of College Budget Councils that would permit discussion and advice for the deans, involving faculty, having to do with how budgets are arranged, what is going where, and so on. It has been suggested to the Rules Committee that it would be wiser to precede presentation of that portion by some discussion with the deans and others, so that we have decided not to proceed with that motion. Now that motion is on the agenda; it is my ruling that, if no one makes that motion, there is no motion. So I request that no one make the motion. If someone does make the motion, I will request the motion to table. There is no motion.

Special Report of the Rules Committee regarding Bylaw Changes will be taken up at the 742nd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate on November 13, 2014.

E. ANNUAL REPORTS


The report was received.


Senator MJ Peterson: Are there any trends in the types of cases or the number of cases that the Ombuds Office is getting that you think we should know about, that might be providing challenges to you in any way?

Catharine Porter, University Ombudsperson: I would say that one of the most notable is harassment/bullying. That seems to be an issue that has been on the minds of many people. We even changed the wording on our take-in. Our analysis used to be just harassment, but now we know that we really have to address it as harassment and bullying. That is probably one of the major areas that we have encountered.

We see more faculty members coming for various issues. Sometimes we reach out to faculty, as you know, because we have student issues with a grade or various kinds of complications. So that’s another area. I think that those are probably the two major ones that you might notice in our report.

Senator Frank Hugus: I have noticed that virtually all of the visits that you have reported have increased somewhat dramatically over the years, which means that the workload which you have experienced and the Ombuds Office staff have experienced over the years have changed. How do you account for this increase, which seems to be almost across the board?

Catharine Porter: You mean, how are we handling more cases than we did before? First, we are doing a much more proactive job and trying to get the word out about the Ombuds Office, so more people know about the Ombuds Office. I think that has certainly increased our traffic. We have changes in the Academic Honest Policy over the year, making it more user-friendly for faculty and for students; it has increased the number of people who have come to our office. We are very good at multi-tasking.

The report was received.


Senator J. Eliot Moss: This report was written by my predecessor, as I was on sabbatical in the spring. I may not be able to answer every detail, but I am in touch with what the council is doing. You can see that our major activities involve engagement with research administration, the budgeting and strategic planning activities, and we provide reviewers for faculty research grants, among other things.

Secretary May: I think the Faculty Senate would be interested in hearing about your study of the FRG, which has been a very successful program. I think there was an issue regarding the adequacy of the total level of funding and what we can do about it.

Senator Moss: We had a task force look at the faculty research grants. We estimate that it would be more effective to have about 10 times the funding we have now so we can do more than provide small amounts of seed money only for junior faculty. There are many other needs, such as bridging or new projects for more senior faculty, and better
support to help people across all disciplines to achieve more external sources of funding. We did hear this fall already, and this project is continuing, at least anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of the professional development funds for some faculty members...that is not an effective way of funding research through the MSP contract. Part of what the task force is doing is looking into having the development office help bring in resource for faculty research grants. This might mean new categories, new funds, because most donors would prefer to donate towards something more specific than one single general fund. All donated money is good money. So looking at that and, in particular, looking at helping faculty tell their stories in ways that will encourage donors to give -- that is one direction. I believe that this year, we will also be talking about, in the process of restructuring the budget, is there a possibility of improving the revenue streams so as to grow these funds? But that is more about the future than a report.

Senator W. Curt Conner asked about the curriculum fees.

Senator Moss: We did have some presentation on that from research administration, I believe. Where it goes is less an issue than the way it has continued to increase by the same percentage, more or less, each year. Originally, it was envisioned as a small tax on grants and now it is a pretty big tax. So the Council is concerned about that. This is partly driven by the budgeting model, so what to do about that hangs in the balance.

Michael Malone, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement: Let me make a comment about the curriculum fee. The conversations last year surrounding the concerns about the curriculum fee changes led us to do a study. We commissioned a study as part of our membership with the Education Advisory Board, which is a best practice group that we, like many universities, are members of and can commission three or four studies each year. They looked at four research universities like us and asked the question, “What are your curriculum fees and how do they compare with UMass Amherst?” One was below us and the others were above us.

That report is available; it is behind a firewall. I can provide the URL, but our agreement with the Education Advisory Board is that we won’t make it public beyond the campus. Everyone on campus can get access to it. There is no reason to believe from that comparative study that we are at any disadvantage compared to others in our competition for grant dollars.

Senator Conner: Where does the money go?

Bryan Harvey, Associate Chancellor and Chief Planning Officer: I think the simple answer is that all of the curriculum fee revenue goes into campus general revenue. It is then used to fund salaries, turn on the lights, plow snow, support research, etc. In the current model, there is no real differentiation where that money goes. One of the interesting questions with the new budget model, is how would you be able to see that, how would you keep it, how would it relate to actual research activity, etc. So that might change with the new model. But right now, it is just general revenue.

The report was received.

F. NEW BUSINESS


MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Revision of the Academic Requirements for the Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) Graduate Certificate, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 15-007.

The motion was adopted.

2. Special Report of the Academic Matters, Academic Priorities, Graduate and Program and Budget Councils concerning the Dissolution of the Department of Public Health and the Creation of Three Departments: Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Policy and Environmental Health Sciences, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 15-008 with Motion No. 05-15.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Dissolution of the Department of Public Health and the Creation of Three Departments: Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Policy and Environmental Health Sciences, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 15-008.

The motion was adopted.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Approval Process for New Courses, as presented in Sen. Doc. 06-15 No. 15-009.

The motion was adopted.

G. OLD BUSINESS

1. Amendment to the Special Report of the Nominating Committee concerning Nominations to Faculty Senate Councils and Committees, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 14-048D with Motion No. 51-14.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Nominations to Faculty Senate Councils and Committees, as presented in Sen. Doc. 51-14 No. 14-048D.

The motion was adopted.


MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Nominations to the Academic Honesty Board, as presented in Sen. Doc. 17-14 No. 14-021C.

The motion was adopted.

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Principal Administrative Officers

   Michael Malone, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement: I mentioned at the last Senate meeting that we had concluded a search for the Director of our Institute for the Applied Life Sciences. Because the director had not yet arrived on campus, we were holding off on a formal announcement. Some of you may have seen this. We are delighted to welcome Dr. Peter Reinhart to the University. Dr. Reinhart has extensive experience in the Biotech industry, as described in the press release. He was also on the faculty at Duke University Medical Center for 13 years.

   Julie Buehler, Vice Chancellor for Information Services and Strategy and Chief Information Officer: I have three things for you. One is that we had a very severe virus hit. Hopefully, you saw our e-mail communications about it. The symptoms of it are that when you go to open a file, it will ask you to pay ransom before the file is unlocked. Another symptom is that when you go to open a file, it will appear scrambled. If you experience these symptoms, please contact our help desk or use our services line. Also, let our info security department know. It’s a pretty bad virus, and it doesn’t affect every file. It affects a small section, so please let us know if you see it.

   We are hearing good feedback about Eduroam, the service that allows you to go from one school to another without having to sign into your wireless. We are getting some questions about it, the most frequent of which is, “What countries are using Eduroam?” So I have a poster and a list of schools in the back; if you are interested you can look. We are also being asked, “What if I am doing research with another institution, and they are not using Eduroam, and I would like them to use Eduroam?” What you need to do is have them go to eduroam.org, and they can work through that process step-by-step at the website. I am also being asked a very interesting question: “Does Eduroam reach out into the K-12 community?” Currently, it doesn’t. Technically, it could. For people who have interest, if you are interested in doing some small pilot with that, say 20 people or so, let us know. We can put them under our trusted accounts. I think it’s something that might be “grant-worthy.”

   Lastly, when I did my listening tour, several of you commented that you didn’t think User Services was meeting your needs -- our Help Desk. We have hired a new person. He’s standing next to me, and is going to introduce himself. I brought him because, also on my listening tour, you made it very clear that you want to see the faces of people who support you in IT.

   Wajid Choudhry, Director of User Services (IT): Thank you, Julie. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for inviting me to your meeting. It is an honor and privilege to be here. I am in the IT leadership role as the new Director of User Services. I have been at UMass for three months; I am new to UMass and new to Massachusetts. The role of IT user
services is to provide service excellent to the campus community and a better customer experience. It is my commitment to continue to improve the services we provide to the campus. It is my understanding that there were concerns about the Call Center. We have listened to your concerns, and we are addressing them. I have gone ahead and filled positions with full-time staff; in the past, those positions were held by students. The new staff will be on campus in the next few weeks, and there will be a full training. Please contact me; I am here to assist you. My e-mail address is wajid.choudry@umass.edu. I look forward to working with all of you. Thank you.

2. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate: Very briefly, I cannot remember another occasion when a revision of the Faculty Senate Bylaws has attracted the attention that this one has. Secondly, I would like to offer hearty congratulations to Jim Kurose on his appointment to a new position at the NSF.

4. The Faculty Delegates to the Board of Trustees

James Kurose, Faculty Delegate to the Board of Trustees: Just to let you know what has been going on at the Board of Trustees meetings... At the recent Board of Trustees meeting held in Lowell, a couple of items came up. There were a number of very impassioned presentations made by various unions that are negotiating their contracts with the University. They read statements to the Board of Trustees that went on for a half hour or so.

A task force has been formed that President Caret is leading; they are looking at increasing student populations, where they live, making recommendations, looking at policy. The task force is supposed to report back at the end of this year.

Our president is doing his annual bus tour. He is focusing on alumni contributions. Student debt keeps coming up again and again. He is addressing those and other topics that come up.

Our campus’ significant rise in US News and World Report’s rankings of publics has been incredibly well-received by the entire system. It was mentioned again and again.

5. The Representative of the Massachusetts Society of Professors

David Gross, Representative of the Massachusetts Society of Professors: Randy had a conflict, so he could not attend. He wanted me to let you know a little bit about our bargaining. Randy and I are on the bargaining team (among others). We have met 31 times with the administration; we will meet again tomorrow. We are hopeful that we will close this down soon. We are negotiating our contract, which is faculty and librarians on both this campus and the Boston campus. So you can imagine that things can get a little complicated because of that.

There are four main sticking points, three of which are system-wide. The reason that the unions have been talking with the President's office is because they have arisen from the President’s office. You might have seen us holding our yellow signs today when the President was on campus. We are trying to get them to understand what our problems with their proposals are. There is one other specific problem that we are dealing with which has to do with the Boston campus.

We are ever-hopeful that we can close this soon; we are hoping to do it tomorrow. Keep your eyes open; we may have an announcement soon. We are trying to let everyone know, by departmental meetings, what these sticking points are. If you have not yet had a visitor from MSP, you probably will soon.

I. QUESTION PERIOD

Senator Steven D. Brewer: Somebody asked me...they noticed that OIT was asking people that, if they were infected by Crypto Wall, they should contact the Help Desk so they could be provided with support. Is it possible to unencrypt the files that have been encrypted? I see that Julie is shaking her head, “No, it's not.” So if you get hit by this, it’s over for the files that have been encrypted.

I would like to suggest a specific curative you might do. If is use a back-up for your machine, make sure you have a current back-up and then keep it disconnected most of the time. Only run your back-up when you are sure that your machine is clean, and then disconnect it again. As long as your back-up is disconnected, it cannot be encrypted. If you leave it connected all the time and backing up, your back-ups can get encrypted as well.
**Vice Chancellor Buehler:** Thank you for mentioning the importance of back-ups and unplugging them. Please do not try, if you get this virus, to unencrypt it. Sometimes with malware, these are people who are trying to do malicious damage. We know for a fact that, if you go to Google and try to find a solution for Crypto, there is malware that they are trying to get you to download onto your machine. They do this by directing you to websites that say, “If you have this virus, download this program.” What you download is actually worse than the initial virus on your machine. We also know that there have been articles that encourage you to ignore it. Those were written by the same people who wrote the virus. They are writing articles that look sound, but they are not; they are part of the attack.

If your machine gets infected, make sure you disconnect BOTH your network cord and your wireless connection. If you do not turn off your wireless, it can be transmitted to servers around you.

**Senator Frank Hugus:** At the last Faculty Senate meeting, there was a motion on facilitating the increase in the number of credits from three to four. There was a statement in the report itself that said, rather cavalierly, that it may be that in the future most or all courses would be four credits instead of three. How many three-credit vs. four-credit courses do we have on campus? Is there a trend in that direction? Frankly, I think that’s a rather dangerous trend.

**Secretary May:** There is no compulsion to go to four credits. When we revised the general education curriculum, that brought all of the general education courses to four credits. So that is one third of the undergraduate curriculum. Many of the science courses are already three plus one or four, because of the one-credit lab that is frequently connected to science courses. So some of the science courses have the three-credit course plus the one-credit lab; others are just the four credits including the lab. Some departments have, in fact, moved towards a four-credit core-course curriculum. Another department is currently proposing in our councils a revision of its curriculum to do that. In other words, to have a smaller number of four-credit courses replacing a larger number of three-credit courses. But there is no compulsion to do that.

I do not know what the percentage is, but it is probably somewhere between 35 and 50 percent of courses are four-credit courses; it may be a lot more. The Registrar can probably provide that information.

I attended a workshop with Martha Stassen with our accreditor, NEASC, a few years ago. They are encouraging institutions to re-look at their curricula by department from the point of view of learning outcomes because many curricula are overloaded. There are a lot of weeds in the curricula that can be streamlined without loss. NEASC is recommending that departments look at their learning outcomes that they would like their students to know at graduation, and then re-design their curricula accordingly. Whether the courses are three credits or four credits is not the issue. It is whether there is an efficient pathway to the learning outcomes that the departments are hoping to achieve.

For students, if we had either a three-credit curriculum or a four-credit curriculum it would be much more efficient. At our sister institutions here in the Valley, it is four-course, four-credit curricula. Here, it’s a mix of three-credit courses and four-credit courses, so most of our students are actually taking five courses, which can be a burden depending on what they are taking.

There’s no encouragement, but there are a number of courses that are being proposed for an increase from three to four credits. It’s not a trickle, it’s a flow through the Faculty Senate Office. We want to clarify the procedure and have a good procedure for making this happen in an efficient way.

**Senator Frank Hugus:** I just want to follow up on this. We had a campus-wide discussion of three versus four credits 15 or so years ago. Much of what you mentioned today was part of the discussion, particularly the four-credit courses at our sister institutions in the Valley. It seems to me that this is going de facto in the way we thought it might or feared it might go 15 years ago. I think instead of letting it go in this ad hoc manner, we need to sit down and look at the curricula, demands on students, demands on faculty, and the expectations of our courses. One of my concerns is that, if you have a four-credit system and 120 credits needed for graduation, this means that in 30 courses you have your degree. If you have largely a three-credit system, then that’s 40 courses. Now, being in the liberal arts, it is good that students be exposed to more rather than fewer courses.

**Secretary May:** Our curricula are very different. For example, take Political Science or Sociology where there are just a couple of core courses that are taken initially and then it’s a series of electives in a variety of concentrations. Compare that to the highly-structured program in Engineering where there are a series of sequential courses that students must take. It can only be done on a program-by-program basis. It would be almost impossible to dictate from on high that we are going to have a three-credit curriculum or a four-credit curriculum. It needs to be done on a program-by-program basis.
Senator W. Curt Conner made a statement regarding university governance.

The 741st Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate stood adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on October 9, 2014.