The SCSE Executive Committee met Friday February 28, 8:45am - 9:45am with EVCAA Andrea Schokker. Our discussion focused on the motivations for the flexible workload model proposal, the status of the budget issues at UMD, and then an update on the Dean search for SCSE.

EVCAA Schokker emphasized that she believed that the flexible workload proposal would in many cases reduce teaching loads for SCSE faculty, particularly for research active faculty. It seems like one concern across SCSE departments is how research would be quantified (how are those beans counted was the phrase used by the committee), and then how realistic it was to expect departments to adjust loads based on research and service contributions (particularly if those aren't as clearly defined as teaching is). A number of committee members mentioned that in their department they had flexible workloads, but those were not available to all faculty and it wasn't clear by what criteria different kinds of loads were awarded. There was also a concern raised that the workload proposal has intensified some existing perceptions of workload inequality between colleges, leading to increased tension across campus. We talked about how improved communications between faculty in different colleges about workload would help to decrease the tension and that this might take place through the union. EVCAA Schokker acknowledged these difficulties and said that she is very open to modifications and new ideas for managing workload, but that her feeling is that something should be done to make workloads more equitable across the campus. She encouraged us to to be vocal if we have ideas and to express those not only to our department and Dean but also to our union, since ultimately any changes to workload must be negotiated with the union.

The budget issues at UMD are of course troublesome, and EVCAA Schokker believes that she and Chancellor Black are making as strong a case as they can that UMD's funding should not be enrollment driven. She does however concede that President Kaler and other UMN folks are not at this point particularly receptive to those arguments. This led to general discussion about President Kaler's February 17 visit to UMD. There was significant displeasure that UMD is equated (for budgetary purposes) with UMTC College of Liberal Arts. Given that UMD is a comprehensive university this seems like a fundamental flaw that must be resolved in order to arrive at a more equitable model of funding. The committee also expressed concern about the lack of UMD representation within the UM system. EVCAA Schokker confirmed that there is some lack of clarity within the system as to what UMD's role or mission is and should be, and that she and Chancellor Black are working on articulating a vision that includes
research as a significant component.

On the Dean's search, there are a few candidates who will be visiting UMD before and after Spring Break. She said that the first group of candidates seemed to generate a great deal of dissension within the college. Interestingly the tension was not between science and engineering, but rather between teaching and research. There are apparently rather extreme and vocal views on what a suitable balance between the two should exist in the college, and none of the previous candidates seemed to be able to satisfy both points of view. She seemed optimistic that the next group of candidates might be more pleasing. There was a concern expressed by the committee that the format of the candidate forums was needlessly mind-numbing, and so we were encouraged to make suggestions for improvement to the search committee.