**FSAC Meeting**

**02/19/2014**

**10:10 a.m. – 2:10 p.m.**

Present: Dr. Wright, Amy Rhodes, Karen Reddersen, Gary Felton, Andrew Ristvey, Ria Malloy, Nia Fields, Don Webster, Debby Cunningham, Cheryl Hill, Hee-Jung Song, and by phone-Mary Kay Malinoski.

Absent: Berran Rodgers and Krisztian Varsa.

Andrew convened the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

**Agenda Items:**

1. Dr. Wright - thanked everyone for their time and energy to be a part of this committee; your roles are vital and there is a need for this committee.
2. Plan of Organization – Staff and Faculty selections for FSAC committee based on Plan of Organization – Andrew explained representation of FSAC and how that could change with the proposed Plan of Organization. It was suggested that Faculty should meet to enhance transparency with Administration; communication is probably not as good as it could be amongst Faculty, from Admin to Faculty and vice versa. It was stated that a group within Extension wants a new structure and this does not necessarily reflect the feelings of all of Extension. Some think the representation is not equal.

This all started with Dr. Kugler stating the Plan of Organization needed to be updated. Tom Miller convened a Task Force to begin this process. Somewhere along the way the process was taken out of the hands of the committee and a few people worked on totally rewriting the Plan, and eventually reducing the contents to be more in accordance with most University Plans of Organization.

Dr. Wright agrees the current Plan of Organization is too detailed and is susceptible for misunderstanding and misinterpretation. He agrees the FSAC group is vital and a more diverse group equals better solutions. The Faculty should meet as a group but FSAC is the body that will be the lead advisory group for UME problem discussion and possible solutions.

Observations by Dr. Wright in his first 2 ½ weeks – He has observed: morale could be elevated in a positive direction; we love what we do and are strong supporters of Extension; with so much change introduced in recent years many need to be reminded of our UME vision and mission. Transparency of operation is important in any organization, with transparency we build trust among all of its members – thus reducing confusion and fear when rapid change occurs. Our UME culture will evolve in such a manner that we will gladly celebrate the important contributions that we deliver to internal and external UME clientele. As an Extension system we must keep each other’s best interests in mind and work as a collective unit or as a highly functioning team. Other Wright observations: There doesn’t seem to be an active Mentoring Program in place, a State EAC or yearly composite of county highlights; the latter could be a publication (or annual highlight report) that could be used to educate stakeholders and newly elected officials on new outcomes and impacts. Dr. Wright would support the development of a Support Staff professional fraternity which would assist support staff with professional development and mentoring. Dr. Wright is in the process of reviewing and familiarizing himself with the following: current staffing plan, the signature program process and implementation, the UME awards system (or recognition of accomplishments throughout the organization), stipend system and UME marketing/branding. Dr. Wright discussed with Brian Magness the possibility of endowing an Educator in each Maryland County and Baltimore City. That development discussion was very promising.

Dr. Wright stated there is a continuous need for marketing what we do, the more we tell our story the more opportunities will come our way. Dr. Wright stated that he was excited about the UME Strategic Plan, its soon completion and future implementation. After the implementation of the strategic plan, Dr. Wright plans to launch a quarterly pulse survey that will provide insight on how effective is our plan implementation. Pulse survey will also evaluate how each person continues to see how their job contributions fit into the strategic plan.

The Plan of Organization should be completed after the Strategic Plan completion. The Plan of Organization must fit within the Strategic Plan. Therein, the Strategic Plan will be the UME’s organizational guide moving forward. It was suggested that Clusters should come together to go over the new Strategic Plan and review the Plan of Organization.

The FSAC members need to know what their representation expectations are and then have them communicated to the entire membership.

ACTION: Plan of Organization final version will occur after the Strategic Plan is completed. Hence, delay finalization until it can be checked for consistency and coordination with the Strategic Plan. The committee will be reconvened to make the plan consistent with the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

1. Senate Updates – Don Webster explained the function of University Senate. He stated our college is unique in that Dr. Wei meets with Senators one hour before the Senate meetings and Dr. Wei attends all Senate meetings. There are 13 Faculty Senators of which 3 represent Extension – Don Webster, Lorraine Harley and Jerry Brust. The AGNR Plan or Organization is also in process. AGNR is the 3rd largest college. Forms will be emailed in the spring for employees to apply for committee membership. Don encourages everyone to join a committee. One of the committees is APT Task Force. The Provost and Senate committee are reviewing the guidelines for better procedures. The next Senate meeting is March 6th. Meetings are open to all and the dates are listed on the Senate website. It was recommended that Don have a Senate update column in the *Newsline*. The Senate website is a vast source of available knowledge. Senate.umd.edu.

Bringing up APT, Nia commented that future specialist positions that are filled will require a PhD. If Tenure-Track specialists require a doctorate, this should be announced to all and then time should be allowed for a degree to be pursued by a current TT position.

1. Appropriate Use of EAC Funds – an awareness was made that some EAC accounts are still allowing the payment of state and national dues to professional associations. This is not an appropriate use of funds as stated in a policy from the Asst. Director in 2002. This policy needs to be enforced statewide by all AEDs/CEDs. Debby clarified that some professional dues may be paid by EAC funds if there is a “significant” benefit gained by Extension for that membership. In these cases, a letter is to be sent to the Asst. Director of Operations explaining the benefits of membership for Extension and requesting permission to use EAC funds for this purpose. Each case must be considered individually. Policies for UMD are followed by EACs . There are UME procedures that need to be updated. The Strategic Plan should drive these updates.

ACTION: Debby will follow up with Tom about issuing a policy update.

There is a similar situation with mobile phones. This issue was brought up at an AED meeting and that group has been looking at options on how to handle equity for positions that require a mobile phone. ACTION: Tom Miller is investigating the liability and tax issues associated with the various options.

1. 360 Degree Evaluations – the question has been raised as to whether there is a formal guideline for review of Program Leaders and Specialists. There is a review process in place for AEDs but not for PLs and Specialists. There should be an opportunity for confidential feedback from direct reports, peers and other co-workers.

ACTION: Dr. Wright will look into this and try to make the process in place known.

1. Effective Communication of Changes – There have been changes made to certain processes that may not have been shared on a broad basis. Most changes would involve documents on UME Answers.

ACTION: Debby will make a concerted effort to send out an email when documents or information is changed on UME Answers.

1. Hiring Process for Tenure-Track Positions – The question was raised as to the process for deciding what position would replace a county TT position that opens up; who makes the decision as to whether or not the position will be filled, with what type of position, is the local office or stakeholders consulted, are other Educator’s positions within that cluster taken into consideration. The hiring process would follow the Staffing Plan. This question appears to be another transparency issue. It was brought up that Specialist positions were not addressed during the Staffing Plan process and were to be addressed at a later date. That has not happened yet. It was also brought up that Specialists and RECs are not recognized as being part of clusters and miss out on information/events since they have no formal affiliation with clusters.

ACTION: Dr. Wright will look into the Staffing Plan and, with the assistance of his leadership team, evaluate the best way to address this issue.

1. Other concerns – Elections are to be started next month, how do we proceed with the proposed Plan of Organization changing the way the FSAC membership is elected? Dr. Wright believes the current process of elections is very adequate for equal representation by employee category, geographic area and diversity.

ACTION: Elections should continue as planned. Dr. Wright has no plans to change the current process.

The communication, actions and decisions of our organization were discussed and how these processes can best be related back to all. It was suggested the Agenda items be in the *Newsline* with a link to the FSAC website minutes.

ACTION: Dr. Wright plans to improve communication efforts for all to be aware of what’s happening in our organization.

Dr. Wright stressed that Extension is “our organization” not “his organization.” Everyone needs to work collectively to be successful.

Moving items such as UME Answers to the WIKI was also discussed. WIKI is a struggle for some, as proven through the lack of comments by staff on the Plan of Organization. It was noted that there were employees that tried to comment but were unsuccessful using WIKI. Is there a point of contact, instructions on use, etc? How can issues be fixed? It was suggested that WIKI be a training that is recorded with specific information such as which server best supports WIKI, how to move around, how to get back to the page you were on without totally closing out and re-entering the site, etc.

ACTION: Debby will talk to Brad Paleg regarding this issue.

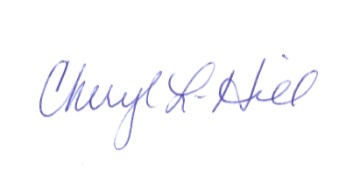
Meeting dates for 2014 are:

June 11 –Face-to-Face meeting for existing and newly elected members from 11 am -3 pm

October 8 – Face-to-Face meeting from 10 am-2 pm

It was suggested that Andrew talk at the next Admin Monday regarding the function of FSAC and the current membership contacts. Dr. Wright will put him on Monday’s schedule.

Andrew thanked everyone for their attendance. With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl L. Hill

FSAC Secretary