Voting members:	S. Bryant, Chair, P. Pasik, Vice Chair, D. Smith Van-Buren, S. Stofflet, J. Schwartz, C. Okolo, K. Yermak, A. Simonov
Ex-Officio members:	D. Barker, K. Elliott, K. Pennock, M. Hudson, J. Pedraza, T. Leahy, D. Barker and T. Shroud, (Job shadowing D. Barker), L. Boomer
Guests:	G. Pierce, Melissa McDaniels

The chair called the meeting to order at 3:05p. Absent a quorum, the agenda for the meeting could not be voted for approval; the minutes of October 23rd and November 27th were held in abeyance until the February meeting. However, members discussed the minutes to identify any statements needing correcting. One spelling correction was noted in the October minutes.

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Melissa McDaniels, Assistant Dean of the Graduate School and Director of the Teaching Assistant Program (GTA).

- Dr. McDaniels' responsibility is to provide centralized teaching support for graduate student teaching assistants; work with colleges and academic departments on their TA professional development programs. A partnership was formed and includes the Associate Provost of the Hub for Innovation in Learning and Technology (HILT), GTA, and other units that have a common purpose to determine the ecology of teaching and learning at MSU. Supporting MSU's student success mission, the goal is to change the teaching culture at MSU by promoting an inclusive environment by educating TA's about accessibility and accommodations. The partnership addresses questions about the needs of faculty, undergraduate learning assistants and academic advisors.
- The new TA institute curriculum devotes an hour to topics of access and accommodations, policies, strategies and resources. Approximately, 85% of the TA's are required by their academic departments to attend. In addition to training in August each year, there is a session called "Quick Start for Teaching" that happens in May, September and January. The curriculum now includes faculty.
- McDaniels has a Doctoral student whose passion is visual accessibility. She is working with guest speakers to make sure their materials are accessible and plans to establish on ongoing working relationship with PACDI to support TA's with disabilities and their teaching.
- #ITEACHMSU is a new way to talk about teaching broadly via website. You can participate in the traditional online way at your desk or you can go to the Hub and verbally participate by talking to people who are posting.

Dr. Sekhar Chivukula, Associate Provost, Undergraduate Education & Dean of Undergraduate Studies

- Broadly, Dr. Chivukula views the work done in APUE in two ways: operational tasks to maintain ongoing functions and new projects associated with student success.
- RCPD is responsible for employee accommodations, so collectively, between Michael Hudson, Dr. Chivukula, Thomas Jeitschko, the Graduate School, Terry Curry, Associate Provost/Associate Vice President, Academic Human Resources, and Sharon Butler, Associate Vice President,

Human Resources, this team coordinates and supports the mission to provide accommodations for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff.

- Dr. Chivukula has begun to receive an increase in the number of reports from the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) when they involve accommodation issues raised by students.
- Typically, OIE findings are in two parts:
  - OIE might issue a finding involving a faculty member, which falls within the jurisdiction of Terry Curry's, Academic Human Resources office.
  - If OIE issues a finding involving academic, that would be APUE's jurisdiction and I will contact the relevant department chair or college dean to decide together what a retroactive solution for the student who did not receive the accommodation would be.

- Among 40,000 students, approximately 4% registered with RCPD and when each of them is taking 4-5 classes each semester, the number of issues that rise to the level of an investigation is less than a handful. Approximately 2.8% to 3.0% of the registered students require some sort of testing accommodation that is the largest single issue in terms of accommodation requests.
- Unlike some universities, MSU does not have a central testing center to accommodate students, faculty use special facilities, allowing them to continue to oversee the education of students.
- Overall, the institution has experienced great success, which is a tribute to M. Hudson and his staff for working hard, and to our faculty in paying attention to issues around providing accommodations to students.
- There is an increase in students requesting quiet space without distractions. Addressing ways to accommodate quiet space requires creative solutions—noise cancelling headphones, deploying mobile noise distraction kits, etc.
- Administrative challenges to address in three dimensions:
  - RCPD's capacity to deal with accommodation issues is a concern. Fortunately, the Gilbert Foundation provided funds for three additional accommodation specialists for the next 10 years. Complying with the endowment agreement, specialists are assigned strategically to areas where there is the greatest need. MSU is experiencing the largest growth in the area of mental health among students in the general population including students with disabilities. The unified CAPS program was created to provide a better set of medical and intervention services to students and this will likely result in more referrals to RCPD over time.
  - Teaching staff are expected to handle increasing demands of their time, which will require preplanning and learning ways to accommodate; learning what the most frequent accommodations requests are and building that into resource planning.
  - Students need to be more proactive about their needs and seek the help they need by properly utilizing resources available to them and taking responsibility for communicating effectively with faculty who provide accommodations. Self-advocacy can be taught in first year seminars for students.
- There are reasons why a student may choose not to register with RCPD and might not ask for accommodations but that means there are students who are impacted quietly. They may be dropping classes because of it, their performance may be subpar or they may be failing classes because of it. S. Chivukula would like faculty to think about universal design as a way of addressing the un-registered students because faculty should not be in a situation of having to decide on their own whether something rises to the level of an accommodation. Greater awareness will lead to greater impact of universal design teaching and student success in the classroom.
- **Student Success Strategy: Credit Momentum Campaign**
  - Go Green Go 15 – When asked, students do not know (or appreciate) that all degrees at MSU require 120 credits, some a bit more but 120 credits. If a student plans to complete

a degree in 8 semesters, 120 divided by 8—they aim to take on average about 15 credits per semester to complete in 4 years.
- o Data shows that if students do not take 15 credits in their first year, they are very unlikely to register for 15 credits in subsequent years. Part of this problem is exacerbated by financial aid, which interprets 12 credits as full time. Twelve credits is a five-year plan. However, we are fully aware that this is not something that everyone can achieve.
- o M. Hudson has pointed out that, by in large, students needing accommodations can handle 15 credits but there are occasions when some students whose accommodations are time consuming or demanding, 15 credits is not appropriate.
- o The point is not to hit a particular numerical target every semester, but to make a plan over time to where you are moving toward graduation.
- o As of fall 2017, 42% of first year students took 15 or more credits in the first semester. We did not see any significant drops of those than we have seen in previous years and we did not see a drop in overall performance in terms of average grade. We are hoping this will have a ripple effect and students will continue to work on it.
- PACDI was asked to think about the construction of metrics to identify the success of students with disabilities who register for accommodations.
- Our students with disabilities had a slightly lower graduation rate compared to other students but this is expected.
- MSU should also consider the intersectionality among students with disabilities as it relates to other characteristics, i.e., race.

Reports: Accessible Learning Conference – Graham Pierce
- The Conference has gotten considerably bigger over the last three years. Approximately 200 people participated over two days—a Friday and Saturday. Participants included people from off campus—state government and other universities. Some great co-sponsors—a good cross campus effort.

Old Business
- Bylaws revisions: changes will be made to add representatives from IT Services Academic Information Technology and Usability Accessibility Resource and Consulting as ex-officio members.

Comments & Announcements

- G. Pierce asked members if anyone knew of a university that is the Gold Standard for stability, including web accessibility. When attending the Michigan Association of Higher Education and Stability conference, G. Pierce believe that MSU, when compared to other universities across the country, is one of the best in terms of stability. Many universities do not have a PACDI or an equivalent. Other institutions might support accessibility and persons with disabilities but at MSU, our work stems from our faculty and staff and our Land Grant mission. This question has come up recently since we are working on a new IT accessibility policy draft. So I was asked if I knew of a university that had a great policy that we could just adapt and while recognizing there are a few that are doing a decent job, none are equal to or exceed what is happening at MSU and we have more work to do.
- The accessibility of the web is a bigger issue today and is something that RCPD is not responsible. I think RCPD does a great job for what it has responsibility. However, there is a new

office for web accessibility, which has very limited resources as well. MSU has a passion for accessibility but no one is going to pretend that the majority of the classes are accessible. That is not our reality or something we are likely to see in the immediate future. Nevertheless, that does not mean we are not a leader in this and that is sort of the positive and the negative perspective.

- Accessible information must be a priority at the university. We must strive to reach a point where 100% of our TA's want and do attend trainings and conferences to help them be better teachers in diverse classrooms. MSU should strive to become the gold standard institution by expecting faculty and TA's to be exceptional educators in this regard, by communicating information about available resources broadly to all faculty and all students, by providing sustainable support to units responsible for creating strong institutional policies and practices that lead to student success.

Announcement: RCPD is scheduled to host its annual awards event on April 20, 2018.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 26, 2018.

Adjourned: The meeting at 4:45 p.m.