

**Student Commission Meeting
Thursday, November 12, 2020
Zoom Meeting**

Present: John Frischmon, Marc Gaberkoff, Bonnie Gorman, Tim Griffin, Lynda Heinonen, Beka Horsch, Joel Isaacson, Mia Kempainen, Jeremy Lundy, Pattie Luokkanen, Keith Machiela, Michael Maurer, Wesley McGown, Laura Putwen, Lauren Spahn, Reese Wagner, Matt Weekley, Chris Wojick

Welcome – Bonnie

Updates

Student Remote/Hybrid Workload – Michael

Michael updated the committee on the Student Remote/Hybrid workload and reported back the results of his discussion with the Academic flex team on the issue. From that discussion they identified a few key reasons why students are feeling overwhelmed with work. They included:

- Students have more (but smaller) assignments this semester, micro assignments are one of the recommendations for teaching online classes and this is intended to prevent students from falling behind. This is putting a larger organizational demand on the students to keep track of all the assignments.
- The university has said (this year and previous years) that the average student taking 15 credits should be spending 30 hours per week outside of lecture studying (homework, project, test preparation, self-study, etc.) Surveys have shown that the average Michigan Tech student was only spending 17 hours per week studying.
- With the micro assignments, and other online learning techniques the instructors are implementing for online learning the study time more closely prescribed (more time on homework/projects, less on self-study) which is requiring students to put in closer to the 30 hours.
- The flex committee recognized that there was a difference in expectations between the students and the university for how much time they need to put in outside of lecture.
- It was brought up that the 1st year students' grades were comparable to previous years, while the returning students (2nd+years) have professors reporting lower than normal grade averages.

Comments included:

- It was commented that when the faculty completed the online training a recommendation was to prescribe smaller assignments to verify that students were learning so for that reason a lot of faculty adopted this.

- These micro assignments feel like a lot of extra work.
- The problem does not seem as prevalent in the freshman class so they think it is an expectation of the student vs. what the University expects. Adjustments will have to be made on both sides – the professors need to clearly clarify what they expect and the students need to know they can put in the required effort.
- If the faculty are controlling the student’s study time it’s not allowing them their own preferred method and what works best for that individual student.
- There is a lot of extra work.
- Labs don’t seem to be affected like the remote classes.
- Laura reported the following for Academic and Community Conduct:
 - Fall 2019 (entire semester) – 49 cases
 - August to current date – 69 cases
 - They are seeing an increase of academic integrity cases and workload is often cited as one of the causes of poor decision making.

Inquiry on Women's Restroom Update – Michael

Michael commented that Capital Project Requests are due soon and wondered what was the status of the women’s restrooms? Tim reported the request had been submitted last year but had been rejected. The request has been submitted again this year.

Non-Motorized Transportation Working Group - Dan

Table until next meeting.

New Items

Campus Barrier Free Access/Accessibility – Michael

Mike reported the issue of accessibility into buildings had been brought forward at a recent Graduate Student Government meeting. He commented that some buildings have no automated doors but the signage indicates they are available. He wondered would could be done to update the signage or make it clearer.

Tim commented that Jake Guter (Assistant Director, Planning and Construction) is the expert in this area and asked that Michael reach out to him to discuss. Tim commented that an accessible door/building sign indicates the building is accessible via ramp or has a proper width door but an auto-door is not required.

Michael will reach out to Jake to clarify. Bonnie commented that he could also be invited to an upcoming meeting to explain accessibility to campus buildings.

Laura reported the Institutional Equity website has a Barrier Reporting form <https://www.mtu.edu/equity/access-disability/barrier/> and commented that if students or staff have a concern they can use this to report it.

Interfraternity Council (IFC)

John Frischman reported he will be moving out of his IFC position and won't be attending the Student Commission meetings after the Thanksgiving break. He thanked Bonnie for her service to the school and felt that students were comfortable talking to and looked up to her. He will find a replacement from IFC to attend upcoming meetings and will let Lynda know who it is.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10 and Bonnie reported that Joe Cooper (Director of Financial Aid) has been named the Interim VP for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and will start to attend the Student Commission meetings at that point.

Mike Meyer will be also attending the December meeting to discuss the student hybrid/remote workload.

2021 Spring Meeting Dates

- Thursday, January 14 -
- Thursday, January 28 -
- Thursday, February 11 -
- Thursday, February 25 -
- Thursday, March 25 -
- Thursday, April 8 -
- Thursday, April 22 -