

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes 09-21-21

Senators present: Ryan McCullough, Kimberly Underwood, Anna Stephan-Robinson, Evedora Wheeler, Jeffrey Grubbs, Darrick Brake, Brian Fitzpatrick, David Hanna, Stephen Richards, Kenneth Sexton, Zachary Loughman, Sean Ryan, Vishakha Maskey Diana Barber Fuhua Chen, Brian Nichols

Absent members: Jon Serra

Chair McCullough called the meeting to order at 3:37 after recording attendance.

Questions or comments on 4/20/21 Senate meeting minutes? None were offered

- i. Dr. Loughman put forth motion to accept the minutes; Dr. Nichols seconded the motion.

President Update – President Evans is unable to attend the Senate meeting today given a health issue. Chair McCullough expressed Senate’s hope that he recovers soon.

Provost Update – Dr. Suderman

1. We are attempting to use Digital Measures/Faculty Success. Dr. Larance has been asked to take on the task of getting this program working well. He is getting access to information about the program and he is working to make use of this program a success.
2. A copy of the travel ban was sent out to the Deans, Chairs, and Program Directors. Dr. Suderman uses this process as the main form of communication to faculty and all relevant parties.
3. This upcoming 2022-2023 academic year is when there will be an accreditation report through the HLC. Dr. Larance is getting in touch with department and program heads to get information needed for the reports for the accreditation. He has articulated to department and program heads about what they need to provide for the large report.
4. The job posting for the position of Provost was opened initially for a 2-week period and it was only a local search. Dr. Suderman spoke with President Evans about the post and the results received. Agreement was reached that the post should be posted once again as a national search for a minimum of one month, or until filled.

*Questions from Senators: Dr. Richards, Dr. Stephan-Robinson, Chair McCullough*

Replies from Dr. Suderman:

- i. Some of those faculty who are going through the promotion and tenure process this year may be grandfathered in so these faculty can use a different program. More details will come at a later time.
- ii. Those up for tenure and promotion next year (2022-2023) should be using the Digital Measures program now to upload their materials rather than waiting until next year.
- iii. Digital Measures should not be the reason some faculty have trouble going through the promotion and tenure process.

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- iv. The travel ban came down from the Governor initially and HELC left higher education out of the ban at first. When discussing travel budgets with President Evans, he indicated travel should not be taking place because faculty are impacted by the travel ban, as well. Thus, Dr. Suderman's note to faculty that University related travel should not be taking place.
- v. President Evans was initially under the impression from concerns he heard from others that tenure and promotion were being conferred too easily. President Evans felt Policy 202 about the promotion and tenure process should be re-evaluated. Dr. Suderman took it upon herself to start researching the promotion and tenure process in individual colleges/departments. She stated to President Evans that she feels the process for tenure and promotion is, indeed, rigorous. Dr. Suderman would like more illustrations from Deans and Chairs to help make that point.

On the topic of allegations of plagiarism directed at President Evans:

- i. Dr. Suderman was made aware during the Convocation speech by President Evans that there appeared to be information that came from outside/online sources. She waited until Friday after Convocation before reaching out to faculty to see what the reaction would be from others/faculty. Dr. Suderman spoke with President Evans and held a meeting where she expressed that faculty were taking issue with the usage of other people's ideas without citations/quotations. She articulated what plagiarism is and that President Evans' speech constituted that. She conveyed that this is considered a big deal in academia and people are not taking this lightly. Dr. Suderman spoke with the e-board to get insight about what faculty and others were looking at/researching.
- ii. President Evans indicated he wanted to send a message out to the entire campus community but the e-board and Dr. Suderman advised against that. Her recommendation was to speak to the academic/Faculty Senate. Chair McCullough emailed the President immediately to request a meeting. Dr. Suderman attempted to communicate the problematic portions of President Evans's speech and why Faculty Senate would take exception to the issue. Dr. Suderman then met with academic Deans; agreement was reached that the issue should come from the Senate, not Deans or the Provost.
- iii. Dr. Suderman indicated to the President that it would not be advised to send a memo out to the campus community. Shortly after, President Evans's memorandum went out to the campus that President Evans's definition of plagiarism differs from the definition of plagiarism understood by faculty.

ACF Representative Update – Dr. Cox

1. The list of ACF agenda items will be emailed out to faculty. [They were presented to Senate in the meeting, as well.]
2. We will have a vote in the October 2021 Senate meeting (if not sooner) on that agenda.
3. If items should be added/modified, bring those comments to Dr. Cox.

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### Board of Governors Representative Update – Dr. Metz

1. The Board of Governors meeting was an overview of budgets, loss of student enrollment, and how to address those issues. We will be at a several million dollar budget deficit.
2. Some information was positive (i.e. WLU does well retaining students, but need to focus on bringing more students to campus).
3. President Evans is significantly concerned with the back-log of maintenance issues on campus; he wants those taken care of as soon as possible.

### Policies Committee Report – Dr. Barber

1. Certain comment periods on policies are ending soon (around October 1).
2. Dr. Barber met with Dr. Suderman about Policies 218 and 250 (on office hours). This issue of verifying faculty are holding office hours on Zoom (and in person) is being examined.
3. Policy 202 on promotion and tenure will also be discussed/modified this year.

### Finance Committee Report – Dr. Wheeler

1. The committee met recently to discuss an agenda and goals for the year.
2. We are meeting with the Provost soon to discuss additional items that can/should be added to the agenda.

### Space Utilization Committee Report – Dr. Underwood

1. The committee was not able to meet in the Spring as planned because Dr. Underwood was experiencing significant health issues.
2. We plan to meet soon to schedule the collection of data of classrooms, etc. on campus.

### File Sharing System Committee Report – Dr. Grubbs

1. This committee was given access to SharePoint recently as a Beta system to look around and use the program so that we can eventually share insights and help train our fellow faculty on the use of the system.
2. This program is helpful to be a place to upload files in case people retire, leave, etc. so files are not lost.

### **Action Items:**

#### **1. Nominations for Senate Vice Chair**

- i. Dr. Ryan was nominated by Dr. Maskey. Dr. Ryan accepted the nomination. No other nominations. Dr. Cox motioned to close nominations.
- ii. Vote: 16 yays; 0 abstentions; 0 nays

#### **2. Nominations/vote of affirmation for Dr. Gall and Dr. Brake to continue on Faculty Compensation Review Committee.**

- i. Vote: 16 yays; 0 abstentions; 0 nays

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3. Policy 202: The comment period ends soon. Executive Committee decided it would be most beneficial to have one statement from Senate with support for the changes we recommend.

- i. Comments: Dr. Ryan- having students on the committees for Provost and President creates scheduling conflicts that disrupts the efficacy of the committee and their agenda.
- ii. Motion to approve comments/changes given by Dr. Stephan-Robinson; seconded by Dr. Nichols.
- iii. Vote: 16 yays; 0 abstentions; 0 nays

4. Covid Vaccination Mandate: Change wording (keep wording of “classroom” broad to be “learning environment” instead and change “is severely at risk” to “may be at risk”).

- i. Comments: Dr. Grubbs – some faculty do not want a mandate; are we talking about that here or will there be a faculty-wide vote later on?
  - a. Professor McCullough – there will be a wider vote later.
- ii. Comments: Dr. Hanna, Dr. Loughman, Dr. Ryan – let’s keep the “learning environment” language broad and not provide specific locations/types of environments.
- iii. Motion to approve comments/changes given by Dr. Cox; seconded by Dr. Ryan.
- iv. Vote: 16 yays; 0 abstentions; 0 nays

***Dr. Cox motioned to suspend the minutes and discuss the allegations of plagiarism against President Evans. Seconded by Dr. Ryan.***

- i. Vote: 16 yays; 0 abstentions; 0 nays

Discussion ensued about the allegations of plagiarism.

End of meeting:

Votes: A majority of Senators voted that President Evans did plagiarize in all four speeches that were reviewed in Senate (in the OH County Library, MLK, Juneteenth, and Convocation speeches).

Details:

Vote on plagiarism in convocation speech:

16 yays, 0 nays, 0 abstentions

Vote on plagiarism in Juneteenth speech:

16 yays, 0 nays, 0 abstentions

Vote on plagiarism in MLK speech:

14 yays, 0 nays, 2 abstentions

Vote on plagiarism in Ohio County Library speech:

9 yays, 0 nays, 6 abstentions

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**Some pertinent details from faculty discussion concerning only the process that we agreed to follow as a Senate:**

The Executive Committee indicated they would send this information out directly to President Evans as soon as possible.

Faculty Question: Who else should this information be sent to?

Faculty Response: The results of our discussion and vote on Senate need to be sent directly to faculty and to the President. It is up to the Senators to share that information with the faculty at large.

Faculty Question: Should we send this to the Board of Governors, as well?

Faculty Response: We should follow a similar process as before- we should send this out to the President and then faculty before we reach out to the BOG. [Agreement among other faculty, as well.]

Faculty Response: We could make a decision via voting to make a decision on how this goes out to different groups and in what order. I propose we have a vote collectively to decide who this information goes to.

Faculty Question: Can we vote to go ahead and have this letter sent? We need to vote and put the message forward. This information should be sent out to the President, all faculty, and Jason Metz notifies the BOG. The next step following that is to have the President meet with the Senate Exec Comm again.

Faculty Response: We're voting to communicate our findings of those 4 speeches to the faculty, President Evans, and the BOG through Jason Metz? Everyone in favor, raise your hand.

i. Vote: 16 yays, no abstentions or nays

Faculty Question: We've reviewed the material, we've determined there is guilt, and besides communicating that guilt, at this point, is there anything else we feel we need to do. Are we going to have a vote of no confidence, are we going to ask for an apology, are we going to open this up to the entire faculty body to ask what their opinion is? What else at this point, besides saying "hey, we found you guilty" do we need to do, if anything?

Faculty Question: Is it outside the realm of possibility to go back to our constituents, meet with them, find out what kind of actions they want, and then we come back to another meeting to discuss how we move forward?

Faculty Response: They have a good idea and maybe we should wait to see what the President's response is. [Multiple faculty agree]

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Faculty Response: I want to make a motion, then, to pause on any wider decision to give the members of Senate the opportunity to discuss this issue in detail and in depth with their constituents and then communicate back with the Senate Chair about where we think we are from there.

Faculty Response: This is a motion to pause and share deep discussions with our constituents and then read and react from there.

- i. Vote: 16 yays [no abstentions or nays]

[Additional discussion ensued that did not relate to the question of what our process would be moving forward.]

DRAFT