

Faculty Senate Minutes  
October 13, 2015

Attendance: Robin Payne (Soc. Sci.), Jim Weekley (BCG), Harry Baxter (ACF), Daniel Eichenbaum (SoFA), Bob Mild (Academic Affairs), Joe Kremer (Business), Amanda Metcalf (SoE/HHP), John McLaughlin (Soc. Sci.), Donna Long (L&L), Siegfried Bleher (CSMP), Crystal Smith (SoE/HHP), Fran Young (Nursing), Jessica Alsup (SoE/HHP), Anthony Yost (Tech.), Matthew Hokom (L&L), Jim Dunlevy (CMP), Chris Kast (Beh. Sci.), Charles Shields (Senate President), Jennifer Yerdon-LeJeune (SoFA), Budd Sapp (SoE/HHP), Tony Gilberti (Tech.), Kaitlynn Davis (SGA)

Guests: Mike Ransom, Jack Kirby, Chris Lavorata, Maria Rose, Tim Oxley, Kaye Widney, Debra Hoag

- I. Senate President Charles Shields called the meeting to order.
- II. The Senate approved the minutes of the September Faculty Senate meeting without revisions.
- III. Announcements/Information/Discussion

A. President Maria Rose

1. Governor Tomblin has announced that there will be a 4% budget cut across the board. Neither higher education nor public education will be exempt, which is unprecedented, though public education will only receive a 1% cut. The university is awaiting further information from Chancellor Hill about how the cuts will be implemented. If it is a cut from the state appropriations base budget, which is anticipated, it will translate into a \$624,000 cut for the university. If this is the outcome, it will also affect the university in future fiscal years. The university also does not know at this time if the cut will be implemented from this quarter on or if it will be a one time only cut. Some higher education programs, including the Promise Scholarship, will be excluded. The cut is the result of a shortfall of \$250 million in projected revenue in the coal, oil, and gas industries.
2. The university is scheduled to go live with OASIS on November 13. President Rose does not believe that the higher education system (not just FSU, but other universities as well) are ready to do so. Rick Porto is still lobbying on our behalf to get a commitment that if the system goes live on Nov. 13, necessary code changes and upgrades will be completed, or to delay the process until March 31. Without the necessary codes, which have still not been set by the OASIS team in Charleston, the university will be unable to enter our employees into the system. The timeline, procedures, and codes are all dictated by the OASIS team in Charleston. The university will offer training when information is made available; however, no information is available at this point.
3. Construction: Work continues on the roads around campus, including repairs to the parking lot across Locust Avenue. The renovations to the one-room school house are

nearly complete, with a re-dedication ceremony scheduled for next week. This is an important component of commemorating the university's history. Water proofing repairs have been completed on the top levels of the Falcon Center. The new HVAC system in Colebank will be put in three days before Thanksgiving break and will require evacuation of Colebank. The Education Building will have its new HVAC installation after commencement and Jaynes Hall is slated to have a new HVAC system installed next summer. There has also been significant progress made on the new student housing facility, which is still scheduled to open in August 2016.

4. Preparations for Homecoming, in combination with the sesquicentennial celebration, are underway. They will begin with a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Hardway Hall and the Homecoming parade on Thursday, the time capsule ceremony and emeritus luncheon on Friday, and the alumni recognition ceremony and football game on Saturday.
5. Following President Rose's announcements, Jennifer Yerdon-LeJeune asked for clarification on emails sent from Cindy Curry regarding OASIS and the switch from 24 to 26 pay periods. Faculty who are currently paid over a 9 month, rather than 12 month, schedule are encouraged to make the switch before OASIS goes live on Nov. 13, but it is unclear how this will affect faculty's PEIA benefits, since the change is being made in the middle of the fiscal year. President Rose said that this is still being set up in OASIS and how it will affect PEIA is a huge component of the process for all state employees. At this point, the university still does not have answers to these questions, but will make them available as soon as information is available. Until then, faculty can be assured that the university will protect their interests and will figure out how to escrow PEIA until the next fiscal year begins.
  - ACF representative Harry Baxter added that he has also addressed this issue with the state auditor and will follow-up when he has a response.

B. Report from Tim Oxley

1. Tim Oxley reported that the Critical Friends group is continuing to work on utilizing the rubric to allow for more qualitative feedback to programs as well as a more comprehensive institutional report. They are also developing membership lists for subgroups and the institutional assessment plan, which is still a work in progress.
2. All units reporting to Student Services are engaging in a process of self-assessment this year. Their output will involve a plan for program improvement, which is the crux of assessment. This constitutes the university's first attempt to assess non-academic areas, which was one of the charges from HLC.
3. The university received its official response letter from HLC. As expected, the letter acknowledged the work that has been performed on campus in the 2014/2015 academic year and work in areas of strategic initiatives. The HLC will require that the follow-up visit in Fall 2016 involve embedded monitoring, which means they will pay particularly close attention to the university's strategic planning and assessment progress.
4. Work on strategic planning is progressing, though not as quickly as hoped. More information regarding the process will be available in the near future. The steering committee has met and the criterion chairs are gearing up to prepare reports for the Fall 2016 HLC visit.

C. BOG Report -- Budd Sapp

1. The next BOG meeting has been re-scheduled for Thursday, October 22 at the Caperton Center. The agenda is not yet available, but it will be put on-line and e-mailed to faculty when it is ready.
2. Sapp circulated a handout with FAQs regarding student housing and progress on the University Terrace construction project.
3. Reports suggest that enrollment for first-time freshman is up from 692 to 896 this academic year. Recruitment plans are in the work and preparations are being made for Campus Visitation Day.
4. Annual graduate program reports are also out. The university currently offers five graduate degrees with Master's programs in education, teaching, criminal justice, architecture, and business. Eighty-four graduate degrees were conferred last year with 810 graduate degrees conferred to date.
5. The BOG has been invited to attend the Nov. 10 Faculty Senate meeting. A regular meeting will be held with BOG members present and refreshments to follow. All faculty are invited to attend.

D. ACF -- Harry Baxter

1. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 22
2. Baxter reiterated the importance of faculty attending the PEIA hearing scheduled on Monday, November 2 at the Ramada Inn in Morgantown. The hearing begins at 6:00, but people who wish to speak are asked to arrive by 5:00.
  - Baxter had attended an information meeting where it was revealed the state legislature is discussing the possibility of using \$50 million for the purpose of across the board raises. PEIA is currently facing \$90 million cuts. Since the proposed raise would only measure out to roughly \$500 per employee, before taxes unless employees have an MSA, which will likely be absorbed by the rising out-of-pocket costs the PEIA cuts will create. Therefore, Baxter plans to speak at the hearing in order to suggest that the \$50 million proposed for raises be put towards the \$90 million PEIA cuts instead. He urges others to attend the hearing as well as write to and call their legislators to express their views.
  - Donna Long pointed to the pattern of PEIA warning of cuts every year that frequently are not as bad as anticipated and that in light of that, perhaps we should not give away the prospect of the raise when it's possible the cuts to PEIA won't be so steep, but rather urge the state legislature to step up and fund PEIA. Baxter pointed out that in the past, PEIA has been able to utilize emergency funds which is why the cuts have been less severe than forecast; however, emergency funds can no longer be utilized, so it's likely that this year the cuts will be as bad as projected.

E. Student Government

1. The student government representative had no report.

F. IDEA Evaluations

2. Amanda Metcalf raised concerns on behalf of the School of Education, Health & Human Performance regarding the IDEA evaluations. In particular, it seems unclear what the evaluations reveal about faculty performance and how the data affects tenure and

promotion. Faculty would like to know are there other means of evaluation that would provide more effective feedback. Budd Sapp added that faculty are obligated to enter this information into TaskStream for their Annual Faculty Review; however, faculty do not receive feedback from the administration regarding the process. This is further complicated by low response rates in venues such as on-line teaching as well as the fact that there is no post-tenure review process. With limited feedback from administration, low responses rates from students, and the lack of post-tenure review process, faculty wonder about the efficacy of the evaluation process.

3. Senate President Shields noted that the Senate has had this discussion in the past and that the issue has been referred to various committees. It is unclear, however, why the university continues to utilize IDEA in light of these concerns.
4. Provost Chris Lavorata reported that following her investigation into these concerns last year, the decision was made that IDEA will provide us with their long-form evaluation which asks more and better questions. She has also consulted with a different company, but they offer the same service at a higher cost. IDEA is also moving to a type of evaluation that can be done on mobile devices which they believe will make students more responsive. Moreover, their evaluations will be exclusively on-line, with no option of paper evaluations, within two years. The university is also revisiting the idea of creating its own evaluation form; however, historically, the problem of low student response rates have made this ineffective. Regarding lack of feedback from the administration regarding evaluations, Lavorata explained that the Deans will be receiving training on how to process the information and provide feedback to better acknowledge faculty efforts at self-evaluation.
5. Further discussion addressed concerns that the kinds of questions asked on the IDEA evaluations are not always relevant to individual courses; that the process does not take into account different kinds of students, making it difficult utilize the feedback; and the reality that improving the evaluation forms are moot if the problem of low response rates from students cannot be adequately solved.
6. Oxley argued that while we must consider how evaluations provide feedback for faculty, they are also important as a normed assessment instrument. Student evaluation of their learning is a key piece of how we assess what we are doing, so the main problem to solve is the response rate.
7. The student government representative was asked if she had a sense of why students aren't more engaged. Ms. Davis explained that she takes them seriously as an aspiring educator, but her perception is that most students feel that their feedback doesn't make a difference. This led to discussion as to whether or not mid-term, rather than end-of-term evaluations would be more effective so students can see that their feedback is being utilized.
8. Faculty shared various ideas about how to improve response rates as well as strategies they've utilized, such as offering their own evaluation questionnaires, in order to boost response rates.
9. President Senate Shields said the Senate will keep this issue on the agenda until more information can be gathered.

G. Joni Gray in the School of Fine Arts has accepted the appointment to Student Publication Board.

#### IV. Unfinished Business

A. There was no unfinished business.

#### V. New Business

##### A. Minor Business

1. Two faculty representatives are needed to serve on the Bookstore Advisory Committee. Provost Lavorata explained that when the bookstore was operated by Barnes and Noble, the university had a strong committee with both faculty and student representation, but that it fell away with the switch to Follett. Nevertheless, the by-laws call for two representatives from each unit. In reconvening the committee, it is hoped that student concerns can be better addressed. Senators are asked to solicit volunteers from their individual units and send nominations to Senate President Shields.
  - Dan Eichenbaum asked if the selections should be made by the Faculty Senate or by some other process, such as the Committee on Committees. Provost Lavorata will consult the by-laws to see if it is specified, but stressed the need to identify representatives soon. Senate President Shields noted that since it is not a Senate committee, soliciting volunteers will suffice.

#### VI. Open Forum

- A. Budd Sapp asked if information on Committee membership is yet available. Senate Webmaster Chris Kast said that it is available on the website; however, there are some gaps because some units have not reported membership and/or have no one willing to serve.
  1. Discussion followed as to whether or not the report of the Committee on Committees had had a first or second reading and whether or not the by-laws dictate that they must. People serving on the committee in the past believed that a report was required for first reading in May with a second reading occurring in September.
  2. Discussion also followed regarding how to contend with certain units where no faculty will serve on elected committees. In such situations, should faculty be assigned by their Chair or Dean to serve? Or, is it possible to deny a unit the benefits of a committee if they do not have a representative?
- B. On behalf of SOE/HHP, Amanda Metcalfe asked if there was a prospect of faculty raises on the horizon. There have been no raises within the past few years and many faculty feel that this is affecting morale.
  1. President Rose explained that the administration had hoped that this was possible if no cuts were made to state appropriations, but since those cuts are now pending, the only means of offering raises to faculty would be to raise revenue. Raising revenue would require increasing enrollments and/or increasing tuition — but since higher tuition rates may serve as a deterrent to students, the latter would likely not lead to

- higher revenues. Furthermore, while enrollment is up, retention is not keeping pace, which further exacerbates the issue. The administration is open to suggestions for how to solve this problem.
2. Further discussion addressed whether or not the rainy day fund could be utilized for raises, even if it constituted one year “bonuses” or if revisiting the practice of merit pay was worthwhile. The state of WV does not legally authorize the payment of bonuses, however, and the merit pay process was previously abandoned because it was overly complicated and controversial. Senate President Shields recalled that the process had proven to be overly formulaic and arbitrary and that it had stifled collegiality. The general consensus was that revisiting merit pay as a solution was not worthwhile.
  3. President Rose noted that she would have the budget people do an analysis of the situation and discuss it with the BOG.

VII. Senate President Shields adjourned the meeting.