



FACULTY SENATE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT
January 19, 2017 meeting

The Overview (which, “For my humor’s sake, I shall preserve the style in which I once narrated it at Lima”) The 2016-2017 Faculty Senate held its ninth regular meeting on January 19, 2017. The body discussed the role of instructors and the possibility of productively intervening in budgetary decisions regarding athletics. It also received a thorough report from the Provost and an email update from the Faculty Regent.

“If the gods think to speak outright to man, they will honorably speak outright; not shake their heads, and give an old wives’ darkling hint.” (Announcements)

(Note: announcements regarding Communication Media and Language’s [CML’s] instructor statement and the athletics budget generated significant discussion and some Senate action. In consequence, they will be relayed separately.)

- Previous minutes: The minutes from the December 1, 2016 meeting were tabled so that they could be streamlined and corrected.
- PAC-26 update: The full PAC-26 Reconciliation team met before the start of the Spring term and the two sides agreed to “come to the table” with a list of negotiable and non-negotiable items at the next full meeting, which will be Wednesday, January 25th at 8:00 a.m.
- Committee on the “State of the Institution”: The Executive Council of the Senate wishes to impanel a committee to draft a “state of the institution” report to complement President Andrews’ work for the Board. Chair Dobranski noted that the formation of such a committee, which would ideally involve faculty as well as administrators (in whatever capacity the administrators would be able to serve), was in its initial stages, and he asked the body if this were something the Senate as a whole were willing to endorse. After some discussion, wherein Senator White recorded his support for the idea, but his reservations about the lack of particulars and the truncated timeline, Senator Caric moved to impanel such a committee, and Roma Prindle second. The motion passed.
- Technology Advisory Board (TAB) replacement: Senator Sharp will not be able to serve on TAB this term. (Editorial aside: many thanks to Senator Sharp for her longstanding service on this committee.) Another Senator will need to serve as a representative. Those interested should contact Chair Dobranski.

“Who ain’t a slave?” (Discussion of the Department of CML’s statement re: instructors)

The chair of the Department of CML and the department’s Senators provided Chair Dobranski with a statement endorsed by CML, which asked the Senate to clarify the position of instructors and affirm that the body does represent all faculty, including instructors. Chair Dobranski projected the statement during the meeting and offered these facts:

- The Senate constitution clearly states that instructors participate in the election of Faculty Senators. Instructors are not eligible to serve on the Senate, but they do get a say in who will represent their departments.
- Instructor status is defined in institutional policy (more specifically, in PAc-34).

Chair Dobranski further noted that the actions of Senate in the last year demonstrate that Senate is sensitive to the plight of instructors. Senate suggestions regarding the budget shortfall and resolutions regarding the furlough clearly stated that those making less money (which would be instructors, who are remunerated less than T/TF faculty) should be spared from as much economic hardship as possible. Many Senators wished to see faculty and staff making below a certain amount exempt from any cuts whatsoever, and final statements and resolutions from the body as a whole were always sensitive to salary disparities. Even more importantly, the 2015-2016 Senate worked quickly to revise the apparent “loophole” in PAc-34 that seemed to allow the administration to unilaterally raise instructor loads to 5-5. This revised PAc-34 was fully in concert with PAc-29 (which clearly outlines a 5-4 instructor load) and provided a shorter timeline for renewal, a timeline that would let instructors know sooner in the year whether or not they were returning the following school term. This revised PAc, which was passed by Senate, was rejected by the administration because, the administration averred, PAc-34 needed to be revisited in concert with PAc-29.

In the conversation that followed, a number of Senators, including Senator White, asked what the purpose of the CML statement was and what Senate would be able to do to address whatever the substantive concerns might be. There was no answer because no one could fully define the intent of the statement. Senator Adams noted that the prolonged Senate discussion of PAc-26 was (and is) the result of administrative interest in revising that policy, not the Senate’s desire to focus on T/TF faculty at the exclusion of other faculty concerns. Put simply, the reason why the Senate is still discussing PAc-26, and not PAc-34, is because the administration, and, even more importantly, the Board of Regents, considers PAc-26 a priority and wishes to see it changed. PAc-34 is not an administrative or Board priority at this time.

Senator Adams encouraged faculty interested in the plight of instructors to contact MSU’s local chapter of the AAUP and to consider joining that body.

Contemplating the whiteness of the whale (Update on the Athletics inquiry)

Following up on the EC charge to explore the athletics budget, Chair Dobranski contacted Athletic Director Hutchinson and asked if Director Hutchinson (or some member of his office) could come to the Senate to discuss the athletic budget and answer questions. Director Hutchinson respectfully declined. Chair Dobranski then sent an email to VP Bentley, who oversees athletics as part of “student success.” VP Bentley has not yet replied.

Senator Adams noted that the Senate was in a position to make a recommendation, even before an official meeting with representatives from athletics, and she moved that the Senate recommend that there be no search for a new basketball coach until all the interim positions in Academic Affairs are filled. The motion was seconded by Senator Carlson.

In the extended discussion, a select group of Senators voiced reservations and an equally select group voiced endorsement.

The reservations:

- This could be perceived as faculty telling athletics what they can and cannot do, and athletics has never done this to faculty, so why should faculty do it to athletics?
- The specific wording could be perceived as adversarial. There might be a more congenial way to express the same thought about priorities. (Note: there was an attempt to put forward alternate language, but there was no consensus on specific language that could convey the perceived point.)
- Athletics has not been exempt from budget cuts. Tennis was eliminated last year, so faculty shouldn't intimate that athletics has been untouched. (Editorial aside, which is also a point of clarification: the elimination of tennis was followed by an addition—women's beach volleyball—which required an outlay of new expenses, even though the added sport does share a number of resources with regular volleyball.)
- Some faculty do not believe that they know enough about the budget overall to be able to make such a recommendation.

The endorsements:

- The motion is about budgeting priorities, not telling athletics what they can and cannot do. Athletics is just as bound by administrative decisions regarding funding as Academic Affairs is. This motion is asking the administration to reconsider its priorities. It is not telling athletics what it can and cannot do.
- What is truly at stake here is transparency. Faculty are fighting for our very values and views, and doing so in a public way for a reason.
- Academic Affairs has been scraping and fighting for hires and new faculty lines. Athletics should have to do the same thing.
- Faculty already have a great deal of data at their fingertips. MSU has been Division I for decades, and everyone on campus knows our enrollment patterns, so we can all determine what role athletics has played in recruitment and retention. Faculty also have a number of documents on the Senate BB site regarding athletic budget data. (Editorial aside: including the Presentation from the AAUP speaker, Howard Bunsis, which highlights athletic spending.)

During the debate, Senator Brown wondered if there might be NCAA regulations regarding the hiring of full time coaches. No one knew if there were, and a number of Senators claimed that they did not feel comfortable making a recommendation without that information. Senator Adams moved to table the motion, with the understanding that the EC would explore NCAA regulations, and Senator Cottingham seconded the motion. The motion to table carried.

(Editorial aside, wherein the EC follow-up is included: the NCAA Division I 2016-2017 manual specifies a number of restrictions on employment in Bylaw 11, "Conduct and Employment of

Athletics Personnel,” restrictions regarding [student-athlete] recruitment, personnel remuneration, and the overall number of coaches particular sports are allowed [especially in regards to Football, which frequently gets its own set of very explicit guidelines], but it includes no specific regulations regarding searches for coaches. It should also be noted that on the very day that Senate was debating whether it should make a recommendation, the job description for MSU Head Basketball Coach was posted on the NCAA website.)

“In this world, shipmates, sin that pays its way can travel freely and without a passport; whereas Virtue, if a pauper, is stopped at all frontiers” (Provost Report)

A relatively upbeat Provost let the body know that there’s a great deal going on, particularly in regards to budget discussions in the President’s Cabinet. There was a full retreat last Tuesday and another retreat is coming up. Unfortunately, our budget discussions are bedeviled (this CO’s phrasing, not the Provost’s) by performance funding, which could cause a cut of anywhere from \$2,000,000 to \$200,000. (Here the Provost noted that we had been warned regarding the potential consequences of performance funding by the President.) Given this uncertainty, and the fact that the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) has yet to inform schools what tuition rates might be, it is difficult to determine what our official budget will look like. Right now every unit is coming forward with proposals, and Academic Affairs, like everyone else, is asking for new money to fund important projects.

There has been a great deal of discussion, at the state level, of what constitutes appropriate transfers and college readiness. MSU obviously needs to be up on this because we need to do everything we can to secure a pipeline that will allow us to increase our total number of graduates (an important criterion in performance funding). KCTCS has begun a conversation regarding the mathematics requirement in the core, offering potential alternatives that some see as “dumbing down” and others see as practical acknowledgements of the needs of divergent students, who will appreciate more discipline appropriate choices. (Editorial aside: “Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appal [sic]!”). There is also a debate over what standardized instrument will best determine college preparedness (the ACT or SAT) and what constitutes college readiness overall. Given the growing concern that K-12 wishes to define college readiness for colleges and universities, there’s an ongoing effort to craft “baseline language” of “minimum criteria” for the Commonwealth. This effort will be difficult, because there is some divergence of opinion among the 4-year schools, but the effort is necessary.

Other items of note: The Diversity Taskforce has its first meeting today, and the General Education Taskforce has begun its review of our program. We also doubled the number of students we served this Winter session (which doubled our net profit), and, in so doing, facilitated the graduation of 20 students. In response to faculty queries re: these items, the Provost stated that the idea of a “January session” (as opposed to a Winter break over Christmas) is a good one, but any possible change would occur years from now, given how far in advance schedules are approved. He also stated that there are currently no planned changes to FYS funding (now it is all professional development funds) and course load calculation.

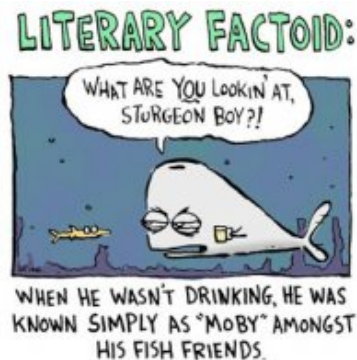
“There, then, he sat, the sign and symbol of a man without faith, hopelessly holding up hope in the midst of despair.” (Regent Report)

Regent Berglee was not able to attend the meeting. He emailed a report in his stead (please see the email included at the end of this report).

“You persist in telling me the most mystifying and exasperating stories” (Senate Committee Reports)

- **Governance:** Chair Cottingham noted that faculty will be electing a new Regent this term. Nominations will occur in March; the election itself will be in April. Candidate and voter eligibility for Faculty Regent are outlined in [KRS 164.321](#), which specifies that the Faculty Regent is to be drawn from “standing faculty” from the rank of Assistant Professor and above, and that all faculty (including instructors) vote for the Regent. There will be more information regarding the Regent election at a later date, but Chair Cottingham just wanted to let faculty know that they should be judicious in the nomination process. Not only do nominees have to demonstrate a willingness to serve, but the 15 signatures appended to a candidate’s application must also be exclusive signatures, as faculty may only endorse one candidate. (Upshot: be certain before you sign!)
- **Academic Issues:** The committee has yet to meet, but it will soon be working on a student survey.
- **Evaluations:** The committee is meeting next week and will be working on resurrecting “Are We Making Progress?” so that faculty can be surveyed this term.
- **Faculty Welfare and Concerns:** no report
- **Issues:** no report

“Time itself now held long breaths with keen suspense.” There was a motion to adjourn at 5:13. The next regular meeting of the Senate is scheduled for February 2, 2017, at 3:45 p.m.



Submitted by the 2016-2017 Faculty Senate Communications Officer, who no longer cherishes unwarrantable prejudices against a harpooner who proved to be a jolly good bedfellow.

Faculty Regent Report for January 19, 2017 (provided by Regent Berglee)

The BOR met on December 9th for its regularly scheduled quarterly meeting. Actions of note include the approval the 2016 Fall graduates, acceptance of the 2015-16 audit report, approval of the Master of Science in Nursing--Family Nursing Practitioner degree, and the approval of a revision to Personnel Policy PG-5 Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity for Employment. PG-5 revisions expanded the definition that identifies individuals and groups who will be considered protected class covered under the policy, and reassigned duties previously assigned to the Affirmative Action Committee were assigned to the President's Diversity Council.

One of the pending concerns is the implementation of the Performance Funding Model designated by the State of Kentucky. President Andrews shared information regarding the status of the Performance Funding initiative. This information has been placed on the MSU web site and attached to this email message. Continued discussion and communication will be needed to work with the provisions in the implementation of this reality.

The Spring Semester schedule for Board of Regents meetings in 2017 are listed here. All dates are Thursdays and all meetings will be held in CHER DeMoss Suite (102D).

- February 16, Work Session
- March 9, Quarterly Meeting
- May 11, Audit Committee
- May 11, Work Session
- June 8, Quarterly Meeting

The Presidential Search and Selection Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, January 11th, to review the status of the background of ten potential candidates and narrow down the list for further consideration. The search firm of R William Funk and Associates reported on the preliminary background checks they conducted on the ten potential candidates selected by the committee. The work of the committee was to further reduce the number of candidates to those selected for personal meetings.

On January 19-20, the search committee will be conducting neutral site interviews to narrow down the pool of candidates to the selected individuals who will be recommended to the full Board of Regents to be invited to visit campus. Typically three candidates would be invited to Morehead to meet the campus community. The general timeline that has been announced and posted includes campus interviews for the second half of February. Any update of this timeline will be announced once the final candidates have been determined.

- February 20-24, Campus interviews
- March 31, Appointment of President
- July 1, New President assumes office

The work of the BOR and the Search Committee continues. Please let me know of any concerns or question you may have for this work. I appreciate the input and support of the faculty. Wish you the best for the semester.

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