

Shared Governance During COVID-19: Kentucky Perspectives

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Kentucky Perspectives

<https://lennex.wixsite.com/drlennexwebsite/aaup-2021>

- ▶ Online pivot announced March 13, 2020
- ▶ Immediate chaos
- ▶ Realization that it was not a two-week shutdown
- ▶ Planning for remainder of Spring 2020 and academic year 2020-2021 toward both online teaching and learning and a healthy campus



MSU Happenings

- ▶ Faculty Senate last in-person meeting March 5, 2020
- ▶ Faculty Senate moved to online (Webex) meetings April 2020
 - ▶ Online Teaching Resolution (April)
 - ▶ Partnership with Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning – Survey
 - ▶ Faculty Online Workshops --- Curriculum, ADA/508 Compliance, Assessment, Rubrics, and Communication
 - ▶ Resolution re Relief Student Online & Hybrid Fees (June 2020- no action returned from Provost)
 - ▶ Resolution re Mask Wearing at MSU (June 2020- no action returned from Provost)
 - ▶ Established the Faculty Senate Award for Shared Governance (April 2021- no action required of Provost)
 - ▶ Open Discussion with Faculty Senate regarding:
 - ▶ Faculty in tenure-track delay of tenure portfolio for one year (April 2020, sent to administration after FS approval Fall 2020)



Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning

- ▶ Through Associate Provost, secured funding for faculty workshops in online teaching
- ▶ Solicited instructors from across campus and provided 5 workshops which also offered faculty stipends (\$500) upon successful completion
- ▶ Fall survey with FS to assess online teaching and needs responses indicated:
 - ▶ Need to improve student engagement
 - ▶ Need for comprehensive repository for student policies
 - ▶ Concern for lack of shared governance and push for face-to-face courses
 - ▶ Concern for lack of COVID-19 policy consistency and reinforcement
 - ▶ Concern for uncompensated extra responsibilities in teaching online
 - ▶ Tenure, promotion requirements affected but not altered
 - ▶ Student evaluations still required

Where we are now

- ▶ As of June 11, state-wide mask mandate lifted
- ▶ University President has declared a “return to normalcy”
- ▶ Universities are planning for at least 70% face-to-face classes and business as usual per pre-COVID
 - ▶ At MSU, shared governance in preparing for Spring, Summer, and Fall 2021 has not occurred. Other highlights:
 - ▶ The Provost during pandemic beginnings retired June 30, 2020. All efforts he initiated ceased with the new interim Provost. The interim retires June 2021; his replacement, selected through an internal search, is not an interim– he is continuing (aka standing).
 - ▶ MSU’s President issued a restrictive inquiry policy whereby any inquiry from constituent body elected leadership must be funneled through the constituent body chairperson to their Vice-President. For Faculty Senate, that is Provost. The Provost would then distribute the request to “appropriate” unit/person and return to constituency chairperson with response. So far, that’s resulted in delays of up to three months (and counting) and inaccurate information.
 - ▶ The FCTL Director, participatory in shared governance with Faculty Senate and the online workshops, resigned as of June 30, 2021.
 - ▶ The Staff Congress Chair, participatory in shared governance with Faculty Senate, resigned from the university as of June 15, 2021.
 - ▶ MSU’s President issued a Confidentiality Understanding to be signed by all administrators and their staff within a short time period. Faculty Senate, and some faculty, resisted this effort. The document was promised retracted, but it was soon discovered it was handed to campus attorney for revision.
 - ▶ A May campus climate survey, distributed by Faculty Senate and analyzed by AAUP leadership, concluded that MSU has lack of commitment to shared governance, confused administrative communication, lack of policies knowledge and comprehension, and perception of “good old boy/girl” leadership promotion.