



## **FACULTY SENATE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

April 5, 2018 meeting

### **Hamartia, Hamartia, Hamartia (Overview)**

Faculty Senate held its fourteenth official meeting on the fifth of April. (The March twenty ninth meeting was a reception at the President's house.) It endorsed COSFL's letter to the Governor regarding the elimination of tenure protections, passed a resolution regarding General Education reform, and had a first reading of a revised PAc-2.

### **"I thought it wrong, my children, to hear the truth from others, messengers. Here I am myself" (Announcements)**

Chair Tallichet (our singular chorus) relayed:

- Harry Floyd, our Travel Coordinator, will visit Faculty Senate on April 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Advance registration for Summer and Fall 2018 is open from April 9<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be an Earth Day Celebration & Sustainability Fair on April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the lawn of Allie Young.
- The Celebration of Student Scholarship is April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Eagle Lake Clean Up Friday is April 27<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Faculty are strongly encouraged to attend commencement.
- Departments need to secure Senate representation for the upcoming year. Any necessary elections should be held as soon as possible.

### **"I have no desire to suffer twice, in reality and then in retrospect." (COSFL statement on the elimination of tenure protections in the "sewage" pension bill)**

SB 151, the sewage cum pension reform bill that was introduced and ratified by both House and the Senate on March 29<sup>th</sup>, includes provisions for the termination of tenured faculty, should institutions of higher education eliminate or modify programs due to financial constraints (or low

enrollment). These provisions, which were included in both the Governor's proposed budget and HB 200, suspend KRS 164.230 and 164.360 for the biennium.

The Kentucky Coalition of Faculty Senates and Leaders strongly opposes these provisions and has written an open letter that will be sent to the Governor this week (see Appendix A). MSU's Senate unanimously voted to add its name to the list of signatories.

**“How dreadful the knowledge of the truth can be/When there's no help in truth.” (General Education update)**

Chair-elect Hare provided an update from the General Education Council. Our assessment submission rates are up, and the QEP has indeed been frozen. A new QEP will be created in time for SACSCOC, but particulars of who or what will constitute this program have either not been determined or made public. A credit-bearing course, akin to the old MSU 101, is being devised. This course, which will NOT be a part of General Education, will be overseen by the AVP for Undergraduate Education and Student Success. In response to queries, Chair-elect Hare stated that he is aware of two people (one faculty member and one chair) who have been asked to serve on a committee to design the course. The course, as he understands it, will be a 3-hour class taught by staff. Some Senators expressed concern that faculty may not be properly in charge of curriculum in these efforts.

The last GEC meeting was devoted to a review of the proposed General Education revision, the LUX program. During the one-hour meeting, Chair-elect Hare attempted to raise concerns regarding shared governance, but it appeared to him that the members of the GEC, particularly those who also served on the Taskforce that created LUX, just wanted to “be done” with the process. The GEC voted to approve the proposal and then voted to submit LUX to the Faculty Senate for review.

The Executive Council of the Senate, which had been apprised of these developments, presented a resolution regarding General Education reform (Appendix B). During discussion, members of the EC argued that recent legislative moves all but necessitated an extended review of curricular change that could potentially affect major programs and faculty load in unexpected ways. As one member stated, a CPE and SACSCOC mandated General Education program will survive the biennial “Purge;” other programs (and their associated faculty) may not.

After multiple expressions of support for the work the Taskforce did in a relatively short time frame, the resolution to “put the brakes” on reform process passed unanimously.

**“Weep not, everything must have its day.” (PAC-2 First Reading)**

Faculty Welfare and Concerns reviewed the suggested edits of PAC-2 offered by the Provost and Deans. Changes for Senate approval include:

- Removing references to MSU in the notation of years in rank
- Removing or severely reducing the discussion of what to do when an Associate Professor is hired with tenure, as the occurrence is so rare
- Specifying that time toward must be decided in the first semester, not the first year

- Rectifying language to account for the fact that there are review years when Deans are not called upon to evaluate candidates (this will also need to be changed in PAc-27)
- Moving the guiding principle of what goes in a portfolio to preface the list of what could possibly be included (note: the Provost and Deans did not think the list was necessary)
- Limiting the number of Associate Professors who may serve on departmental committees when departments have fewer than 5 full professors (note: Senate will need to determine if it wishes to privilege discipline or rank—rank being the Provost and Dean’s preference—in committee formation)

Questions faculty should ponder before the second reading:

- How will we staff committees, given the dwindling number of professors on campus?
- On what level should faculty be compelled to serve? (Senate has determined highest; the Deans and Provost favor the lowest, departmental)
- Should the comment about validating materials be included in the policy?

**“What good were eyes to me? Nothing I could see could bring me joy.” (Regent’s Report)**

The Senate could “not hear, nor their eyes behold” the Faculty Regent, who was away at a professional conference with students. The Regent’s issuance of a report, which is reprinted in Appendix C, mildly mitigated the tragedy of his absence. (CO dithyramb: may there be a peripeteia to his journey.)

Highlights: Kathy Walker is our new Board Chair, the Board approved new bylaws and the strategic plan (SOAR), and Frankfort has offered no economic reprieve for MSU. Despite Dr. Morgan’s best cost-saving efforts, we are still \$2.5 million short of closing our deficit for 2018-19. Methods for further reductions will be discussed at the May 10<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup> Board of Regents meetings.

**“Thou lov’st to speak in riddles and dark words.” (Provost Report)**

A rather somber Provost began by stating that Academic Affairs has lost around \$3 million this year, in things like travel, postage, and vacant lines, but we have NOT lost any “instructional power” in the classroom. The one “big caveat” to this is voluntary reduction in force. There are about 12 or so faculty who have submitted proposals for retirement, and we do have some people who are just leaving. This is the greatest number of exits the Provost has seen in his time here. While we are “pretty steady” with the resources we have, if we continue to lose, we will not have the capacity to meet enrollment demands. Cognizant of both the encouraging enrollment numbers and legislative uncertainty (it is still possible for the legislature to enact prohibitions that would negate some retirement agreements), the President and the Provost have been exploring alternate options and looking for money that could be set aside for emergency hires.

The faculty credentialing process moves on, and we now have a process in place for new hires. We just need to add a mechanism to ensure updates occur when people teach new classes. The Self-Study also continues apace and is on track to be completed in a timely fashion. In response to questions, the Provost stated that faculty received the data the Deans and Provost used to update the Study themselves. Full APNA data, though, should be available to anyone who

wishes to review it. (At this point, faculty informed the Provost that they do not have direct access to the APNA dashboard.)

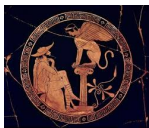
The Saturday SOAR is canceled due to the impending storm, and the Provost is not aware of any waivers for courses being terminated. That said, he did specify that there are a number of internal as well as external waivers, and that there has been some discussion, at the state-level, of doing away with a 6-hour external waiver.

In response to a specific query, the Provost averred that he was unaware of any conversation between university administrators and state legislators (more particularly, Senator Chris McDaniels) regarding tenure protections. Although he could not state why Dr. Morgan was not mentioned in recent news articles that cited other university administrators claiming that they had not spoken to Senator McDaniels (or requested the abolition of tenure), he could iterate what Dr. Morgan said during his talks with the Executive Council—that tenure was important for recruiting and retaining faculty at regional schools like MSU, and that Dr. Morgan had no desire to terminate tenured faculty. Should circumstances require such terminations, we would follow our institutional policies.

Asked if he would defend tenure, the Provost said yes. After noting that tenure was actually created in the wake of political and politicized threats to employment in the mid part of the century, he asserted his belief that academic freedom is even more vital at this time.

#### **“The pains we inflict upon ourselves hurt most of all” (Faculty Senate Committee Reports)**

- Academic Issues (No report)
- Evaluation Committee (A report will be forthcoming next meeting)
- Faculty Welfare and Concerns (The committee continues work on PAc-2)
- Governance (47% of Faculty responded to the committee interest survey)
- Issues Committee (No report)



**“[A]nd no man’s life account as gain/Ere the full tale be finished and the darkness find him without pain.”** The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next full Senate meeting will be on April 19, 2018.



Submitted by the 2017-18 Faculty Senate Communications Officer, the Tiresias who foretold the Brown Steel bitmoji.

## Appendix A

### **COSFL Statement on Kentucky Budget Bill Submitted by Enid Trucios-Haynes, President of COSFL on behalf of COSFL Membership March 29, 2018 FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION**

The Kentucky Coalition of Senate & Faculty Leaders [COSFL] strongly opposes any budget bill provision that would permit the summary dismissal of tenured faculty. The Senate budget bill permits Boards of Regents and Trustees to eliminate or modify majors or degree programs due to “low utilization, financial feasibility, budgetary constraints, or declaration of financial exigency” and to terminate tenured faculty after a ten-day notice.

Salaries are the largest and most controllable expense for universities. Shortsighted strategies designed to achieve immediate financial savings, such as eliminating programs, their supporting staff, and faculty, including those with tenure, will cripple universities as engines for growth and development in our communities. The devastating impact on our students and state will reverberate for decades to come. The Senate bill will do more harm, and devalues universities, their faculty, and public education. It will not yield savings because of our ethical responsibility to “teachout” students to degree attainment. This obligation takes years to accomplish and is an accreditation requirement for many institutions and programs.

Faculty believe that public universities have a collective mission to provide access to education to *all* Kentuckians. Decisions to close or modify academic programs require careful consideration relying on faculty expertise to evaluate current trends, long term projections, and historical data in their academic fields. While “low utilization” or low enrollment may seem like an obvious reason, there are cycles in the popularity of some programs and other programs must be continued to provide the well-rounded education students need and expect in order to compete in a global economy.

Universities have an ethical obligation to our students to avoid what seems like an “easy fix” to eliminate majors and degree programs based on financial feasibility and budgetary constraints. Rather, faculty and university administrators must evaluate these challenges with integrity and transparency, and work collaboratively to avoid the extreme measures proposed.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of speech and this is the bedrock of American universities. Tenure is the method by which U.S. universities establish teaching and learning environments free from ideological constraints, and advance new ideas regardless of controversy in research, scholarship and creative activity. Faculty, protected by this academic freedom, are the heart of U.S. universities which make us attractive to students from across the globe. Tenure protects the academic freedom to teach unpopular topics and to explore the full range of thought on a topic, ensuring students develop the critical thinking skills most valued by U.S. employers.

COSFL is a statewide forum of senate and faculty leadership representing the eight public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). It was formed July 13, 1979 as a collective advocacy body of public higher education faculties. <https://www.wku.edu/cosfl/>

## **Appendix B**

### **Resolution regarding the proposed revision to General Education**

Whereas the General Education Council voted to submit the General Education Taskforce's proposed revisions of General Education to the Faculty Senate;

Whereas the Faculty Senate's review of the revision will include a consideration of the proposed changes to General Education as well as the effect these changes will have on existing programs and majors;

Whereas the Faculty Senate remains committed to ensuring that any program creation, modification, or elimination is academically justified in ways approved by the faculty at large;

Whereas the administratively defined deadline for a final decision regarding the approval of General Education revision does not allow the Faculty Senate or the faculty as a whole to exercise proper due diligence in reviewing the proposed curriculum;

Whereas General Education (and any revision thereof) is curriculum, and SACSCOC *The Principles of Accreditation* 3.4.10 specifies: "The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty";

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate will review the General Education Review Taskforce's proposal in a time frame of its own devising, one that will allow it to work in concert with the faculty on the General Education Council to bring about any revision to General Education that the faculty deem necessary.

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate formally thanks the General Education Taskforce for the important work it has completed and absolves that body from further labor in the revision process.

## Appendix C

### Faculty Regent Report to Faculty Senate

Dear Senate Colleagues,

I apologize I won't be able to provide a report on the March 29, 2018, Board of Regents (BOR) meeting in person. I'm travelling with students today to a Political Science conference where two had abstracts accepted for presentation.

The BOR took several important actions last week, but did not make significant decisions related to our budget deficit and the "reduction strategies" that will be necessary for next year. At the time, there was still considerable uncertainty on where the state budget was likely to land, and how any pension reform would affect the institution's finances.

The most important actions taken by the BOR include:

- The election of a new BOR chair, Kathy Walker of Paintsville.<sup>1</sup>
- The approval of tenure and promotion for five outstanding faculty members: Prof. Greg Carlisle, assistant professor of theatre; Dr. Kurt Gibbs, assistant professor of biology; Dr. Patricia Harrelson, assistant professor of animal science; Dr. Sherry Stulz, assistant professor of education; and Dr. Fujuan Tan, assistant professor of adult and high education.
- The approval of a recommendation to create the "W. Terry McBrayer Presidential Lecture Series in Government and Leadership"; it will kick off next Fall, probably with a lecture in November.
- The approval of a recommendation to name main gallery in the Claypool-Young building the "Golding-Yang Art Gallery" in honor Prof. Deeno Golding and his wife, Yanya Yang. An official ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 4.
- The approval of revised BOR bylaws.
- The approval of MSU's new strategic plan, SOAR.
  
- President Morgan also recognized Dr. George M. Luckey and Dr. Sue Luckey to the BOR, who both had long and distinguished careers at MSU and are in the process of making a generous gift to the institution.
- President Morgan continued his practice of recognizing faculty to the BOR, this time noting the outstanding teaching, service, and research contributions of Dr. Johnathan Nelson, associate professor of management.

Note that all of the financial commitments recognized at last Thursday's meeting will support student scholarships. This is great for our students and will help us to stabilize enrollment. I'd also like to highlight that the Foundation has secured several major commitments in recent months, and every donor (excepting one \$10,000 gift) who pledged money to the Alumni Welcome Center has

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<sup>1</sup> With respect to our new chair, allow me to add two things. Mr. Goodpaster termed out as chair after

agreed to see their commitment re-designated to student scholarships. They are doing great work for the institution!

The BOR also approved a second quarter financial report and an amended operating budget reflecting second quarter changes. Nothing struck me as concerning with respect to the budget amendments. We will actually spend almost exactly this year what we spent last year in Academic Affairs, which I think underlines the new administration's commitment to instruction. We also heard a preliminary enrollment report for next year, which was very encouraging. SOAR registrations and admissions offers for Fall 2018 are up considerably year over year. Enrollment Services continues to do excellent work. A growing freshman class would be great news for the institution, and would relieve some of the budget pressure we're under.

After the meeting, the BOR had a light lunch at the President's house and toured the Academic Honors Program offices, which are now located in Fields Hall. The offices are modest, but the Program staff has done an excellent job building an inviting and comfortable space.

The news from Frankfort since the meeting has not been good. The budget and pension bills being contemplated do nothing to mitigate the short term budget pressures we are facing. There had been some hope that the House and Senate would adopt a compromise budget bill reducing the 6.25% cut to higher education (and perhaps restoring the \$200,000 to MSU earmarked for the Folk Art Center). In the end, the legislature decided to maintain the full cut while returning \$31 million to state universities through the performance funding model. As we all know, the model is unfriendly to smaller institutions that enroll mainly in-state students and spend proportionately less of their budget on instruction (MSU in a nutshell). This means that every institution in the state *except MSU and KSU*, will enjoy some relief on the budget side. Recall that KSU was exempted from the last round of cuts, meaning that MSU is the only institution that will bear the full budget reduction contemplated by Frankfort this biennium and last.

Here is a CPE assessment of how the \$31 million will be distributed among KY institutions. (Keep in mind that the model uses a rolling three year average, so the adjustments we are making this year will only, and slowly, begin to yield appropriations dividends in future years.)



### Scenario 1: No Equity Funding / \$31.0 M in Performance Funds

Institution	A	B	(A + B)
	Equity Funds Distribution	Sample 2018-19 Performance Fund Distribution	Total Additional Appropriation
University of Kentucky	\$0	\$9,151,100	\$9,151,100
University of Louisville	0	1,066,800	1,066,800
Eastern Kentucky University	0	3,054,800	3,054,800
Kentucky State University	0	0	0
Morehead State University	0	0	0
Murray State University	0	1,521,700	1,521,700
Northern Kentucky University	0	5,174,100	5,174,100
Western Kentucky University	0	4,128,100	4,128,100
	\$0	\$24,096,600	\$24,096,600
KCTCS	0	6,903,400	6,903,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$31,000,000</b>	<b>\$31,000,000</b>

With respect to pensions, there was some hope that legislators would see fit to phase in the new, punishingly astronomical, KERS rate (\$0.84 per \$1 in salary). Unfortunately, it looks like MSU will be on the hook for the entire amount beginning FY2019, which means an addition \$3.3 million pension contribution (since widdled down to about \$2.5 million).

All told, the institution remains approximately \$2.5 million short of closing its deficit for 2018-19. Discussions about further reductions will be among the main items considered at two upcoming meetings, on May 10<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>. At the latter, the BOR formally considers next year's operating budget.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Pidluzny  
[j.pidluzny@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:j.pidluzny@moreheadstate.edu) | 606-783-9437