

Fairmont State Faculty Senate
Minutes
10 October 2023

Members: **Bob Niichel** (Executive Committee: President, Computer Science & Math), **Bill Harrison** (Exec Committee: Vice President, Social Sciences), **Tyler Singer** (Exec Committee: Webmaster, Exercise Science), **Barbara MacLennan** (Exec Committee: Member at Large, Behavioral Sciences), **Raymond Alvarez** (Exec Committee: Member at Large, CoBA), **Denice Kirchoff** (Exec Committee: Member at Large, BSN), **Frankie Delapas** (SGA), **Nicholas Myers** (SGA), **Chuck Shields**, (proxy, Rick Harvey, Academic Affairs), **Donna Long** (Exec Committee: Secretary, Humanities), **Todd Clark** (ACF Rep, Social Sciences), **Julie Reneau** (Education), **Chris Kast** (Academic Affairs), **Kelley Flaherty** (Natural Sciences), **Malisa Eades** (ASN), **Stephanie Jones** (CSM), **Tabitha Lafferre** (ET), **Ashley Dover** (Library)

Guests: **Amanda Metcalf**, **Adam Podlaskowski**, **Jackie Sherman**

1.-3. Meeting called to order 3:00 p.m.; Agenda approved; 12 September 2023 minutes approved.

4. President Davis—not present

5. Old Business—None.

6. New Business

- a. Curriculum Efficiency ad hoc committee; no action taken (Dr. Phillips not present to present).
- b. Labyrinthine Tenure and Promotion Process. Singer reports complaints among his constituency about the process and structure. Suggestions: create a checklist; update/fix Forms Repository; Streamline process.

Harrison moved and Clark seconded a prepared motion.

Shields states that the checklist and forms exist; information is in Faculty Success [AFR?]; questions whether we are duplicating effort and/or asking Handbook Committee to make policy. Clark agrees process needs clarification, including proper sequencing of information. Shields/Kast note confusion caused by recent changes to process, including issues like how recommendations are handled and the shift to online portfolios.

CTLI may have a role to play since it is involved in new faculty on-boarding.

Niichel states that the point is to make sure young faculty are supported.

Lafferre states that AFRs were not used. Kast notes P&T standards are not uniform across disciplines; Reneau concurs and questions how detailed a checklist can be.

Several amendments to the motion were made and accepted and the final motion by Shields/Harrison reads: “The President of the Faculty Senate shall direct the Personnel Committee to work with the Provost’s Office to develop and refine electronic tools to help faculty prepare their applications for tenure, promotion, and sabbaticals. This should include but not be limited to:

- A checklist of all required forms and documentation needed to apply for tenure, associate professor, full professor, and sabbaticals
- A list of hyperlinks to all the correct forms needed to apply
- Examples of successful application materials, used with permission by their authors.

The President of the Faculty Senate shall request this information no later than August 1, 2024.”

7. Provost Announcements: Not present

8. Reports

a. ACF: Clark reported that ACF has a retreat scheduled for 3-4 November. The retreat will be unusual this year due to WVU representation. Perhaps discussion of liberal arts will be more robust? No ACF agenda yet, but Clark will prepare a report on the retreat for Senate. Legislative session Jan-Mar; no legislative action yet. An ACF representative to meet with State provosts week of 16 October; she asked for concerns/issues. Issues raised include future of tenure and academic freedom (given situations in other states); after the discussion on "Campus Carry/Safety," this was added to the list, as was Library funding. Email Clark with additional issues; he notes that he and other ACF representatives only just learned of this request for concerns.

b. BOG: On behalf of Fantasia, Alvarez reported Fantasia is at BOG summit. Committees' timetable of meetings is completed, and Fantasia will send Board book as usual ahead of full BOG meeting.

c. SGA: Delapas reported that Homecoming was a success. He noted new administration is being supportive of Athletics. He also noted that he is moving to a staff position at Fairmont State in December. Any student clubs requesting SGA funding (each club is eligible for \$400/semester or \$800/year) should contact SGA President Richard Austin.

d. Library Committee Chair Adam Podlaskowski [note: this discussion took place after Open Forum, but I am including the substance here as it appeared on the Agenda]. Jackie Sherman also fielded questions.

Podlaskowski thanks the Senate for the invitation to speak and provides a handout detailing database subscription history, costs, rationale. He notes increased library costs and a flat budget. Databases are especially expensive, and our budget model isn't working. Library has cut all it can (librarians haven't had professional development or travel funds for years; book purchases are way down; student programming has decreased; furniture has not been replaced; elevator repair delayed). The Library lost \$100k when Pierpont left, which made budget issues worse. Librarians consult with units before making cuts, but some databases were cut that were used by faculty; e.g., CoBA wanted Marketline but it got cut—too expensive for the amount of use.

It was noted that we cannot grow the University without providing resources.

In response to a question about partnering with other institutions, Sherman noted that we are in a consortium with other regional institutions, which does save us money, but some databases are separate from the consortium and necessary for program accreditation (Architecture, Engineering).

WVU may now be willing to share in costs where they were not before.

North Carolina institutions have a strong consortium, but they also have lots of money.

The budget for databases last year was \$539,000, and it is typically about \$20k underfunded.

The Foundation has a small library fund.

MacLennan noted that she is working on a statewide consortium for software purchases, and perhaps something similar could work for databases.

Podlaskowski notes that the year-end reports by the Library Committee have called attention to these issues for the last 4-5 years, and the reports have been shared with the President's office, but no action has been taken.

MacLennan states that K-12 has better library funding than colleges do.

Sherman notes state public libraries are also losing funding.

Alvarez tried to find budget information on library services, and even as Interim Chair he cannot find the information. BOG members also have no idea what the library budget is. He asked how we can get input if he can't even find his own department's fee allocations for the library or what academic units pay. More transparency is needed.

Niichel asks if existing consortium has negotiating power with database producers; Sherman states that we try to work with vendors, and some are more helpful than others, but prices are based on FTEs. Vendors own the rights to the information, so we don't have much negotiating power, plus HEPC requires certain resources for accreditation, so vendors don't have to negotiate. Kast agrees academic publishers are part of the problem.

Kast suggests Podlaskowski get Library on the 10/18 Academic Affairs meeting.

Clark moved and Eades seconded a motion to direct the Senate president to provide President Davis with the Library Committee year-end reports for the last five years and to express “serious concern” about the situation; motion passed. Niichel to circulate language to the Executive Committee prior to emailing the President.

Clark moved and Singer seconded a motion to direct the Library Committee to research alternative approaches to cost management and budgetary support, including revisions to internal funding model, and to present a report to Senate; motion passed.

9. Information/Discussion

a. Senate Budget. Suggestions for use included: travel on shared governance-type/leadership conferences (conference for faculty senate presidents, e.g.); faculty welfare committee; travel scholarships; fund for Senate committees to showcase their work.

MacLennan noted a treasurer would be needed; Niichel suggested a Member-at-Large could be converted to a treasurer position.

Alvarez suggested a Foundation account, but Kast noted that state monies cannot be held by the Foundation. Kast noted that funds can rollover (don't have to use it or lose it). He also noted that faculty could donate to a Foundation account if we wanted to go that route or funds could be generated by faculty “dues.” Lafferre noted the Foundation charges a user fee. Kast also noted that state funds' use for hospitality is “limited” if events do not include students.

Niichel suggested funds could be generated by a \$2-\$3 student fee or come from the president's or provost's fund. Long said she would not support a student fee for this purpose.

b. Matt Hokom, Personnel Committee chair, asked senators to “Please continue to let your colleagues know that sabbaticals are back, and the Personnel Committee hopes it will receive many applications.”

Discussion followed noting deadlines, including an Intent to Apply due 15 September, but Kast said deadlines are also flexible. Dates are something like: 9/15 Intent to Apply; 9/21 Dean notifies Provost of potential applications; 10/15 Faculty applications due to Deans; 10/30 Deans submit applications to Provost—but dates need to be double checked!! Kast recommends faculty work with their deans.

The deadlines and guidelines are supposedly in “Faculty Success” [of AFR?] but faculty can't see this section unless they have filed an Intent to Apply? Contact Emily Swain about faculty success/AFR questions.

10. Open Forum

Niichel asked for feedback on a new committee on gun control (legislation called “Campus Carry” renamed “Campus Safety”), as President Davis has asked him to serve. Clark noted that the issue is of interest to ACF.

Kast asked if the legislation has been read by our legal counsel and if we know associated costs. Clark will find out the deadline for institutions to respond to legislation with concerns. Shields says institutions have a year grace period to address compliance.

MacLennan noted the Police Academy, Aviation, and NSI/OSIX may all be specifically impacted. Metcalf noted Middle College initiative will bring underage population to campus/in residence. Long noted that we have children on campus all the time for events.

Other issues raised included: mental health services/availability; office safety; training, including de-escalation training; Cleary Act; gun locker management/access; costs.

Podlaskowski noted that all costs should be calculated since legislation is an unfunded mandate. Kast notes costs are also associated with the Police Academy.

Dover notes that her previous institution's protocol included all computers were set to alert campus of emergencies; Metcalf thinks emergency response to Fairmont State may be inactive?

Niichel will find out to whom the committee will report; it is an internal committee.

Alvarez announced the Business Plan Competition, which is open to all students. Contact Jim Davis for details. He also reported on the Chief of Staff search; there are 21 candidates for the position. Alvarez also asked for input regarding the use of scantron machines. Six faculty in CoBA use theirs, but it needs maintenance and Institution won't pay for it unless the machines are used. Sherman notes that scantron machines in the library are used. The alternative to scantron offered does not work.

Clark asked for better communication to faculty regarding Maroon & White Day activities and timetables.

Meeting adjourned 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Long
Senate Secretary