

Across the Bay

(Sorry for the delay on this, but so much of it is delicate to say.)

1. The situation Across the Bay is one of constant flux (in the plans of the Board of Regents, the Chancellor, the Maryland Legislators and the Governor's offices): just think of the openings and closings, changes of schedules, doing things live on campus and not doing them. We need to recognize how different, how unique each campus is and, as soon as possible, get back to having faculty from all the campuses visit UMES and all the other system campuses, to see what the campuses, their students, faculty members and administrators are really like. This is the only way that we really get to understand each other.
2. We need to recognize that, from the USM point of view, UMES is a tiny campus, a small group of students and faculty in comparison to the overall system. This means that we may receive less attention and guidance right now than we might in a more stable world. Fortunately, we have a President who is proactive and vigilant in representing our interests and a Provost with a deep understanding of the principles involved in such work as the realistic creation of the new Promotion/Tenure/Evaluation policies that are individualized to meet the needs of our highly diverse departments and programs.
3. Concerning these new P&T policies, I must admit to a lot of involvement in the process that has led to so many changes and expansion of the documents that departments will need to be looking at (much of it from remembering examples of individuals in earlier years at UMES (so that no one currently around need be used as an example) who were critical to our campus success but who were unique in ways not covered by earlier versions of the policies. I think that the most critical recognition is that, while it may have been considered convenient for review at higher levels to have some sort of "uniform" expectations across the campus, we need to give up this uniformity (and convenience) and instead respect that nature of the model we are trying to set up.
4. /at the same time, we are trying to deal with successful new policies about academic dishonesty and cheating, both system-wide and at UMES. Except for some general education courses mostly concerned with introducing our students to general ideas and concepts in fields new to those students, I can assure you that the process of stopping cheating is technically hopeless, system-wide and at UMES: the technology is moving too fast for us to keep up. [This is my own technical field: for anything involving the student needing to demonstrate knowledge about doing technical things in the real world, whether in health, business, science, technology or engineering-related fields, the "bad guys" are way out in front.]
5. Finally, on this campus, we need to stick together, even when our own area is sadly under-resourced, resist the temptation to try to steal resources from other areas, whether dollars or lines for faculty and staff. We cannot have a viable campus if people

with different styles of doing administration and dealing with others persist in disrespecting views that are different from their own or misrepresenting those others and their views to higher levels of administration. Over time, our President and her Cabinet found themselves again and again misinformed by those with special interests - - many of these folk are no longer around at UMES -- but the campus becomes ungovernable when the President's Cabinet again and again discovers that those whom they thought they could trust are so deeply involved in their own self-interests that they have become unworthy of that trust. We need to pull together for ONE UMES.

[Edit as you will, particularly if you find some stuff too dangerous to say: I'm afraid that it is all true.]

BILL CHAPIN