**Minutes of the Fall All Faculty Meeting**

September 26, 2017

EP 254

Chair Rod Rice called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. President Puszynski and 33 faculty members attended.

Dr. Puszynski began with a summary of the background of his appointment as interim President. The appointments did not require him to cease being VP of Research and he plans to remain in that position after the new President is appointed.

Two positions have been added to the Executive Council, the Chair of the Faculty Senate and Dean of Graduate Education.

**Questions from the faculty**

1. What are your plans and concerns as Acting President?

Not too many long-term plans as his appointment is interim. The previous budget debt will be paid off in December. In addition, the school receives about 20.5% of its operating expenses from the state, 30% from tuition and fees, and 15% from research expenditures with the remainder coming from federal aid and other sources. The primary concerns are enrollment and ensuring a smooth transition to his replacement.

The main impact of decreased enrollment is in the budget. The drop in new students this year equates to approximately $1-1.5 million in lost revenue. The reasons for the decreased enrollment are thought to be mainly related to scholarship availability.

1. How can we reverse this downward trend in enrollment?

We tried a Goto Mines event in Colorado but it was poorly attended. Bi-weekly meetings are being held currently with the Foundation and Alumni Association to work on better communication strategies to appeal to prospective students. For instance, scholarships are generally two-tiered with the freshman year scholarship coming from the school with later year scholarships funded by departments; however, information about later year scholarships isn’t always communicated well.

Dr. Puszynski estimates we need three times the amount of scholarship money we have now. Currently we give out about $650,000 in scholarships, with the largest scholarships being approximately $12,000. This hurts our ability to get top students. Other states offer discounted tuition to lure students away from SD Mines but this is not allowed by state law in SD. South Dakota Mines has over16,000 living alumni, of whom about 3,000 give consistently while an additional 2,000 give occasionally to the school. Dr. Puszynski believes there’s a need for more alumni, industry, and local giving. He also pointed out that places like SDSU subsidize the engineering college with funds from the larger campus, which we can’t do and hence we suffer when SDSU makes these comparisons.

Graduate education is down one person this year, with fewer foreign students. To increase diversity, more foreign graduate students may be necessary. Some of these may be funded by their government, but may not be good students, so questions arise about whether we should lower standards or let them go elsewhere.

Another issue Dr. Puszynski cited concerns high school dual credit option and online courses, which hurt our credit hour numbers, although exactly how much is difficult to determine with precision.

1. What about using graduate students to teach courses rather than hiring lecturer-level faculty? Having teachers closer in age to the students could be a boon.

Provost Kouris and the many parents do not want courses taught by graduate students. Doing this could also negatively affect accreditation.

1. What about having lecturer positions be tenure-track to attract better candidates?

We need flexibility and some people like having teaching-only positions. We already lose considerable tenure-track faculty in their third or fourth year–about when they are getting accustomed to the system and can generate fundable proposals.

In other areas such as research,Dr. Puszynski observed that we currently have about $8 million in new grants in 2017 compared to $14 million in 2016. For the size and type of school we are, $20 million is closer to the level expected. He believes a science and engineering faculty who teaches four courses per year should be submitting 2-3 grant proposals annually. He also pointed out that the effective F&A rate is about 17% (the federal F&A rate is 39%) as state grants generate no F&A nor do equipment grants or tuition remissions. At SD Mines, about 20% of the faculty generate approximately 80% of research grant funds.

1. The faculty have provided feedback with respect to new plans and ideas for future institutional growth, but these plans and ideas require funds. Where will these funds come from, particularly with respect to funds for new programs, when existing programs have been starved for funds over the past several years?

The Provost and President believe we shouldn’t stagnate as a university, so we need new, more in-demand majors to attract students. While it is recognized that we are understaffed, we can add lecturers or make tenure-track faculty teach more. Perhaps some faculty can be shifted to newer departments.

**Additional discussion**

Budget planning for next academic year is underway. Dr. Puszynski noted that we are expecting about the same number of new Freshmen next year, so we will again be down in enrollment as more students will graduate than new Freshman arrive. Fortunately, our debt to the BoR will be paid off by December. One possible budget saving could come from eliminating some of the course duplication on campus by looking for areas that can be combined.

Concerning questions about improving our local and industrial public relations, Dr Puszynski said departments are primarily responsible for these (particularly the industrial ones), so it is up to the individual departments to build these relationships. When asked whether there were faculty-local high school relationships, Dr. Puszynski responded that there are a few and the recently funded Research Experience for Teachers may be a useful route to increase these.

Finally, Dr. Puszynski announced that On December 2, 2017, there will be a $1,000 per couple Presidential Dinner to raise money for the school. The list of attendees is somewhat restricyed as the Foundation would not allow their common donors to be solicited.

Dr. Rice adjourned the meeting at 4:56 pm.