**FACULTY SENATE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**
February 16, 2017 meeting


**"Now is the winter of our discontent."** (**The Overview)**  The 2016-2017 Faculty Senate held its eleventh regular meeting on February 16, 2017.  The representative body was briefed on the progress of PAc-26 and discussed MSU's recent NCAA infraction.  The Executive Council also outlined a strategy for productively engaging with the open presidential forum in March.


**"An honest tale speeds best, being plainly told."  (Announcements)**
- **"State of the Institution" update:**  Issues met last Thursday and began some preliminary work on a project that will directly link to the "Five-Year Goals for Morehead State" approved by Senate in the Fall of 2016.  Although the exact form of the report has yet to be determined, the committee wishes the document to be a forward-looking report that offers practical advice for what we can do to achieve our preferred future.  Anyone interested in learning more about the report or contributing to the effort can attend one of Issues' meetings or contact a member of the committee.
- **New Senate representative on TAB:**  The next meeting of the Technology Advisory Board (TAB) is February 24th.  Senator White will be the new Senate representative. According to Chair Dobranski (who attended the last meeting), the board wishes to define what its role might be, as it has not played a role in major technological purchases. (Editorial aside: our recent NCAA infraction [see "England hath long. . ." below] demonstrates why TAB should resume its true advisory function.  Imagine what we could achieve if we utilized the populated, standing committees we already have to complete specified tasks!)
- **TEC:**  The Educational and Professional Standards Board added a new literacy competency.  In response, Dr. Alison Hruby has designed a class to focus on content literacy.  Course proposals for MSUTeach have also been approved.

- **ADVISE:** John Ernst has been working with the consultant we hired to interface with Ellucian (our software management system) to look into a new advising program (cleverly called ADVISE). He would very much like to get faculty involved in the review process. No official group has been formed, but there are talks of involving members from each college.
- **Commendation for Senator Schack:** The Executive Council of the Senate endorsed the following resolution:
  > Whereas Senator Edna Schack volunteered to host the inaugural "First Thursday" event for faculty, staff, and administration to engage in fellowship;
  > Whereas, Senator Schack provided food and drink for her colleagues;
  > Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate would like to commend Senator Schack for her efforts.

## A PAc! a PAc! My kingdom for a PAc! (Old Business: PAc-26 update):

The reconciliation committee continues to meet. Currently they are discussing the criteria that could justify the elimination of a program, and hence the need to terminate tenured and tenure track faculty. So far they have discussed potential mechanisms for "flagging" programs, using APNA data, and creating incentive for positive programmatic change. One identified criterion for flagging—a designation intended as a warning that could, in adverse situations or left unchecked over a period of time, lead to program elimination—could be low enrollment. Another is a consistent pattern of failure to meet accreditation standards. The committee, which is still discussing and defining criteria, plans to outline a full process for necessary program elimination, a process that would apply in even the best of budgetary times, before specifying a streamlined process that could be utilized in the wake of an imminent budgetary crisis. (Note: "imminent budgetary crisis" has not been defined, and has yet to be discussed by the committee.)

In the conversation that followed, a number of Senators expressed concern over either the broadness of categorizations or the limited (or perhaps overly narrow) nature of the analysis proposed so far. The concerns were as follows:
- We may not be well served looking at programs individually. The elimination of one program could have a deleterious effect on another that shares cohorts of students.
- Funding discussions need to be macro as well as micro. There are times when we can and should consider having a relatively flush program help "float" another, particularly when we are dealing with a program that either does or has the potential to serve the region.
- Low enrollment isn't always a "bad" thing, particularly in some professional areas that have to limit program size so that those programs do not flood the market.
- Enrollment figures can be determined in different ways. It would behoove the committee to consider looking at enrollment figures per FTE.
- For this new policy to work, there needs to a constant and credible feedback loop. If we really are going to "monitor" and "flag," we need to do so consistently and transparently.
- The feedback and data need to account for more than just MSU. A program that is "small" compared to another at MSU might actually be quite large (and healthy) compared to other programs of the same type at other schools. The obverse could also be true.

- We need to remember that administrative decisions can have adverse effects on programs (cited example: the elimination of Future Teachers of America, which adversely impacted the enrollments in elementary and middle grades education).
- The document tends to presuppose that all faculty are defined by a particular program. This is not always the case, and it is not clear what will happen to faculty who straddle programs. It is also not clear how such a policy might apply to the faculty class of librarians. Right now, the Provost doesn't think the policy affects librarians, but there needs to be a firm consensus so people know where they stand (and what policies apply to them).

At the end of the discussion, Senator Schack noted that informal feedback loops, and "big picture" discussions that could aid in programmatic analysis, can happen at social gatherings where faculty from across campus come together. This is one of the many reasons why she supports initiatives such as First Thursday.


**"England hath long been mad, and scarr'd herself" (Response to the NCAA infraction)**
Senator Adams read the following statement on the Senate floor:

> On February 10th, the NCAA published its decision on MSU's "second major, Level I or Level II" infraction. According to the document (titled "Morehead State University Public Infraction Decision"), our
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>> institution's use of a flawed software system to assist in certifying student-athletes led to 48 student-athletes in nine sports being erroneously certified as eligible for intercollegiate athletics competition after failing to meet progress-toward-degree requirements. Additionally, due to human error, one football student-athlete failed to have at least six semester hours during the preceding regular academic term. The institution also permitted these student-athletes to compete and receive travel expenses.
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> Because the error was "inadvertent," and "the student-athletes and coaches in this case were completely unaware of the violations resulting from the flawed software system," the infraction was deemed Level II—Mitigating. MSU has since agreed to spend $1,000,000 to customize its software to better track athletes according to NCAA practices, pay a $5,000 penalty, accept one year of probation, and have all parties involved (designated as the "registrar, assistant registrar, compliance, assistant compliance, faculty athletics representative, athletic director/Academic Services") attend "NCAA Regional Rules Seminars for at least two years (2017-18)."
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> The NCAA investigatory "panel believes that most, if not all, of the improper certifications in this case could have been avoided by having a system of checks and balances in place at the institution." While we should embrace the suggestion to institute a manual check of student-athlete records, we should also take the time to explore the other problems this infraction has uncovered, and begin to implement a much broader system of checks and balances that can help enshrine proper budgeting priorities while we facilitate all students' success.
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> As the infraction report notes, MSU learned its 2008 proprietary software purchase "erroneously used the total number of credit hours earned, not just those applicable to the student-athletes' designated degree program for progress-toward-degree purposes" in a June 2015 NCAA Academic Performance Program (APP) audit. This means that as of June 2015 we knew that there could be potential problems with the academic progress of some of our athletes, yet, in the budgetary period of October 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, we made a budget amendment to grant supplemental pay to an employee for having met "overall APR" (c.f. this BOR book). Put

another way, we awarded a bonus to an employee for having met an NCAA academic progress rate (APR) right after we discovered the tool we had for measuring one of the metrics of that rate was flawed. This supplement, which was $1,176 more than the penalty that we would eventually pay to the NCAA for not having properly met academic progress goals in regards to all student athletes, was perhaps not the best use of limited funds in trying economic times. Had information from across campus been centrally located and readily available for all to view, perhaps different amendments could have been made.

While it does appear as though we have found a silver lining in this NCAA in fraction cloud (in that we have purchased software updates that will better help track the progress of all students, including student-athletes), it is highly unfortunate that we had to spend over a million dollars on such updates at a time when staff and faculty were being furloughed, and that we made the decision primarily to meet NCAA standards, not our own internally defined needs. (As the report notes: "The need for and purchase of this software came about as a direct result of NCAA findings during the APP audit.") I'm sure the Graduate School would have appreciated at least a shot at some of the one million dollars to facilitate the clear, but admittedly slow, progress they've been making with admission technology (dealing with Recruiter and Colleague issues), just as Academic Advising and Retention would have liked an opportunity to have immediate funds for a productive early alert program. A system of checks and balances could allow for scenarios wherein reasoned justifications for prioritized student needs, not imminent danger of sanctions, inform important decisions.

Hopefully, another silver lining will be the approval of a search for a permanent Registrar. Given the role the NCAA expects the Registrar's Office to play, and the added work that will be placed upon the staff therein, one would hope that that unit would finally get a permanent leader. Perhaps even more importantly, one would also hope that this report encourages us to do more due diligence in regards to our software and technology purchases. The fact that we expected the software we purchased in 2008 to reproduce "the degree-audit functionality of [our] prior system," and made the purchasing decision under that flawed assumption, suggests improper or incomplete vetting. Looking forward, I earnestly hope that we view this report as an admittedly costly wake-up call and do more—much more—to make sure our resources are wisely spent to truly facilitate authentic student success in an era of decreased state funding.

In the brief discussion that followed, Senator Caric asked what a comprehensive system of checks and balances might be. The body, which had just been apprised of the issue through Senator Adams' report, had no specific answer, but other Senators expressed a desire for greater transparency. Senator Connor moved to ask the CFO if the "recent investment" of one million dollars (noted on the top of the first page of the appendix to the infraction report, or page 10 of the pdf that accompanies this CR) was actually made by MSU, and, if so, from which portion(s) of the budget this money was extracted. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Chair Dobranski will be contacting Ms. Patrick to ask where the funds for this software upgrade came from, and where we can find a notation of said purchase in our financial statements or audited files.

**"But shall we wear these glories for a day?/Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?" (Provost Report)**
The Provost provided some necessary context on general education scheduling and offered some brief updates. MSU has more than enough capacity for our general education classes. The problems we have encountered have been from students signing up at SOAR and never attending. Now that we are asking students to pay a deposit for signing up (a deposit that will

apply fully toward their tuition), we're hopeful that we'll have the classes we need for the students who need them and not have to cancel under-enrolled sections. Just as we did last year, we're building our schedule conservatively and adding sections as needed. VP Bentley is cautiously optimistic about numbers, but neither he nor the Provost is planning based on optimism.

Last year we decided to upgrade our IT infrastructure and hired Ellucian. The Provost believes that the one million dollar update cited in the NCAA infraction report could be a reference to Ellucian. Although he could not verify the point, and did not wish to offer specifics about a situation without having concrete facts, he did state that the one million figure "fit" with conversations he recalls regarding Ellucian and stressed that the IT upgrade is designed to do great things for the campus overall.

> (Why there is uncertainty: The NCAA infraction report has not been as widely publicized as announcements regarding Ellucian. It may well be that updates that we are seeing in regards to Ellucian are the result of the software purchase that "came about as a direct result of NCAA findings during the APP audit" in June 2015, but this specific outcome [the purchase of software to meet NCAA standards] is only fully outlined in a public document on the NCAA website. NCAA findings have not been discussed in any public announcement regarding Ellucian. MSU does include a link to an official NCAA statement on the infraction in the "Story Archives" for our athletics program, archives that can be accessed when a person clicks "More News" on the Athletics main page, but this statement, listed by its February 10th date, does not include any reference to new software purchased by MSU. The statement/archived story appears to be the institution's response to the NCAA mandate that MSU include "a statement to include the types of violations and the affected sport programs and a direct, conspicuous link to the public infractions decision located on the athletic department's main 'landing' webpage.")

The Provost ended by urging faculty to attend the open presidential fora. While he encouraged faculty to ask important questions and find out what they could about this candidate, he also reminded the body that this visit is MSU's "one shot" to land this candidate. If faculty find the candidate suitable, they should consider this their opportunity to help recruit him to campus.

**"Look, what is done cannot be now amended:/Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes"**
**(Regent Report)**
Regent Berglee noted that there was a Board of Regents work session this morning. In that meeting, where no formal actions were taken, the BOR discussed performance funding and updates to the President's house. The next quarterly meeting will be March 9th. Actual business will be performed at that meeting.

The Regent ended by stating that his term was coming to a close and exhorting the body to select a candidate who is up to the rigors of the job.

**"Harp not on that string" (New Business)**
Under new business, the body discussed two things: (1) the forthcoming presidential fora and (2) a measure toward transparency.

1.  Chair Dobranski alerted the faculty to the newly added faculty and staff forum during the presidential candidate visit and the shift in the faculty-only forum time. Chair Elect McBrayer stated that this forum is an opportunity for faculty to really learn something about the candidate, so we need to use our limited time wisely. He urged Senators to be in contact with their constituents and to solicit questions for the forum. The Senate will then generate a slate of viable questions that should help structure the open discussion.
2.  Reflecting back on the discussion of checks and balances, and suggestions toward transparency therein, Senator Connor argued that one specific step toward transparency could be to have an electronic copy of the personnel roster (which is public information, and available for physical review at the library circulation desk) available online to all employees through the portal. He moved to request this happen. Senator Adams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**"Compare dead happiness with living woe" (Senate Committee Reports)**

*   **Governance:** The committee interest survey will be open from February 22$^{nd}$-March 3$^{rd}$. Senators have been asked to alert their constituents to this fact and to strongly encourage participation. An email about the Regent election, complete with a petition form for potential candidates, will circulate shortly. Interested faculty who are eligible to run (eligibility is defined under state law as persons in the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor) will need to submit a petition that is signed by themselves and 15 other faculty who are eligible to vote and have not signed any other petition. These petitions should be submitted to either the Chair of Governance (C. Cottingham) or the Senate Secretary (B. Willoughby) by March 15$^{th}$. A verified list of candidates will be sent out on March 27$^{th}$. The Senate will then hold a forum, where faculty can ask questions of the verified candidates, during either the standing March 30$^{th}$ or April 6$^{th}$ Senate meeting. The election, itself, which will be run online through IR, will be April 12$^{th}$-14$^{th}$. If there are more than 2 candidates and no candidate gets a simple majority in the first election, a run-off election of the top 2 candidates will take place April 19$^{th}$-21$^{st}$. (By all accounts, this process conforms to the Regent election processes of the past. To aid future committees, and codify this process, the current Governance committee will be working on outlining a formal procedure, to be approved by the Senate as a whole, to add to Senate records.)
*   **Academic Issues**: The committee has talked to a number of people across campus and is making strides in its study of retention issues. It is also in the process of finalizing its student survey.
*   **Evaluations:** The committee is meeting with the Provost to set up the "Are We Making Progress?" survey.
*   **Faculty Welfare and Concerns:** The committee is meeting with the Provost on Wednesday (the 22$^{nd}$) to discuss PAc-27.
*   **Issues:** The Issues Committee has taken the initiative to try to provide a venue for faculty, staff, and administration to come together to improve morale and for social interaction at MSU, in keeping with the goals that the Faculty Senate laid out in "Five-

Year Goals for Morehead State."  It would like to ask the Provost to consider ways to sustain this effort going forward on a monthly basis.

**"Ay, what's o'clock?"**  There was a motion to adjourn at 5:15.  The next regular meeting of the Senate is scheduled for March 2, 2017, at 3:45 p.m.



What God hath joined any poison shall sunder



Submitted by the 2016-2017 Faculty Senate Communications Officer, who reviles those who "clothe their naked villainy/With old odd ends stol'n forth of holy writ."