

Faculty Senate Minutes January 19, 2012

Call to Order: Chair Sharp called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm; Riggle Room; ADUC

Senators Absent: Michael Dobranski, Cynthia Faulkner, Cyndi Gibbs, John Hennen, Rebecca Katz, Barbara Lyons, April Miller

Chair Sharp welcomed Dr. Craig Tuerk who will be filling in for Janelle Hare this semester because of a class schedule conflict with Senate meetings. Senator Katy Carlson has returned to Senate from sabbatical. The Senate thanked Dr. Sarah Morrison for filling in for Senator Carlson for the fall semester.

Minutes: Senator Carlson moved to correct the spelling of Phil Gniot on the last line of the first page. Amendment passes. Senator Carlson moved to approve the minutes of December 1, 2011 as amended. Senator Wymer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Academic Issues: Will meet next Thursday, January 26th in Combs 309 at 4:00

Evaluation: Anyone who would like to give feedback on the survey sent to all departments regarding student evaluation please stay after the meeting to meet with Senator Nabb; will meet next Thursday to discuss results of feedback

Faculty Welfare and Concerns: PAC 27 first reading

Governance: Will have a Standing Committee replacement for vote; will meet next Thursday

Senate Committee on Issues: Will meet next Thursday, 4:20 Senate conference room

Reports:

Chair's Report:

- Attended the Board of Regents meeting on December 8th
- Reported on the Faculty Salary Model Work Group on December 14th and January 11th; Senator Rathbun and Regent Morrison also attended the meeting
- President approved the revisions to PAC 7
- PAC Reconciliation Committee met on December 15, regarding PAC 29
- Some Senators are going to serve on a focus group with the IT consulting firm Berry Dunn

Open Chair Segment:

The Open Chair Segment included a statement by Senator Royal Berglee speaking as a representative from his department concerning external mandates and faculty service loads. The following comments were communicated to Senator Berglee from his constituents and colleagues in response to the Senate Briefing Report from the December 1st Faculty Senate meeting. The comments were edited to fit the Open Chair Segment to be read on the senate floor.

Transcript of Open Chair Segment: Quoted comments from MSU faculty:

I'm writing to comment on some remarks quoted in your most recent Senate report by the chair and provost that stated: "MSU is leading the state in adapting to federal, state, and regulatory mandates, and that although we've all experienced growing pains, I think our hard work is paying off."

Regarding the assessment mandates, if these mandates strengthened our programs, helped our students move forward, or were pedagogically appropriate, I'd be glad that Morehead State was out front on adapting to them. But my experience is that none of this is true. I teach in the First Year Seminar Program and the writing and presentation rubrics ... provide no useful information on how my students are performing, provide no meaningful feedback for students, and take a great deal of valuable time. The assessment also takes away from the substance of the class.

I had to cut the number of writing assignments even before I started and I'm now planning on cutting back even more writing assignments [to meet the requirements]. Besides wasting our time and disadvantaging our students, [this type of] assessment is also a faculty morale killer.

I realize that SACS, state government, and federal agencies are pushing colleges more in [this] direction, but I see no reason why Morehead State University should be "leading the state" in complying to these kinds of counter-productive mandates. We would be serving our students and region better if we were somewhat behind the curve on these matters -- in the lower half of state universities on assessment issues rather than leading the pack.

The only people on campus who benefit from our [so called] "progress" are senior administrators padding their resumes and the personnel involved in administering the assessment materials. As a faculty member I don't see that as anything to be proud of.

The administration is benefiting on the backs of the faculty who are conducting an immense amount of administrative work. The amount of service work continues to increase. If the administration would invest the same amount of time and energy insuring that the faculty members in each and every program on campus were properly being supported then the faculty would have something to be proud of and our university would actually see some changes in the classrooms.

The administration seems to think that there is an endless amount of faculty energy and good will to do service work for all their initiatives. This is not the case; the faculty are fatigued by all the additional service work. The cost will come with the sacrifice in the classrooms and with academic achievements, which are the parts of the university that gives it its reputation in the academic community, not necessarily the political arena.

Senator Berglee's response to the comments from his colleagues (included in the Open Chair Segment):

I know that there are those in administration who are working hard at what they do. I have often mentioned in humor that President Andrews has done so much "heavy lifting" at MSU that he has developed back problems. [President Andrews made comments regarding his back during convocation.] We know that SACs, for example, is a requirement for operating the university. What I see here with the comments from my colleagues is that this issue is a matter of focus and priority. As one of our senate colleagues asked, what are the best practices when it comes to faculty? Where are all the focus groups, task forces and special ad hoc committees when it comes to faculty matters, sabbaticals, or programs being eliminated? I think the university faculty feels that the administration may need to focus on the internal issues of the institution with the same intensity and energy as it has focused on the external mandates.

Discussion by the Senators followed the report.

Provost's Report:

- Responded to questions regarding the five year statement in the PAc for promotion. Asked the Senate to clarify the policy for the five year statement in the PAc before the beginning of the fall semester 2012.
- APNA reports will be disseminated to the deans on Friday and they meet the following Wednesday.
- Spoke about the Governor's Budget Address. Will update the members on the University budget as details become available.
- Provided an update on the University of Pikeville issue.
- In response to a question from the floor, the Provost indicated she did not feel now was an appropriate time to abandon the Faculty Salary Work Group, but continue to move forward.

Regent's Report:

- Regents met Thursday, December 8th.
- Work session will be conducted on February 16th.
- Regent Morrison addressed the Senators about the University of Pikeville issue and the state's budget problems.
- Regent Morrison agreed with the Provost that the Faculty Salary Work Group should continue.

General Education Report:

- Capstone proposals are approved.
- General Education Program setup is complete
- First-Year Seminar Incentive Plan and the Computer Competency Document are approved.
- A Senator and First-Year Seminar teacher asked if items such as iPads that are purchased with these funds belong to the teacher or the University. The Provost will look into it and notify the Senate.
- Since the Gen Ed Program is complete at this time, Senator Chatham indicated that the program could begin a "tweaking" phase and asked that Senators provide him with concerns or ideas regarding the Gen Ed program.

Scheduling Committee:

- Senator Chatham will replace Chair Sharp on the scheduling committee. As new information is added to the reports it will be made available. Survey for students is almost complete and continuing to work on survey for faculty.

Senate Actions:

Faculty Welfare and Concerns: Senator Rathbun presented PAc 27 for a first reading and explained the markings in the document. Senator Rathbun will provide the Senate with a copy showing all the changes prior to the next meeting. Several Senators asked questions for clarification. If changes result from these questions, FWC will make those prior to the second reading. Senator Rathbun indicated that the major change in the document is the creation of the College Tenure Committee. At the end of questions, Senator Rathbun asked that any amendments for second reading be brought to the floor typed.

Governance: The Governance committee recommended Scott Davison fill a vacancy from Humanities on the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Recommendation passed.

Announcements: Chair Sharp informed the Senators about several thefts from offices on campus and encouraged them to be diligent regarding laptops, iPads, etc.

Adjournment: 5:50 p.m.