Faculty Council Meeting
July 10, 2012

Present: Drs. Millonig, Roth, Walworth, Stock, Weiss, Hegyi, DiCicco-Bloom, Ayers, Walker

Absent: Drs. Aisner, Kim, Kiss

Guest: Dr. Christopher Molloy, Interim Provost for Biomedical and Health Sciences, Rutgers

The meeting opened with a short presentation by Nancy Walworth of the history of the NJ Higher Education Restructuring Act legislation, including the letters sent by the Faculty Council to various committees of state government, legislators, and administrators at UMDNJ and Rutgers. An interpretation of the presumed organization of Rutgers based on the legislation was presented for discussion, noting that many questions remain unresolved, including how the Graduate School is affected by the reorganization.

Dr. Christopher Molloy, Interim Provost for Biomedical and Health Sciences at Rutgers, gave a brief history of the Rutgers structure, including the legislation in 1956 that established pseudo-autonomy from the State. He noted that changes to Rutgers have to be approved by both the Rutgers Board of Trustees and Board of Governors.

From his position as interim provost, he had been working on the recommendations from the Barer Report, and stated that some components of the legislation were a surprise for Rutgers. Regarding the creation of new Chancellor and Provost positions, he was asked to define the role of these titles. Chancellors address both academic and administrative issues. Provosts address academic issues.

Comments from the faculty brought forward the sentiment that the legislated organization of the School of Biomedical and Health Sciences (SBHS) looks essentially the same as the present UMDNJ with a name change. Dr. Molloy stressed that he and the Rutgers administration are aware of and understand this concern. Dr. Molloy stressed that while the legislation states that the Chancellor of the SBHS is based in Newark, he/she would have an office here in New Brunswick and would report directly to the President of Rutgers. Dr. Molloy stressed that a national search for the position of Chancellor will begin after the arrival of the new Rutgers President, Dr. Robert Barchi, in September.

The role of the two provosts for the Newark and New Brunswick campuses of SBHS was further discussed. It is likely that the roles of the provosts could be different, since Rutgers Newark may have a different relationship with the UMDNJ units in Newark than are found in central NJ, where synergies between Rutgers and UMDNJ units are already strong. Dr. Molloy expressed confidence that Dr. Barchi appreciates the complexities of integrating assets of UMDNJ with Rutgers. Dr. Barchi has significant experience overseeing an academic medical center, including as Provost at U. Pennsylvania before becoming president of Thomas Jefferson University.

Given the dramatic changes in the restructuring plan outlined in the legislation, the integration teams that were previously working to integrate a subset of UMDNJ units with
Rutgers will re-launch their efforts, a process that will begin in the next few weeks. The Rutgers Boards will probably not vote until September or October. Rutgers does have options to renegotiate some issues. The Rutgers Boards have fiduciary responsibility for the university and the finances must be considered. Rutgers has a good credit rating and a tuition-based business plan now. It was also pointed out that the Governor has not signed the legislation to date.

Faculty raised concerns about the centralization of UMDNJ support services in Newark. Integration teams will consider operational aspects as a consequence of the merger. There won’t be two HR departments and two payrolls. Compliance will have to be maintained and we are still bound to the CIA agreement.

A question about the Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) was raised and it was clarified that CINJ faculty are still faculty of RWJMS, though the legislation stipulates that the director of CINJ will report directly to the President of Rutgers.

Dr. Molloy emphasized that Rutgers will want to help retain faculty and work to recruit strategically in a number of areas with input from the chairs and institute directors at the medical school.

Questions were raised regarding the legislation specifying a separate state appropriation to the SBHS. Dr. Molloy noted that the state appropriation to Rutgers accounts for about 20% of the budget, which is distributed to the campuses. He noted that Rutgers operates on a different business model than UMDNJ, which relies heavily on clinical revenue.

Dr. Molloy encouraged RWJMS faculty to think positively about the future of the medical school as part of Rutgers University. He emphasized that Rutgers has successfully recruited people who are excited to have a medical school as part of the University and that we need to retain good faculty and grow strategically in academic excellence in a number of areas.

A question from the floor asked about fund-raising and the status of the UMDNJ Foundation. Endowed funds committed to the medical school have to continue as committed.

One area of concern of the Faculty Council is communication. Dr. Molloy commented that a high priority for the consulting firm hired to oversee the merger (Price Waterhouse Cooper) is development of a communications team. Faculty emphasized the importance of communicating information regarding the merger directly to the faculty and Dr. Molloy stated that he believed he could put mechanisms in place to make that possible.

Dr. Molloy emphasized the goal to do what’s right for medical education and for Rutgers, which will include developing a strategic plan to identify ways to drive revenues to support the academic and clinical excellence desired for the new Rutgers.

Dr. Molloy encouraged RWJMS faculty to be optimistic and helpful, and to offer productive suggestions to facilitate a successful merger.

A suggestion was made from the floor to incorporate input from external advisors. Dr. Molloy indicated that he would consider that suggestion.
Voting on the minutes of the June meeting was deferred.