

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes 1/18/2022

Attendees: Sean Ryan, Kimberly Underwood, Robert Gall, Jeffrey Grubbs, David Hanna, Diana Barber, Brian Nichols, Eveldora Wheeler, Anna Stephan-Robinson, Fuha Chen, Vishakha Maskey, Stephen Richards, Kenneth Sexton, Courtney Huffman

Absent: Zac Loughman, Brian Fitzpatrick, Cory Reigel, Dr. Cox (unable to attend but provided report)

Meeting called to order at 3:30pm

President Dr. Franklin Evans Update:

1. Dr. Cathy Monteroso is now our interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. She is working hard and very busy and we are appreciative of her for taking on this challenge. Dr. Cathy Monteroso has appointed Dr. Ennis as the Interim Dean for the College of Education and Human Performance.
2. COVID 19 continues to be an issue. We had mass testing last week (about 1,150 students tested and only 5.9% tested positive). We had expected 10-12% of students to test positive. Mr. Cook and his staff are working with the students who did test positive (i.e. isolation, taking classes from home etc.). Mask Mandate continues to be implemented. We will continue to monitor what occurs in WV.
3. We signed an MOU with Pittsburgh Technical College particularly with the college of business. This is a fast track program that will be a win-win situation for us and Pittsburgh Technical College.
4. We were a finalist for the Governor's honors academy but he has since heard back that we did not receive this. Fairmont State University will host the Honors Program this summer.
5. Dr. Ann Saurbier is now serving as the HLC liaison. She is taking the lead as we work on our assurance report that is due in May.
6. Strategic plan review... Current plan is for 2019-2024. Mission statement was under review recently. BOG worked to review and accept the mission statement that was assembled by a task force in December. The strategic plan needs to be reviewed so that it reflects the challenges and opportunities of West Liberty. Some particular things he would like to see in the strategic plan are goals and objectives on enrollment, the fiscal stability of the institution, and the generation of external funding. Some have already been accomplished but this will give us an opportunity to update and enhance the strategic plan along with the assurance report.
7. HEPC: Dr. Evans had a meeting with Dr. Christopher Treadway, Vice Chancellor for community and technology education. Dr. Treadway met with our CFO Lori Hudson to update the framework. They have completed calculations and have recommended benchmarks for us. We need to make sure that the metrics that we are going to be evaluated on are realistic and are the best ones for us.

8. Sodexo contract is ending this semester. Three vendors are applying for this. Also our Bookstore contract is running out and we are looking at who will give us the best return on our investment.
9. The 2022 NCAA convention will commence in Indianapolis. Football preseason schedule, whether athletes can start early. The NCAA is also looking at transfer policies.
10. Money from CARES Act is being disbursed to students (2,129 students) by the end of this week. This money totals \$3.8 million. Federal funds earmarked for the students.
11. We have another decline in enrollment... Mr. Cook said it was around 100 students. We anticipate the number for the fall to be higher. We have higher participation in black'n'gold days and more applications.
12. Our institutional giving was at an all time high a month ago. We are farther ahead than we were in the past three years.
13. The BOG meeting is scheduled for February 3rd.

Question from Dr. Ryan to Dr. Evans. Is the BOG Finance committee open.

-Dr. Evans stated that the meeting was open and would be meeting in person and virtually tomorrow 1/19 at 8 am.

Dr. Ryan thanked Dr. Evans for sharing in the meeting and Dr. Evans left the meeting.

Dr. Monteroso, Provost Updates:

1. Dr. Monteroso thanked everyone who helped with the COVID 19 testing and faculty did a lot to help with the process so thank you.
2. Dr. Brumfield, the HEPC Vice Chancellor will be here February 1st all morning. He is meeting with key personnel and some students.
3. Dr. Monteroso also discussed developing an ad hoc committee. Looking at the 232 policy on grade submission. We are still on the pilot on grade submission so students can receive their diploma when they graduate. She asked for input on what are the concerns and what are the obstacles.

Dr Underwood asked: Is there a way for faculty to submit their feedback on this process.

Dr. Monteroso responded that there currently was not but that she wanted the committee to have a survey created so that faculty could submit their feedback on this process.

Dr underwood asked: Did the past interim provost provide you with any feedback, comments, or discussions prior to her departure.

Dr. Monteroso responded that she did not have anything but that she welcomes all feedback.

Dr. Ryan commented that he encourages all senators to talk to their constituents and gather their concerns and comments. We need to get that information.

Dr. Ryan read a report for Dr. Cox from ACF

Funding formula discussions continue

- still following performance plan shown in last meeting

- 70% of the amount the state provides would remain stable, only 30% of it is in play
- no more than a 5% drop in one year
- additional weight in the formula given to majors that the state considers high priority careers (secondary and elementary education, social work, pre-professional speech pathology and audiology, dental hygiene, medical laboratory science, and nursing are the programs at WLU that qualify for such consideration)

Conceal carry is once again on the legislative docket

- 3 separate bills taking aim at the idea that individual institutions should determine their own stance
- In the past, ACF had faculty senates approve a statement supporting the idea that BOGs should control policy and university presidents banded together and issued a similar joint statement.
- ACF will read and react. We have already made ACF's position known through our agenda items (we support BOG control) and there is hope that if left alone these bills might never make it through committee for a vote.
- However, individual institutions and presidents may want to take further steps if they see fit.

Raises

- Governor proposes a 5% state employee raise and a one time 2.5% stimulus check
- this does not translate directly into these numbers for those in higher ed
- the percentages are tied to the amount of money that the state gives us, not to the actual total of all employees' pay. Universities also divide this money up based on state regulations that dictate that a percentage of it must go to merit pay.
- The last time this happened we got around a 1.5% raise, but the university matched it to make it a 3% raise (or something close to this if memory serves) that was then distributed following the guidelines agreed upon by the Faculty Compensation committee (formerly the Faculty Salary Review committee)
- Will the president commit to following tradition and matching funds for at least the pay raises, if not the stimulus?

PEIA

-No premium increase this year with a promise from Justice to keep rates steady next year as well.

As for ACFs representative ability, the HEPC will no longer be holding a Higher Education Day at the capitol again, at least not in the form we have in the past, due to Covid and poor attendance by legislators. However, they are searching for new ways to have direct contact with legislators which could be each university sponsoring a day at the capital (like Marshall, WVU and WVUState already do), scheduling 1 on 1 meetings between ACF reps and the legislators, or institutions hosting their regions legislators at their institution.

Lastly, as the Legislative Liaison of ACF, I have been asked by Chancellor Tucker to participate in a focus group to solicit input into the vision, mission and values of the HEPC and to discuss how they support us and our institutions. The meeting is this Thursday, Jan. 20th.

Dr. Ryan stated that if anyone had questions please email Dr. Cox directly.

Dr. Metz BOG Update:

1. Highlands Center is working on developing a testing center. This would serve a regional need for standardized testing and other tests like the Praxis and other field certifications. The Highlands center will also be a central location for community based clinics, One in particular is the behavioral health clinic run by the psychology department with Rebecca Meachum heading this.
2. Doctorate and educational leadership... intent to plan will be sent to HEPC. The program will start in august of 2023 is the hope.
3. We are in a similar spot to where we were 5 or so years ago. We are just 60 employees heavier. Some of that growth is due to the addition of some graduate programs.
4. Fiscal 2021 audit had an unmodified opinion and no weaknesses to report. That is a very favorable audit report.
5. Ohio Valley University is closing and there is supposed to be a fair to get those students attending other local universities. We are hoping to get some of these students.

-Dr. Ryan said that he sent some questions to Dr. Metz to take to the next BOG meeting.

Dr. Barber Policy Chair Update:

1. We have been getting ready for meetings. We are looking to get policies to be ready for review in March.

Dr Ryan asked if there was an update from the Ethics and integrity committee.

Dr Barber responded that she was having a difficult time setting up meetings with all committee members. Hopefully a meeting will be set up later in January. We do have material from work done at West Liberty and other universities, so we are not starting from scratch. We should still have a policy for review in March.

Dr. Wheeler

1. No updates.

Dr. Grubbs

1. Dr. Grubbs is expanding his role from Sharepoint to be the IT liaison to meet with Joe Rodella. Dr. Grubbs meets with him every Thursday at 9 o'clock. Joe Rodella is interested in hearing where our pressure points are.
2. Mr Rodella sees things from a different point of view and there are reasons for why they do what they do. I want to be that conduit to bring that information to the Senate. Please let Dr. Grubbs know if any faculty are having any IT issues and he will bring those to Joe Rodella.

Question from Dr Stephen-Robinson: When you are meeting with [Joe Rodella](#) you are not just addressing Sharepoint, but looking at all IT concerns in general. Is that correct?

Response from Dr. Grubbs: Yes, that is correct.

Action Items:

- I. Nomination and vote for Faculty Senate Secretary.
 1. Course release for being secretary.
 2. No nominations at this time.

II. The mission statement.

Dr. Ryan shared the new mission statement that was approved by the Board. Senate agreed that there was not much to discuss because the mission statement was already approved.

Dr Barber expressed that the first paragraph was more of a history lesson than a mission statement.

Dr Underwood commented that the mission statement was only sent out for a brief period of two days for comment.

Dr. Monteroso stated if any discussion, it could be brought back to the Board.

Dr. Ryan added that if there were no other comments, Senators should assemble any faculty comments and forward them to Dr. Metz.

Dr. Ryan asked everyone to please put your comments together and send them to Dr. Metz, if any thoughts on the mission statement.

III. The pilot study on grading.

We can send formal input to Dr. Monteroso or the committee after the committee is formed.

Dr Barber stated that there were a number of student complaints related to what occurred between when grades were submitted and when degrees were granted and then asked if administration was going to look at those processes after grades were submitted.

Dr Monterosso responded that we want to look at the whole process.

Dr Ryan commented that as a professor who gives finals requiring written answers, and with finals schedules throughout the week up to Friday, it is problematic to get grading done early enough. [Multiple Senators nodded agreement].

Dr Barber responded that she had a one page list of issues raised by her constituents. She would share that with Dr Monterosso.

Dr Underwood responded that her constituents expressed that they wished they could have had a list of classes being taken by the graduating seniors so that they did not have to thumb through all of the classes to identify the graduating seniors in each class. Many COLCA has many larger Gen-ed classes with 40-45 students so it can be cumbersome to identify affected students.

IV. Provost Search Committee Policy

Dr. Ryan explained that Dr Suderman had suggested WLU could use a policy specific to the Provost search.

Dr Gall added that there was an attempt to draft such a policy about 12 years ago and there was pushback on trying to implement policy to the process because the President wanted maximum flexibility. Therefore we would not be starting from scratch.

Dr. Maskey asked if there should just be a policy specific to just Provost or any higher up position.

Dr Ryan responded that Presidential searches are covered by Board policy and asked Dr Gall to confirm that.

Dr Gall confirmed that Presidential searches are covered by BOG policy and added that Dr Barber suggested that perhaps the Board should exercise authority over the Provost search policy. He added that Dr Metz was asked to take that suggestion forward to BOG for consideration.

Dr. Ryan also stated that we had solicited recommendations for faculty representations for the upcoming Provost search and to date we have not received any recommendations. We

have received some nominations from the staff. The faculty input should be heard by the President. Dr. Ryan added that if there is no interest in providing recommendations for who should represent the faculty in the search committee, then the faculty should be willing to live with the outcome quietly and professionally.

Dr Sexton asked if the Provost served at the will of the Board or if they were employees serving at the will of the President. He added that as the Provost does not serve at the will of the Board there is a difference in how that position is set up.

Dr Ryan acknowledged Dr. Sexton's perspective and added the counterpoint that Dr. Gall raised that the Provost is the number two and acts as the Interim President in the President's absence.

V. Faculty handbook update

Dr Ryan commented that after discussing developing an ad hoc committee to update the handbook he found that the Bylaws dictate that the Senate identify a representative to serve on the Provost's Faculty Handbook Committee each September. That representation can come from the Senate, Chairs' Council, or the faculty writ large.

Dr Barber asked if that representative was in addition to the Policy Committee Chair.

Dr Ryan responded that the Bylaws does not answer that. It only states that a representative is needed.

Dr Barber added that she had read that the Policy Committee Chair was assigned to the Faculty Handbook Committee somewhere and that it was probably in a policy somewhere. Dr. Suderman had assembled a committee including her, Dr. Nichols, and the West Liberty attorney to review all policies.

Dr Ryan commented that this subject centered specifically on updating the Faculty Handbook and his discussions with the Provost highlighted that while the Handbook should reference the other policies, there were other procedures and standard practices that would be helpful to new faculty that could be covered. It can be an online document rather than a written document.

Dr Stephan-Robinson commented that the Handbook can be pretty important citing a recent situation where a university in New York shut down a department and fired tenured faculty who were able to sue and overturn the dismissals because due process in the Faculty Handbook was not followed.

Dr Ryan asked that Senators survey their constituents for committee participation.

VI. Time for Senate Meetings for next fall

Dr Underwood commented that we need to find out who is constrained by these dates and times and asked if anyone know what those schedule conflicts are.

Dr Sexton suggested creating a survey to identify those faculty interested in serving and available timest.

Dr. Ryan asked when Senators would come prepared with the information necessary to knowledgeably address the schedule.

Dr Underwood asked for a directive for Senators, especially from the College of Sciences to gather that information so that we can come back in February and talk about other options.

Dr Wheeler responded by suggesting the possibilities of early morning meetings and stated that she would not object to collecting information from other faculty.

Dr Sexton commented that whether the meetings are on Zoom or face-to-face can impact scheduling options.

Dr Maskey commented that we need to first identify who is constrained by these times and then consider other time slots through a poll.

Dr Barber added that nobody currently serving is likely to have a problem with the current time, but others who may want to serve may have conflicts adding that we are not ready for a motion, and asked if she was hearing that Senators are free to poll constituents to see who would serve and when they are available.

Dr Ryan confirmed that direction for Senators.

Dr Hanna commented that the current schedule was used last year also, but that the make up of the Senate will change. He then asked if it makes more sense to set the schedule during the first meeting of the Senate each Fall.

Dr Underwood responded that some faculty, particularly medical-related programs, have schedules impacted by external requirements and some Senators have not been receptive to alternate schedule times. She added that a previous discussion suggested that this be taken to the Chairs Council to identify all possible options and conflicting requirements.

Dr. Ryan commented that Senate meeting times can affect the selection of Senators (Dr Underwood agreed), so that prevents deferring the schedule decisions until Fall.

Dr Underwood asked if Dr Ryan was directing one Senator to go to Chairs Council or if College representatives should address it with their Chairs.

Dr Ryan responded that this is more of a College function.

Drs. Barber and Underwood responded that they would bring up the Senate schedule with their faculty and Chairs the following day in their faculty meetings.

Discussion Items: None

Faculty Forum Items:

Dr Sexton raised a discussion about the Fall Faculty and Staff Institute meeting before classes began. He stated that the meeting was announced on short notice and asked if that the meetings will continue, if they could be scheduled with more notice.

Dr Ryan responded that he had addressed that with Dr. Suderman and that Dr Monterosso was listening and taking notes.

Dr Monterosso responded that they are planning to add those meetings to the academic calendar.

Dr Barber warned that scheduling meetings prior to classes starting has the potential to increase the periods that faculty work beyond the nine-month contract windows. Scheduling those meetings on Thursday may have less of an impact.

Motion for Adjournment- Anna, Seconded by Brian

Motion to adjourn passes unanimously.