ASF Meet & Confer  
Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2010

**Present:**  Judith Ramaley, Sally Johnstone, Connie Gores, Kurt Lohide, Lori Reed, Ken Janz, Jim Schmidt, Barbara Oertel, Sarah Olcott, Vicki Decker, Alicia Reed, Jill Quandt, Jenny Lamberson

1. **ASF Representation and Input on Master Plan**
ASF has representation on the Facilities and Finance Committee which is working on the master plan. However, we were wondering if ASF as a unit will have the opportunity to be involved and meet with the consultants? In previous master planning processes ASF was invited to participate. Administration replied that this opportunity has not been set up for any other constituency groups at this time. Our ASF representatives on the Facilities and Finance Committee should be sharing all of the information on the master planning process with the rest of the membership as they are representing us. The representatives should be soliciting questions, comments and feedback from the constituency group. A major difference in the master planning process this time around is the budget. It was postponed because of the cost. There is concern that additional meetings with other groups will increase the cost and we can’t afford to do this. The new master plan will be a modest revision of the current plan and not a major revision. We are trying to meet MnSCU requirements related to the master plan. The remaining steps of the master plan will be communicated at the next Meet & Confer but we need to use our ASF Facilities and Finance Committee members to communicate the rest of the information back to the membership.

2. **Restructuring Due to Retirements**
A handout on the vacant position review process was distributed and explained by Lori Reed. This process was developed by cabinet over the last few weeks. Supervisors and Vice Presidents are evaluating all open positions to determine if they are essential, if they can be eliminated, or if they can be combined or reduced. They are also determining if the functions of the positions should be reviewed using the educational lean process or a review of best practices to increase efficiency and better utilize technology. Lori Reed, Ann MacDonald and Theresa Waterbury are meeting with all of the Vice Presidents to assist with this. Vice Presidents will bring back their recommendation to cabinet. Once the President approves, the search process will start. Layoff lists and claiming opportunities may not allow us to fill positions as we intended though. Which specific positions will be replaced is still a work in progress. Some positions are moving quicker than others. Deans and Vice Presidents should be sharing with their employees what is happening. ASF reminded administration and HR that delays in filling positions may result in the need for extra duty pay to be enacted. Lori Reed assured us she will be sensitive to contractual implications during this process.

3. **All University Committees**
Nancy Peterson recently did some research on the All University Committees. She found that in general, committees are working and being productive. The main finding of concern is that the portal is not be used to communicate the work the committees are doing. Ken Janz reported that only 5 committees are actively posting to the portal. Some committees are just not taking the responsibility to post their information despite that there has been sufficient opportunity for training on the process. ASF suggested it might be helpful if more than one person per committee has the access to contribute to the portal. If any ASF members have any feedback on the portal please share this with either Ken Graetz or Ken Janz. Dr. Ramaley will be reviewing the
list of committees and determining which are mission critical and then she will be bringing a possible new structure of committees to the constituency groups to get additional input and suggestions.

4. Meet & Confer Agenda Items
ASF wanted to remind Administration that there are contractual items Administration should be adding to the Meet & Confer agendas each month. Dr. Ramaley was under the assumption that All University Committees are reporting back, but it has become apparent that this is not always working so Administration will now bring items directly to Meet & Confer since Meet & Confer is the official means of communication between Administration and ASF. Core materials will be covered at Meet & Confers but Dr. Ramaley requests our guidance on topics of concern to our members. Budget updates will be a regular topic. ASF will get our Meet & Confer items to Administration farther in advance and with more description.

5. Budget Update
Dr. Ramaley asked the group if we felt her budget memorandums were sufficient. It was suggested that information should be shared in the interim if it was appropriate as information can be calming to people. There will be a new budget memo coming out in about a week. Kurt Lohide shared that there is an incredible amount of work being put into the budget with many unknown variables. New information will only be brought out when there is some substance behind it. Unfortunately, we need to make decisions now based on an unknown future. We can all help by looking at our own areas and determining where we can lower costs and operate leaner. That is how each of us can be of real service to the University. We need to rethink what we do and how we do it in order to lower instructional costs. Administration is looking at a variety of things including fewer adjuncts and fixed term employees and larger class sizes, etc. 69% of our general fund is dedicated to delivering our current curriculum. Everything we can do this spring to save money will create a nest egg for the next biennium. The University is hoping to save half of the dollar value of the positions vacated due to early retirement. This fall, some programs will go through re-thinking and re-design. We need to be clear about essential learning outcomes. Mapping will be done. The result will be a tighter, more powerful curriculum. We will be thinking about how we deliver our core services with hopes that we can maintain the quality of our services. Dr. Ramaley cannot guarantee that there will not be retrenchment. Federal stimulus money will disappear. We have to make assumptions based on the little that we know. The current estimate is a 2.5 million dollar reduction per year by FY12. The President has to present the biennial budget by the end of this spring to the board. This is six months sooner than normal. So, she will need to decide what she is going to say when she has no clue what the budget will look like that far out. She has to plan for something that can only be estimated. Unfortunately, Dr. Ramaley will need to give notice for some things long before she really needs to. This semester is critical. Vice Presidents and Deans will be given a fiscal mark in working through the rest of this semester. We are preparing to thrive in the long run. WSU used stimulus funds to reduce our base budgets. Not all of our sister institutions did. We are in better shape than our sister institutions. This was an investment. We need to protect that investment. Take it serious and do what you can. We need to think of things differently. We won’t necessarily be working harder; we just need to figure out what we are not going to do.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jenny Lamberson
ASF Secretary/Treasurer
March 11, 2010