Chair Patricia Plummer's Address, Spring Meeting of the Faculty, May 6, 1996

One of the "perks" of being Chair of the Faculty Council is being invited to participate in the numerous awards ceremonies held in recognition of Faculty, Staff and Students. This gives one an exceptional opportunity to see the wealth of talent which is present at MU.

With good reason, the reputation of MU in the state has never been higher. More students want to attend. Our journalism department continues to be number 1. Our medical school's reputation is growing, with family practice program moving up to 5th in the nation in one poll. In addition to this reputation of the strength of our academic offerings, much of the positive feeling about the university is its service to the citizens of Missouri. An example of this service, illustrative of the way in which the activities of a Research 1 University benefits the entire state—is MOREnet, an initiative of Campus Computing, that has brought the information superhighway to Missouri over the past five years. Currently funded in excess of eight million dollars per year from grants, contracts and fees, MOREnet now connects almost all of higher education, about 400 of 500 public school districts, public libraries, state government and many community networks, such as COIN here in Columbia.

At the Spring faculty meeting, it is customary for the Chair to recall some of the activities of the MU Faculty Council during this year. At the faculty meeting in the fall, a proactive agenda for Faculty Council was announced and as a result, the 1995-96 Academic Year has been a busy and, I believe, a productive one for the Faculty Council. A summary has been provided and we plan to have them as part of the minutes so I again will only give you the highlights.

In the fall, the Council played a leading role in opening up the discussions between the committee appointed by the UM central administration and Tenet about the possible sale of University Hospital. With the help and support of faculty, staff and friends, including those in Jefferson City, questions were raised whose answers made it apparent that the "deal" was not in the best interest of the academy or the citizens of Missouri.

The Intercampus Faculty Council was reorganized creating an executive committee with one member from each campus. Members of the executive committee would all be invited to participate.

Board, resulting in a four-fold increase in faculty participants. This reorganization of the IFC has given your faculty representatives much more access to the President and to the members of the Board, virtually insuring faculty attendance at all meetings and provides multiple pathways for communication.

Members of Council took the lead in organizing and sponsoring a University Forum in the Fall on "Academic Freedom, Scholarship and Entrepreneurial Activities", featuring Provost Sheridan and AAUP President James Pearley and discussion on this important topic continues.

Council has continued to monitor healthcare issues and has representatives on the University Benefits Committee as well as the Healthcare Oversight Committee.

The bulk of the work of Council is accomplished through the standing committees. I have been fortunate to had had very hard working committees lead by very able chairs. Special Projects initiated a Council "web page", with substantial enhancements and links scheduled to be implemented this summer. Faculty Affairs Committee, has streamlined the process for evaluation of campus-wide and divisional administrators. Council also approved a policy for dealing with disabilities. Under the leadership of Academic Affairs, the campus, now, for the first time in its history has an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. I and the Student Affairs committee have been working with the Office of Student Affairs and with the campus standing committees which advise the Vice Chancellor to enhanced communications and cooperation. Fiscal Affairs Committee is continuing to work with the Office of Institutional Research and the Deans to monitor allocation of resources. This committee will have additional responsibilities as the policy changes in graduate student fee waivers are implemented.

As Council Chair, I have had an opportunity to work with the chair of Staff Council, and the presidents of MSA and GPC to improve the timeliness of appointment to the Standing Committees of Campus. I anticipate that our combined efforts will allow committees to begin their work six weeks to two months earlier in the fall term than in past years. I especially appreciate the efforts of the student leaders in affecting this change.

As a part of our proactive agenda, Council resolved to be more accessible to MU students and their concerns. The cooperation and communication between Council and the student organizations had improved and I want to acknowledge the help of the student leaders, MSA Presidents Jim Massey, 1995 and Elisabeth Barton, 1996 and GPC Presidents Ken Smith, 1995 and Jenny Brown, 1996. You received a handout summarizing some of the many accomplishments.
More of our undergraduates are participating in research than ever before. This is evidenced by their presentations at regional conferences and professional meetings and 30 presentations at the Missouri Academy of Sciences this spring.

At the national level, our undergraduates are receiving recognition and awards in such diverse areas as animal sciences, mathematics, and theatre (both performance and design).

In service, several hundred students participated in the Day of Caring in the fall and again in the spring.

In addition to their research and scholarly presentation and publications, our graduate students have shown they are among the best in the nation with special recognition in the areas of photojournalism, geography, chemical engineering and creative writing and poetry.

In the area of teaching, our graduate teaching assistants have provided superior class and laboratory experiences for our undergraduates and 78 were singled out for special recognition in teaching.

To close on a somewhat more personal note, I am very proud to be a member of the faculty at MU and honored to have served this last year, as Chair of the MU Faculty Council on University Policy. This is the kind of experience that drives home an appreciation of the great strengths and diversity of this campus. At the same time it forces one to an even greater understanding and appreciation of Academy as a whole.

I thought I understood this. In my remarks at the Fall Faculty meeting, I lamented how the pressures from all sides have caused many of the faculty to identify more with their discipline than with the institution or even the concept of the university. I commented on the need for the faculty to renew their commitment to the concept of the academy of scholars and challenged all of us to work to insure its health and survival.

However, over the course of this year, I have become convinced that we have no time to waste. This conviction became stronger upon my recent re-reading of “Animal Farm”, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its publication. In its broadest terms, Orwell’s satire reminds us of the fragility of principles and the difficulties of practical governance. This re-reading increased my belief that the time is now for the faculty to commit actively to guide the university. To quote Sanford Pinsker in a recent issue of the “Chronicl”, a “struggle is underway for the very soul of higher education”.

To begin, we must re-install civility. We need to re-unite the disciplines in support of the community of scholars. We are much more than dispensers of facts; we may be the last refuge for true freedom of inquiry. We may be the last place where the citizens of tomorrow can learn what it means to read, think and discourse critically. First and foremost, our students need to learn how to come to reasonable and rational positions. They need to learn to listen to unpopular ideas and consider unpleasant options and realize that simple solutions to complex problems are usually wrong. They need to learn to disagree without being disagreeable. The public’s love affair with technology cannot be allowed to convert the academy into a trade or vocational school. Both have a valid place but it is not the place of the university.

Faculty at MU support these ideas in principle. It is the essence of MU philosophy which is printed on the back of many of our utility envelopes. But these principles seem to have been changed and their very history was rewritten as a justification. Have we, the faculty, relaxed our vigilance in the face of those who would make us just a business, or who would turn us against each other, attempting to put researcher against teacher, humanist against scientist? Do we think often enough about our guiding principles? As citizens of the academy, we owe it loyalty and we have the right to demand that this loyalty be reciprocated.

In keeping with this idea, perhaps the first commandment should be: “All members of the Academy are worthy and should be treated with respect”.

The students who are here are among the brightest and most talented in the state and the nation and hence, the world. They did not come to the university to be made to feel insignificant; to fail; they came with faith and hope that at the end of their stay with us, life would be better, for them and for society.

Each member of the faculty is also an exceptional individual, having spent decades in learning and sharing that learning. They have succeeded where only a few have even dared to try. They did not struggle all this time to not perform and not produce. Each of us came with hope and a willingness to work and an expectation of success.

The students come to us to learn from us and we have the obligation to teach them how to live with each other, respecting each others’ talents, beliefs, and interests. Different is not better, is not worse, is just different. We, the faculty, must serve as role models. And how can we be those role models if we allow all faculty to be forced into the same mold of teaching, research and service, for all of their careers? How can we be role models when we don’t respect the scholarship or service of our colleagues? We must insist that “all faculty are equal” and not add the Orwellian refrain “but some are more equal than others”. To again quote William Danforth, “faculty must embody and serve as guardians of the values that should permeate the institutional culture...”.

In the Academy, we cannot tolerate the oft quoted maxim “perception is reality”. To do so is to deny our very reason for existence. This does not mean that we can neglect the perception but we cannot permit lies to go unchallenged nor can we erect facades to disguise our shortcomings.

The third commandment should reaffirm our commitment to freedom of speech and freedom of discovery - Academic Freedom for All. For the academy to continue and thrive, we must be able to discuss and conduct research on unpopular topics. We must be free to pursue ideas, regardless of whether society is willing to fund them. We must never be a participant or supporter of those projects or persons who would harm our fellow humans or our world. And we must never “prostitute” ourselves for the “bottom line”.

To take charge of our destiny will require commitment, willingness to explore new ways of conducting research and disseminating knowledge. In our individual disciplines, we constantly change and push back the boundaries; in a similar vein, we must be responsive to the changing needs of society. Times and society will not permit us to continue as in the past. We must work together to discover ways to work with and use technology without abandoning individual scholarship and mentorships which have served us and prior generations so well. Because we abhor the trivialization of our activities contained in pop phases like TQM and greater efficiency and “thru put”, we cannot refuse to consider change if it do so increases our effectiveness. We also must be accountable to those
Only we can ensure that it remains healthy and committed to the principles initiated at its creation over 500 hundred years ago. If we make that commitment and take it upon ourselves to lead in designing and embracing the changes needed for the vitality of the academy, I have faith, it will survive another 500 years.

Minutes of the May 2, 1996
Faculty Council Meeting

Attendance
Present: Edward Adelstein, Gary Allee, Jim Brown (for Lloyd Barrow), Hardeep Bhullar, Benedict Campbell, Leonard Forte, Jere Francis, Allen Hahn, Peter Hall, Edward Hunvald, Nancy Knipping, Charles Knowles, John Miles, Jerry Browning (for Marian Minor), Johnetta Morrison, Alex Pickard, Glenn Pierce, Ron Plain, Patricia Plummer, Michael Porter, Don Ranly, Ray Rothenberger, Dennis Sentilles, Mary Ellen Sievert, Susan Taylor, Harry Tyler, Gilbert Youmans, Bob Almony (Librarians), Roy Utz (Retirees), and Mabel Grimes (Black Faculty and Staff). Absent: Craig Anderson, and Sara Walker.

Approval of Minutes
Chair Pat Plummer called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. in Room S110 of the Memorial Union. The minutes of the April 11, 1996 were approved as presented.

Discussion Items
Guest: Pat Morton, Chief Planning Budget Officer & Director Institutional Research (Columbia Campus). Pat spoke of faculty salary comparisons for the various levels of faculty between MU and the AAU mean and the AAU median. (Photocopies of his overheads are available either from the Faculty Council Office or from Bob Almony in Ellis Library.) From the data presented it appears that by 1998/99 MU hopes to achieve parity with the AAU median on salaries for full professors. For associate professors, it is forecast that we will achieve an average MU salary higher than the AAU median for the 1996/97 academic year. For assistant professors we have already achieved the AAU median for MU salaries. As of 1995/96 14 public AAU institutions' salaries fall below that of MU's for assistant professors. He also presented some information that shows the percentage off market by individual school and college. Finally it was noted that when the cost of living is calculated into these graphs, that MU has already reached its goal of surpassing the median of AAU.

Guest: Charles Schroeder, Vice Chancellor Student Affairs. Vice Chancellor Charles Schroeder presented a written summary of events in his division over the last year. (Copies of his document can be obtained from Becky Panders in the Faculty Council Office.) His document lists 7 major priority areas: 1) create student-centered programs and services that foster student success; 2) implement a systematic research and evaluation effort that generates timely and relevant information on student characteristics, institutional impacts and program effectiveness; 3) create learning communities through collaborative partnerships with students, academic administrators, faculty and others; 4) encourage and reward the participation of faculty members in co-curricular areas of university life; 5) promote understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity through various programmatic efforts, policy statements, and strategic initiatives; 6) develop and implement strategies that assist students in acquiring educational resources and opportunities to acquire through investment in various out of class experiences; and 7) advocate the development of interrelated enrollment management systems which aid student's matriculation at MU from perspectives of recruitment, retention, graduation and placement.

After his report, Faculty Council was reminded that the Freshman Convocation for the 1996/97 year will be on Monday, August 19, at 4:30 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to participate.

Report of Officers
Dennis Sentilles gave the following report from IFC. Gen Care's response to the Faculty Council resolution on health care of 3/2/95 was distributed to Council. In brief, a reading of their response suggests that the principles, unanimously approved by Council, that we would like our health care plan to meet are not being met. On the Faculty Council principle that: "it is appropriate that GenCare macro-manage the university health care plan, but not that it micro-manage it"; and, "no patient should ever find himself or herself to negotiate with GenCare in order to obtain coverage for what his or her physician orders or recommends", the response was that "while the participating physician may recommend a particular procedure to the patient, the patient must choose whether or not to comply with the proposed treatment as it relates to limitations and exclusions in the health plan". Further: "by definition a function of the HMO to assure that all rules and regulations of the plan are followed ... this does not assure that all services will be reimbursable".

On the Faculty Council concern about meeting the medical needs of faculty away on research leave or sabbatical the response was: "if the physician on-site determines that the patient is stable, but the patient refuses to transfer to the service area, the member becomes responsible for the expenses incurred." In other words, said Dennis Sentilles, managed care is not health care, it is a business. Professor Sentilles further commented, "your doctor is not the person in charge of medical decisions affecting your health, and your sabbatical or other leave could be sorely disrupted by a short-term but costly medical need while away. We are no longer able to purchase insurance against the cost of our medical needs as determined by a physician who is serving us. The art of medical practice has been replaced by a six-inch thick contract of rules and regulations."

IFC discussed again the need for dealing with concerns about the quality of spoken English by faculty in the classroom. The matter is now off the legislative calendar but could reappear at any time. IFC will draft a statement to faculty on this concern.

There was an hour’s discussion on teaching and faculty values. It was noted that: (1) mechanisms now in place do a good job of recognizing excellence and dealing with visible problems; (2) day-in/day-out classroom performance in the best professional sense is taken for granted and plays little role in merited reward; (3) faculty hold the key to "value change", if desired; and (4) evaluation typically follows the potential for reward more easily than to beg reward following extensive and likely resentful evaluation.

President Russell reported that things "look good" for the university budget. He repeated his concern that on the matter of English proficiency we find ways to "keep our own house in order." He expressed a concern about a generalized national decline in the repute of faculty before the public, though a considerable reservoir of support remains if we "take care"; in this context he mentioned, the rise of education as a for profit business.
is seeking “professional help for health planning”. Regarding the CBHE interest in education and telecommunications, Vice President Wallace repeated his belief that “it cannot be done right without the support and involvement of faculty”. Vice President Wallace also noted his active interest for over a year in library access and intercampus library loans, aiming for a 24-hour turn-around. Finally there was an assertion that the prevailing ratio of internal research funding to external research funding is “not right” for an institution of our size and stature.

Board of Curators Report
Gary Allee handed out a Board of Curators Report for the April 25th meeting. (Copies are available from Becky Flanders in the Faculty Council Office.) Executive Vice President Jim McGill announced there will be fewer health insurance programs this next year, but most employees will have equivalent or better insurance. President Russell reported that the appropriation bill before the General Assembly would result in the largest inflation adjusted percentage increase in the UM budget in more than a decade. President Russell also reported on the possibility of some changes in the benefits package next year. Details are not final at this time. The Board also discussed several major construction projects in the area of athletics, Brady Commons, and the new B & PA building.

Action Items
Service Award Plaques. Pat Plummer handed out nine faculty service award plaques to members of the Faculty Council who are leaving Council at this time. Plaques were awarded to: Hardeep Bhullar, Natural Resources; Gary Allee, Agriculture; Ron Plain, Agriculture; Craig Anderson, Arts and Science; Glenn Pierce, Arts and Science; Harry Tyrer, Engineering; Edward Hunvald, Law; Sara Walker, Medicine; and, Susan Taylor, Nursing.
Proposition 4: Evaluation of Deans. Peter Hall and Don Ranly handed out revised copies of the Proposition 4 document. Peter Hall then explained changes and differences in some detail. Peter also thanked Jean Hamilton, the former Council member who did the original work on this document, for her early and extensive work. After some discussion and recommended changes, Proposition 4 was passed unanimously by Faculty Council.

Standing Committee Reports
Academic Affairs: Academic Affairs reminded Faculty Council that the Academic Vice Provost and the Vice Provost for Research interviews will occur over the next couple of weeks.
Fiscal Affairs: No report, as Pat Morton was their presented speaker.
Special Projects: No report.
Student Affairs: No report.
Academic Affairs: No report.

Other Business
There were guests who presented a sample resolution for the consideration of Faculty Council on sexual orientation. They were notified that Faculty Council will get back to their concern sometime in June or July of this year.
There will be no May 9 meeting of Faculty Council.

Closed Session and Adjournment
Faculty Council moved into closed session at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of electing a chair and vice chair for the next academic year. Dennis Sentilles was elected Chair and Michael Porter was elected Vice Chair for 1996-97 academic year.
Respectfully submitted,
Robert A. Almony, J Recorder

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