**Chairs Council**

**Chair’s April Report**

**Dean’s Cabinet Meeting, April 6**

Faculty mentoring. A proposal to establish a formal mentoring program within each department and coordinated across colleges was largely rejected by the deans. Many questioned the need for a formal, highly structured program, in part because of the additional burden it would place on chairs. Asst. Provost Johnson agreed to work with the chairs and deans to revise the proposal.

Advisor benchmarks. The deans discussed a presidential request that the university set benchmarks for advisors. The deans pointed to the many tasks being handled by the college advisors and the problems of developing a simply, unidimensional matrix. Sluder, Asst. Provost for Student Success, is attempting to work with the president on this.

Announcements.

* Bartel noted that the salary equity study was complete and that the information would be released after it is first presented to the President. Noting that a large number of faculty are below the average pay at peer institutions, he acknowledged that the issue centers on how to respond to the deficiencies.
* Bartel referred to the broad-based opposition to the concealed weapons on

campus legislation. University presidents, the Faculty Senate, and many others have expressed opposition, apparently, to little avail.

**Executive Committee Meeting with Dr. Bartel, April 11, 2016**

The EC raised the following agenda items:

* Salary study. As noted above, the study is complete. It shows about 600 faculty below the average pay levels and only 80-100 not facing an equity problem. The goal, he noted, is to get to 100% of the mid-point. Such an adjustment, however, would take a 5% increase in tuition: a move the legislature is unlikely to approve for next year. Institutional Research examined the data and found no correlation linking equity deficits to race or gender.
* Adjunct pay. This is controlled by TBR and once MTSU is no longer under TBR authority, the institution will be free to increase adjunct pay. Bartel insisted that the institution wants to do this and believes that it can be done easily once we are under our own Board of Trustees. He suggested a minimum of $1,000 per credit hour.
* Graduate Assistant Stipends. Alluding to the lack of change over many years, Bartel pointed to the need to increase stipends for graduate assistants. This would have a more pronounced impact on the budget than adjunct pay. Still, this sounded like something on the agenda for next year.
* Enrollment/ Budget outlooks. Early reports on fall enrollment look good with first time freshman and transfers slightly ahead of this time last year. The yield (applicants to admissions) is also up as are graduate applications. Enrollment will drive the budget, especially since there is little likelihood of a tuition increase or major gains via the funding formula. He did mention that with the structural changes, MTSU will no longer have to fund TBR, likely resulting in a net savings for the institution. He suggested that funds might be found to increase faculty travel or department operating budgets.
* Dean Searches. The search for the Dean of the University College and Dean of the Graduate College and VP for Research are proceeding at a brisk pace. Both committees have submitted a short list of candidates to interview by phone early next week. He anticipates on campus interviews for 2-3 candidates for each position the following week. Notices will be sent out to all regarding these visits and presentations. He notes that the search is expected to conclude before the end of the semester.

Bartel raised the following items:

* P&T Workshops. The office of the Provost has organized a series of promotion and tenure workshops for first year faculty, for women in STEM, and for candidates within two years of promotion or tenure. He envisions this as an ongoing service.
* Chair workshop. Bartel would like to organize a workshop for chairs early next year and invite in an expert in the area. He asked that the Chairs Council identify the top five topics we would like to see addressed.

Faculty Survey

Charles Apigian and I have been working with the President and President-elect of the Faculty Senate, Tricia Farwell and Mary Martin, to create a Faculty Survey. The survey provides faculty an opportunity to express views and provide feedback on a wide range of issues. In preparation of the instrument, we have requested survey questions from administrators, faculty senators, chairs, and colleagues. We hope to administer the survey prior to the end of the semester with results to be presented early in the fall semester. The idea is to conduct the survey with minor revisions annually.

Updated Policies from Watson Harris

Watson Harris, who will be retiring at the end of this year, shared three updated policies sent as an attachment to an email containing this report and the agenda for our April meeting. The three policies included: Instructional Space Use Policy; Schedule Production Guidelines; and the 2018 Academic Calendar. In sharing these documents, Dr. Harris asked that I point out that there is really nothing new in these policies, but that chairs should have the policies and know that the institution will likely to a better job of enforcing the policies in the future. She emphasized that faculty should not arrange for special meeting for the final exams outside of the day/time place established for final exams. She added that any proposals to operate outside of the standard calendar would require the approval of the committee and must be based on student needs, not faculty desires.