



**FACULTY SENATE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**  
September 21, 2017 meeting

**“Admit me Chorus to this history;/Who prologue-like your humble patience pray”**

**(Overview)** Faculty Senate held its third official meeting on September 21st. (The September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting was a special session devoted to overview of performance funding.) The body took its official photos and discussed the implications of performance funding.

**“There is occasions and causes why and wherefore in all things” (Announcements)**

- The Title IX Sexual Misconduct training must be completed by September 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Some faculty have not received Senate communication reports. Chair Tallichet urged Senators to distribute these reports to their constituents.
- MSU’s Diversity Plan will be sent to the Board of Regents for approval on September 28<sup>th</sup>. It will be shared with the campus community after that date.
- University professors are eligible to join Kentucky Education Association (KEA). They may wish to do so in order to rally around the pension issue.
- Jason Bailey, from the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy, will be speaking on pensions and taxes the evening of October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. (The initial venue was Kibbey theatre, now we are being told that the talk will occur in the auditorium of Rowan County high school).
- Senate will break to take pictures at 4:00 p.m.

**“Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more” (Statement from Senator Adams regarding the performance funding)**

Dismayed to discover that (non-auxiliary) athletics spending counts in the legislature’s computation of “direct cost of educating students,” whereas the essential instructional resource of the library does not, Senator Adams called upon the Senate to mitigate this legislative misstep by reallocating resources from Division I athletics to actual instruction (which is aided by the library and its resources). She argued that a move to DIII would allow

the university to retain the “social and cultural” benefits of an NCAA athletics program without the “cost driver” of scholarships in this era of increasing tuition. The “captured” savings could then be re-invested in Academic Affairs to fund instruction. (The full statement that Senator Adams made on the Senate floor is appended to this report.)

Many Senators shared Senator Adams’ dismay, and the body informally decided to pursue some type of resolution. Senator Lennox requested that actual figures (of costs and potential savings) be included in Senate discussions and any possible action. Senator Adams and Chair Tallichet noted that this would be the case.

### **“But we in it shall be remembered” (Photos)**

Chair Tallichet briefly interrupted the meeting to have the official 2017-18 Senate pictures taken.

### **“Turn him to any cause of policy,/The Gordian knot of it he will unloose” (Regent report)**

Regent Pidluzny, wearing a somber colored tie, addressed key issues that were raised in the recent CPE meeting (and the COSFL meeting that followed) in Frankfort:

- “All eyes are on the legislature” and what they may do to address the pension crisis.
- As Dr. Morgan noted at the special Senate session last week, the institution’s defined KERS rate is going to go up dramatically, in ways that will cost the institution several million dollars. The exact rate for KTRS (which is better funded than KERS, but still below 60% overall) has not yet been determined, but it will be a cost increase for the institution as well.
- One widely discussed area of reform is a change in the retirement age. Currently, employees may retire with full benefits if they have put in 27 years of service and reached the age of 55. The consultants tasked with reviewing our pensions recommended that the age be increased to 65. If this recommendation is adopted, this change alone may be strong incentive for faculty and staff members, who meet the current retirement thresholds, to retire. These retirements would have a major impact on the university.
- The Regent stated that the special session, when it is called, will more than likely proceed quickly, as legislators invariably take straw polls over already drafted legislation before such a session convenes. (CO note: Dr. Pidluzny is a Political Science professor, so he knows a thing or two about legislative sessions.)
  - Why he’s telling us this: because the short time frame of a special session will not afford much room for dissent. If faculty wish to contact their legislators about the pension issue, they should do so now.
- We all know that states have not paid the contributions they were required to make to pensions, and this lack of contribution (along with the loss of interest on said contribution) has left our pensions underfunded. Interestingly enough, one of the biggest drivers of our Commonwealth’s pension shortfall (which is the worst in the nation) has been non-existent payroll growth. The projections for systems like KTRS

assumed more hires, changes in rank, and raises for employees [insert mirthless laughter here].

- The pension crisis, the uncertainty of any sort of tax reform, and talk of possible cuts in “non-essential” state appropriations are why President Morgan has taken such a cautious approach to hiring.
- Governor Bevin, who addressed the CPE during the meeting, outlined his desire to make Kentucky “the Germany of America,” or the place where people go for high tech manufacturing. He believes that the Commonwealth’s geographic location and low energy costs make the state a logical and desirable choice. In the course of that same talk, where he made his infamous remarks regarding interpretive dance, Governor Bevin also challenged Boards of Regents to cut “entire pieces” of their universities (programs or buildings).
- Talk of cutting is not limited to Governor Bevin, or to the Republicans in the state legislature. Democratic as well as Republican state representatives are discussing the possible benefits of colleges and universities reducing program portfolios.
- Regent Pidluzny also attended the COFSL meeting (a meeting of faculty leadership through the Commonwealth) that followed. The body discussed what arguments it would like to make to Governor Bevin, should a meeting be secured. Members coalesced around the idea of reminding the Governor of the value of the full university experience, and the danger of limiting higher education opportunities in the state if all funding and energy are directed solely toward a narrowly defined notion of technology. They would like to develop a short white paper, with relevant research, to present the Governor. Anyone who is familiar with relevant research in this area should pass along references to Dr. Pidluzny.
- The next Board of Regents meeting will be Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**“There is some soul of goodness in things evil,/Would men observingly distill it out”  
(Provost Report)**

As always, the Provost urged faculty to strip their sleeves, show their scars, and focus on the positive outcomes of our budgetary battles:

- There is a general search freeze. This does not mean that we will not move forward with critical hires tied to important initiatives (such as the doctor of physical therapy, which is being built with grant money); it only means that we will not yet be able to search for permanent positions where we have functioning interims in place (c.f. the Math chair).
- The visit of Hal Rogers and the head NASA administrator went well. We received “great advertising” for our program of distinction.
- There has been and continues to be a great deal of work done to aid retention. “Student Success” has moved back to Academic Affairs, and we are expanding course offerings to help progression rates. Winter continues to grow, and we are trying to maximize Summer, possibly by including more “on the ground classes.” We may also start offering other terms and sessions, such as a “Maymester.” Right now, we are open to any idea that can provide students with more opportunities to complete coursework.

- Retention is up. (CO note: our overall retention rate is 69.2%; the figure cited during the meeting, 72.5%, is the retention rate for first time black freshmen.)
- FuseIdeas, the company that created our new webpage, has been hired to help us market our graduate programs. They were recently on campus to gather ideas for the graduate program in Space Science and our MBA. They will return with options for each. (CO aside: hopefully these options, unlike our current webpage, will properly load in all browsers.)
- In order to maximize instructional costs in the new performance funding model, we will differentiate the duties of staff members who regularly teach as part of their contract (so that we can count a portion of their salaries in “instruction”).
- In response to a question about international students, the Provost noted that we need to make our assistantships and stipends, for all students, more competitive.

**“All things are ready, if our mind be so” (Senate committee reports)**

- Academic Issues—Senator Ahmadi stated that there was no report because the subcommittee has not met.
- Evaluation—Senator Privott, reporting for Senator Dearden (who was representing MSU elsewhere), noted that the committee would begin a review of FEPs.
- Faculty Welfare and Concerns—Senator Carlson met with the Provost to begin work on PAc-10 (which needs to be updated to account for things like Winter session) and PAc-2 (which may need to be rendered more consistent with PAc-27). While both Senator Carlson and Provost Ralston agree that PAc-29 and PAc-34 need to be reconciled, they do not yet agree on the nature of the reconciliation. At the same meeting, the Provost suggested that it might be wise to revisit PAc-3, either to simplify the emeritus process or give emeritus faculty more “perks.”
  - By virtue of being chair, Senator Carlson is on Employee Benefits, a committee that she believes has not been functioning for years. The intent of the committee, as Senator Carlson understands it, is for faculty and staff to work with HR. In practice, the committee has merely been given advance notice on decisions HR has already made.
    - In the brief discussion that followed, Senator Carlson confirmed that there would be a surcharge for employees whose spouses could get health insurance elsewhere. Senator Schack voiced her hope that the administrative perspective on faculty is changing, and urged Senate to focus on either the Employee Benefits committee or the Technology Advisory Board to ensure that affected faculty and staff are fully included in the decision making process.
- Governance—Senator Lennox presented the body with a slate of nominees (see Appendix B), which was unanimously approved. Senator Lennox then informed the body of two things: (1) there was no new Distinguished Creative Productions appointee because there was no Distinguished Creative production award given the previous year (in consequence, Stacy Baker will continue to serve on “Excellence in Teaching”) and (2) all standing committees should have met by September 15<sup>th</sup>; this deadline is specified on p. 7 of the Personnel Action calendar.

- In the brief discussion that followed, the body debated how best to deal with standing committees that have not met. The dilemma of chair-less committees (which have no “point person” for scheduling) was raised, and various solutions, from the suggestions offered to the administration by 2016-17 EC to a Senate directive to designate senior-most faculty as “point persons,” were proffered. Senator Lennox offered her own services in the short term, and encouraged people on non-meeting committees to contact her in her role as Governance chair.
- Issues—Senator Adams, reporting for Senator Hare (who was away at a conference), relayed that Issues was looking Senate Constitution, with an eye to mitigating the problems with representation that have bedeviled the body of late. She also stated that she would inform Senator Hare of the problems regarding standing committees that do not meet and put this forward as an agenda item for Issues to address as well.

**“Thus far, with rough and all-unable pen,/Our bending author hath pursued the story”**

The Senate adjourned at 5:25 p.m. The next full meeting will be on October 5<sup>th</sup>.



Provided by the 2017-18 Faculty Senate Communications Officer, who knows: “If you can mock a leek, you can eat a leek!”

## **Appendix A:** Statement from Senator Adams re: performance funding metrics

At our special Senate session on September 14<sup>th</sup>, we were informed that 10% of our state appropriation would be determined by the amount we pay for the “direct cost of educating students.” This “direct cost” is calculated by adding the functional expense category of “instruction” to the functional expense category of “student services.” If we wish to increase our “direct cost of educating students” and hence maximize our investment in instruction within the performance funding model, we need to familiarize ourselves with these functional categories.

As Teresa Lindgren helpfully noted during the special session, the Commonwealth’s performance funding legislation utilizes the National Association of College and University Business Officers’ (NACUBO’s) expense categories. She provided a subgroup of the Strategic Planning committee with an appendix from the *NACUBO Advisory Report* that outlines these categories/classifications the following day.

“Instruction” is relatively straightforward. “Student services” is less so. Expenses designed primarily to “contribut[e] to students’ emotional and physical well-being and intellectual, cultural, and social development outside the context of a formal instructional program” are included alongside more obvious student services, such as those provided by Admissions and the Registrar. Somewhat surprisingly, one of the areas designated as “social and cultural development” for students is intercollegiate athletics, “if the [athletics] program is not operated as an auxiliary enterprise.” (All quotations from p. 19 of the *NACUBO Advisory Report 2010-1*)

**What this means:** *performance funding allows institutions to count (non-auxiliary) athletic spending as part of “the direct cost of educating students,” but not any investment in the library, as libraries fall under the functional expense category of “academic support.”*

### **THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS.**

**What we can do about it:** Well we should all start writing angry old woman emails to the legislature, but we can rectify this outrage on our campus here and now if we take collective action.

Obviously, we can’t start designating intercollegiate athletics as auxiliary (even though that is where intercollegiate athletics belongs) because then we’d be even further behind in terms of performance funding. Sadly, our “investment” in Division I is the only outlay capable of even vaguely papering over the previous administration’s evisceration of Academic Affairs. Without the injection of this athletics “funding” in the model, we’d look even more like KSU. But that doesn’t mean we need to keep doing what we’ve been doing and suffer the same deleterious results. Dr. Morgan has stated time and again that institutions cannot remain “static” and survive, and he has repeatedly said he wants mind-blowing ideas, **so let’s blow his mind by advocating that MSU move to Division III athletics.**

Such a move cannot occur overnight, and, admittedly, we won’t see the fiscal savings for a few years, but, if we start the process now, we’ll guarantee instructional dividends in the

future. Not only will we have more money to spend on *actual* instruction, but we can also use this reallocation of resources to maximize our potential in other areas. Currently, we're pouring millions of dollars *every year* into a program that serves, at most, 300+ students. Although we may not be able to secure the exact amount of funding with certainty (as the various accounting methods for athletics will allow clever people with an agenda to find some tiny pocket of revenue or "kick back" that no reasonable person would be able to uncover without a fine-toothed comb), we can safely say that we're devoting 7+ million *per year* to help a tiny fraction of our student body. There are many more cost-efficient ways to ensure diversity on campus, and improve progression and graduation rates for a larger number of students, than NCAA Division I. If we move from scholarship to non-scholarship athletics, we not only reduce one of our many cost "drivers" (increased scholarship costs in an era of increased tuition), but we also have a better chance of drawing in more students from our service region, who would have a greater chance of being able to play on an MSU team.

It's the right thing to do, and now is the time to do it.

**Appendix B: Governance Committee slate for approval 9.21.17**

Tenure:

Kimberely Nettleton COE 2016-2019  
Wilson Gonzalez-Espada CoS 2016-2019

Research and Creative Productions:

Gary Mesa-Gaido CCAHSS 2017-2019

Scholarship Appeals and Advisory:

Julia Finch CCAHSS 2017-2019

General Education Council:

Phil Krummrich CCAHSS 2016-2019  
Mark Blankenbuehler At-Large 2016-2019

**Excellence in Teaching:** No vote needed for these replacements

Distinguished Teacher- Geoff Gearner  
Distinguished Researcher- Janelle Hare

**Election Results (Candidates approved by Senate Spring 2017):**

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities:

CCAHSS Tim Hare 2017-2019  
CoBT Ken Henderson 2017-2019  
CoE Lola Aagaard 2017-2019  
CoS Jennifer Birriel 2017-2019

Planning Committee:

CoBT Sam Nataraj 2017-2021  
Library Dieter Ullrich 2017-2021