**President Report**

**Faculty Senate**

**March 25, 2019**

* **Exploration of mutual mentoring models**. This is a brief summary of the application of this model used at several organizations, premised on the belief that each of us has new things to learn from others quite different than us. The president’s office has shared with some members of the SGA our intention to explore ways to use such a model to help us better understand, or at least place into context, diverse student perspectives about learning. <https://www.umass.edu/tefd/mutual-mentoring-model>
* **President Trump’s free speech executive order**. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/03/21/white-house-executive-order-prods-colleges-free-speech-program-level-data-and-risk> We believe that the policies and practices of the university already establish our commitment to the protection of expression rights imbedded in the First Amendment to the US Constitution. Several other commentators have also noted that this portion of the executive order likely redundant with first amendment protections in place at public universities nationally. Several other components of the order, however, will create new obligations on higher education institutions if they are put into place. Noted in the above link: “The college transparency component of the order will direct the Education Department to produce a website by 2020 that will allow student loan borrowers to view information about their loans, including their total debt, monthly payment when entering repayment and available repayment options. Betsy DeVos, the U.S. Secretary of Education, already had announced plans to create a single website for student borrowers as part of an overhaul of the federal loan servicing system. The expanded College Scorecard will include data for each certificate, degree and graduate and professional program on median earnings, median debt, graduate PLUS loan debt, parent PLUS loan debt and other metrics. The order directs the Treasury Department to work with the Education Department to produce program-level earnings data.” Should these come to be implemented, it will require considerable collaborative work by the university to determine post graduate outcomes for our students.
* **Senate Proposal on Creation of a University Wide Committee on Equity, Inter-culturalism and Inclusivity** We applaud the efforts of our colleagues for the proposal found in the minutes of the last senate meeting. Implementing the proposal in final form as a university, and not simply a faculty senate/academic affairs action, will take additional consultation and refinement with the university community. We will make every effort to meet the time line included in the proposal (“We conclude with a respectful request for a timely response from administration to this motion, ideally during the initial proposal presentation/meeting, or, if further discussion is necessary, by the end of the Summer 18 semester.”).

As reported by the Provost at the last senate meeting, work had already begun to address immediately changes in training requirements for search committee across campus (staff and faculty alike) on issues of inclusion and diversity. The shared work of Dr. Demmitt, Dr. Abdullah, and Mr. Byrd led to actions that will result in mandatory training for search committee chairs, members and hiring managers to ensure that searches are in compliance with all state and federal regulations and to promote a diverse and qualified applicant pool. The group believes that such training could be in place by May 1.

* **Legislative Update** Last Day of the session is still April 2 at midnight. As of Friday, formula funding and salary increases remain intact. No funding reductions were made as a result of the audit findings on retirement fund issues previously discussed with the Senate. Final votes had not been taken yet on issues related to Dual Enrollment, although it appears that if there are reductions in coverage, they will be modest.
* **Thanks and Questions**