

## Fairmont State Faculty Senate

### Minutes

13 February 2024

Members: **Bob Niichel** (Executive Committee: President, Computer Science & Math), **Bill Harrison** (Exec Committee: Vice President, Social Sciences), **Lisa Eades** (Exec Committee: Webmaster, ASN), **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), **Nick Myers** (SGA), **Sophie Stuart** (SGA), **Rick Harvey** (Academic Affairs), **Donna Long** (Exec Committee: Secretary, Humanities), **Todd Clark** (ACF Rep, Social Sciences), **Chris Kast** (Academic Affairs), **Kelley Flaherty** (Natural Sciences), **Stephanie Jones** (CSM), **Tabitha Lafferre** (ET), **Ashley Dover** (Library), **Jason Frazer** (CoBA), **Nathan Myers** (Humanities), **Paul Reneau** (proxy for Kiefer, CoEHHP), **J.L. Tomlin** (Social Sciences), **Julie Reneau** (CoEHHP), **Gina Fantasia** (BOG)

Guests: **Michael Davis**, **Dianna Phillips**, **Tim Oxley**, **Susan Ross**, **Brian Selmeski**, **Chuck Shields**, **Amanda Metcalf**, **Jeremiah Kibler**

1.-3. Meeting called to order 3:00 p.m.; Agenda approved (Fantasia moved, Harrison seconded); 30 January 2024 minutes approved with one correction (Fantasia moved; Harrison seconded).

4. President Davis—provided an update on directories issue raised at the last Senate meeting. Office numbers and phone numbers are being added/updated to the internal directory for full-time employees. These updates will not alter college or department webpages. External directory updates are next.

- 2/29 is Fairmont State's Day of Giving. President Davis will begin live-streaming at 12:01 a.m. Volunteers for the dunk tank are needed. Programs that would like to be featured on the livestream should contact Dr. Selmeski. Dr. Davis is matching gifts in a variety of ways, and donors who choose payroll deduction are eligible for gifts.
- Dr. Davis has increased opportunities to communicate with him via a new website, calendar, and org. chart, and he will do monthly video updates. "Open Mikes" are also scheduled.
- Dr. Selmeski noted the Presidential Inauguration on 4/4 will require faculty to be in regalia. The event is open to the public, but the university community is the focus. There will be a reception from 6-8.
- Selmeski reported that the Employee Engagement Survey from last year found out-of-date policies and lack of access to procedures were concerns, and these are now being worked on. The BOG is reviewing its Policy on Policies to move forward with fixing or clarifying policies and procedures.

5. Old Business: Major

Harrison moved and Tomlin seconded to bring CP 23-24-05 CJ Online, 06 Middle College (MC), 07 COMM, 09 FORS, 10 FORS, and 12/12a HIST, and GSC 23-24-01 CHEP for second reading. After discussion, motion passed.

Long raised the issue of additional costs to students for online and hybrid courses. Kast stated that IT gets 75% of those fees. He stated that staffing issues sometimes drives course offerings. The BOG eliminated differential tuition for online courses. Fantasia will raise the issue with the BOG Finance Committee. Shields stated that low-enrollment in face-to-face courses sometimes means they are cancelled because online classes fill. He recalls discussions in the past

about online fees, but faculty were not part of the discussion. Davis stated that the Student Engagement Survey this spring will ask questions about course offerings and modalities.

Phillips spoke to the Middle College proposal. She anticipates hiring any faculty needed in ENGL and MATH. The increase in enrollment is welcome. The announcement about MC from Charleston is “imminent.” Niichel asked how coordination across disciplines will be managed; Phillips said we will hire an administrator just for MC (“It’s a unique entity”) and KVC staff will report to that person. We will also hire a dedicated advisor who will serve as advisor/career counselor.

## 6. New Business: Major

Harvey moved and Harrison seconded to remove the Academic Integrity Policy from the table. MacLennan moved and Eades seconded approving the policy for first reading. After lengthy discussion, the motion passed.

Susan Ross noted that the policy grew out of faculty and administrative concerns. The policy was drafted 7 years ago by the Faculty Welfare Committee and revised in collaboration with Student Services. It recognizes the need for flexibility and provides guidance for faculty. She states that AI is a new / another issue.

The procedure in the policy now is that when a charge is submitted to the Advocate portal, Student Conduct and Academic Affairs representatives can see it.

Alvarez stated that the Student Handbook has a section on behavior and asked if the Handbook includes anything on academic integrity; also if Academic Integrity is in the Faculty Handbook. Ross says the policy coordinates with both handbooks.

Shields stated that the Faculty Handbook Committee discussed various policies and asked if this policy creates a single policy. Ross said that is the intention.

Harvey objected to Section II.6 (that the Student Conduct Officer has access); Reneau pointed to II.3 (also includes Student Conduct Officer).

Harvey suggested including specific technology (Advocate) in the policy; Davis recommends including procedure only and not specific software. Harvey asked where the evidence will reside. Ross said the same repository as Student Conduct, and she doesn’t see a due process problem. Harvey stated that specific procedure should be in the policy.

Selmeski recommended different forms of communication (Handbooks) should link to a single repository and not to copy/paste in various places. Clark stated that the Faculty Handbook Committee did that for everything except the grievance procedure because the State site is difficult to navigate.

Fantasia asked how the procedure works. Reneau said it allows latitude: faculty members can choose to talk with the student first or follow whatever their course policy is. Faculty are strongly encouraged to use the additional reporting form. Once submitted, the system generates a letter to the student letting them know their appeal options. Kibler stated Advocate is a secure database. Harvey objected still to issues of retention and access; Kibler stated access can be restricted. Ross said access is already restricted to Trish DeNoon and Ross.

Niichel asked if students have access; Kibler stated students can request records.

Fantasia stated access should be to Academic Affairs only and not accessible by Student Conduct.

Harvey stated II.6 (referral of case to Student Hearing Board) needs to be fleshed out.

Alvarez suggested using either “dishonesty” or “integrity”; they are currently used interchangeably. He also suggested changing “Complaint Form” to “Occurrence.”

Kibler projected the form. Kast asked what actions are taken upon submitting the form. Reneau stated it could include education, like requiring the student to complete modules on plagiarism.

Fantasia stated the policy is not ready for implementation: too much revision and clarification needed. Harvey agreed.

Lafferre noted that AI needs its own section.

Reneau asked if policy can be tabled; Niichel confirmed. Kast stated that given the length of time the policy has been in the works, a policy that can be refined is better than no policy at all. Long noted that this discussion has provided direction for revision. Fantasia pointed out that the delay was not due to faculty.

7. Provost Report—Phillips announced a new curriculum website; more information forthcoming.

- She is increasing opportunities for communication, with a new newsletter to be published every 3 (or so) weeks.
- Academic Affairs drafted Program Review guidelines to be in compliance with HEPC Series 10. The guidelines will be shared widely before implementation.
- There is discussion of adopting Master Scheduling software, with several products under consideration. Adastra (spelling?) is being used in other state institutions already. The software must provide “diagnostic capacity” and will allow a “hard look at retention initiatives”; the software will be part of a retention strategic plan. Once two products are under consideration, reps will be invited to campus to demo for everyone.
- The rumor that we are getting rid of deans is untrue. There are several vacancies with interims in place, so there is some discussion of restructuring academic affairs, but it won’t happen soon. Deb Hemler has agreed to be serve as interim dean for Sci/Tech upon Roof’s retirement; Rebecca Giorcelli is interim for CoBA; Phillips is interim for Nursing. Phillips encouraged anyone with questions to contact her.
- Fairmont State has signed up with the American Association of Colleges & Universities’ American Democracy Project. This is a non-partisan program that encourages voter registration and participation in society. Harrison is assisting. More info to come.
- Sixteen (16) promotion & tenure applicants are under review—a record. Phillips is finishing up her part and is very heartened to see all that faculty are doing.
- She congratulated Long on being a finalist for the WV Professor of the Year and Savage for her book contract.
- Phillips reminded everyone of the upcoming AI Conference on 27 & 28 February organized by CTLI.

8. Reports

ACF—Clark reported that of 85 pieces of legislation on higher education only two are of concern: HB 4572 prohibits higher education from requiring employees from changing social media accounts (this is a good thing), and [bill number not provided] the American Campuses Act restricts academic relationship and commercial relationship with certain governments, including China. HB 5450 is about a supplemental appropriation for Fairmont State. There are no bills relating to tenure. ACF members decided not to go to Charleston for the session.

BOG—Fantasia stated Board committees are meeting now. The Board book for the upcoming BOG meeting has been provided via email.

SGA—returning member freshman Nick Myers and new member freshman Sophie Stuart stated that the SGA E Board is “rebuilding” and encouraged faculty to encourage students to get involved (regular meetings are Thursdays at 12:30 in HB 128). There are currently nine regularly attending members. The new advisors are Dr. Stone and Tiffany Raschella. SGA is discussing

the inauguration on 4/4. They may be attending SGA training in Atlanta. Phillips stated she will advocate for stipends for student leaders. Selmeski encouraged SGA to create a “Friends of SGA” so it is eligible for matching funding.

#### 10. Miscellaneous

Niichel stated that the Senate Bylaws Committee met on 12 February. The two major changes proposed are 1) a treasurer position in exchange for one of the member-at-large positions on the Executive Committee, which requires a change to the Constitution; and 2) the combining of Academic Appeals, Student Hearing Board, and Faculty Harassment and Complaint committees into a single committee tentatively called the Faculty Appeals Committee. The latter also simplifies the current Bylaws’ description of the procedures of these committees.

Dustin Merrill took some pictures during the Senate meeting; Eades will share them before posting to the Senate website.

#### 11. Open Forum

Niichel announced Tom Devine, Computer Science prof, will give a talk called “Finding a Needle in the Cosmic Haystack in ET 427 [missed the date for this!]

Tomlin announced that he is collaborating with Prickett’s Fort on its 3-year celebration of a variety of anniversaries for the Fort. Information on events will be forthcoming.

The meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna J Long, Secretary