Title: Follow Up to Consultation Council Orientation

Date: October 17, 2013

Contact: Steven Bruckman, Executive Vice Chancellor

Issue
Follow up conversation with Chancellor Harris on the Consultation Council orientation.

Background
At its August 14, 2013 orientation meeting the Consultation Council discussed and reviewed the role of Consultation Council.

Information
Several Consultation Council members expressed dissatisfaction with various issues as described more specifically below. This information was shared with Chancellor Harris who will respond to the concerns at the October meeting.

1. Consultation Council is a significant commitment of time and expense and given the way Consultation Council has been operating, some questioned whether it was worthwhile. Meetings should be longer and more robust.

2. A major concern was that important materials needed for a useful discussion were not provided to members sufficiently in advance to allow for preparation. Also, if materials are not provided well in advance, members don’t have the opportunity to seek input from their constituent group membership. Current examples were the system-wide accountability goals and the 2014-15 budget, but the members felt it was a frequent occurrence.

3. There was considerable discussion about how the Consultation Council engages in dealing with bills and the legislative process. Members felt that Consultation Council was not given the opportunity to discuss and debate important bills. There was recognition that this is a very political process and there must be flexibility. However, there was still dissatisfaction. For example, there are situations in which the Chancellor’s Office does not take a position on a bill. How should that be handled? The process for the annual legislative agenda should be reviewed.
4. Consultation Council needs to be proactive in addressing major issues. Members suggested that major issues be scheduled in advance for discussion over the course of the year. This would allow the Consultation Council to develop positions proactively rather than reactively. For example, declining enrollment at the K-12 level will change the long standing expectation of continued growth. How should we deal with this? Members also suggested that major topics, like budget, should be a standing item on agendas. Interest was expressed in finding ways to better fund the Chancellor’s Office. Professional development is another major issue.

5. It’s important for vice-chancellors to attend Consultation Council regularly. This would also facilitate vice-chancellors working with members in developing consultation digests as needed.