

Communications Report for Faculty Senate

September 6, 2018

Overview:

Faculty Senate (FS) held its third meeting of the 2018-2019 academic year in Rader 111. FS Chair Hare gave several updates and reminders for upcoming events and academically-related deadlines that are listed below. President Morgan was not present because he was moving his family and their belongings out of the President's House on campus due to mold resulting from damp conditions and the health risks to all who have been living there. Provost Bob Albert gave a brief update on General Education reform and discussed the Blackboard attendance tracking process and faculty issues with it. Our Faculty Regent reported on the activities of the Board of Regents meeting earlier that day.

Announcements:

Chair Hare made the following announcements, some were repeats and a few were new items: Faculty & Staff Family Picnic Sat. September 15. Please RSVP by Wed., Sept. 12 to events@moreheadstate.edu.

Our assessment timeline is Sept. 15 for *2017-2018 Findings & Action Plan for Unmet Targets*. That should be sent to assessment@moreheadstate.edu.

The Education Abroad Fair will be on September 19th from 10:30-1:30 in front of the library.

Nominations for the December 2018 Student Commencement Speaker are due September 21.

Faculty are required to complete Sexual Harassment Training by September 30.

Research & Creative Productions Proposals are due October 8. (IRB and IACUC protocols should have been submitted by September 3.) Summer Fellowship Proposals are due November 5. Nominations for Distinguished Researcher and/or for Creative Productions are due December 10. (Portfolios due March 4.) Annual report of RCP downloaded from Faculty 180 due by February 1.

Posters-at-the-Capital is Thursday, February 21, 2019. Submission deadline is Friday, Oct. 12 by 6pm.

All of these announcements are posted on our Faculty Senate Blackboard site. Based on questions about availability from the last FS meeting, Chair Hare announced that he has created links on our FS site to the archives in the library consisting of FS Minutes; Communications Reports; Regent's Reports; Staff Congress documents and Board of Regents documents.

Senator Grupe announced that the Kentucky Academy of Science Conference will be hosted by Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green on November 2-3. The early registration and abstract submission deadline is October 1.

Senator Blankenship also reminded FS members about making use of retention alerts for attendance which led to some discussion about issues with the system. She asked why it seemed that no one was monitoring this since she spent much time entering data on each of her students last semester and, to her knowledge, none were contacted. Senator Lasley said it took advisors two weeks to contact students. Advisors said they were waiting for them to show up. Lasley said they had not shown up yet.

Chair Hare responded that this was something that should be managed within each college with the professional advisors. Senator Blankenship said whoever supervises the advisors should be contacted. She continued saying her experience with the advisors was mixed. Some send lots of detailed messages about students and others do not. She said she had heard that faculty would be expected to use the attendance tool all semester. She said it was time-consuming. Chair Hare said he would look into the professional advisors issue and the rumor that faculty would be required to use the Blackboard attendance tool all semester.

Chair Hare also announced that President Morgan apologized for not being at Faculty Senate, but that he and his family were in the middle of moving out off campus. The process was tedious because furniture and belongings were being cleaned so that mold was not transferred to their next off-campus home.

Provost Report

Provost Albert said he would talk to VP Laurie Couch about the attendance tracking issue since that fell under her area of responsibility. "There have been some discussions regarding the attendance tracking and there two purposes for attendance tracking. One is this student success focus. Now we have been approached by Financial Aid out of concerns over federal guidelines that we need to be able to confirm attendance for students receiving federal financial aid within the first couple of weeks of the semester. It gets to be a bit of a chore for the folks in financial aid to adjust student financial aid that is received. Some aid can get disbursed and then they call it back because students have not been attending, but they have been receiving aid. So it's kind of a complicated procedure." He said that a plan had been presented yesterday to the Dean's Council "to require all faculty to record attendance within that first two-week period. If it is not recorded then it will be assumed that the student is not attending. If a student is not recorded as attending any of their classes, then their schedule will be dropped. That is under discussion. No decisions have been made." At this point, "the Deans are going back and talking to the Chairs and faculty to get their perspectives on that issue and will continue the conversation." He said they also have reports for the student success part of the attendance issue and that faculty had not been in 100 percent compliance in this process. "There are concerns in dropping students' schedule over a compliance issue," he concluded.

Regarding General Education, Provost Albert reported that Chair Hare, Regent Pidluzny and he continue to meet over "how to go forward with the Gen Ed." He said they have had good conversations and they will have a full report by the next FS meeting on September 20.

The Provost then took questions. In further discussion with Senator Blankenship, he reiterated the conditions under which students receive federal financial aid. He also discussed the appropriate grades when a student truly fails a course in which they were participating versus giving a grade of "U" when students were not attending or participating at all. He said that if MSU were to be audited, we need to make sure we have a process in place.

Senator White remarked that taking attendance during the first few "unstable" weeks of the semester is not the best time to be doing so. He also suggested that attendance thresholds be established for students and once they reach it, then faculty could turn their recording to that "handful of students who are not compliant." Recording attendance for every single student did not make much sense and was not efficient. Senator Grupe and Provost Albert continued discussing the issue during which Provost Albert said that adding students complicated the process, but that financial aid needs to be disbursed early in the semester so that is why attendance is taken after the first two weeks.

Senator Dearden added that there are some students who come in for the first few weeks and then not again until the final exam. Provost Albert agreed this was a problem when students "scammed" the system to get their financial aid. Senator Dearden said this needed to be discussed further as well. He said "it is hard to develop models where you are managing by exception." Senator Blankenship said that the conditions under which a student receives a "U" needed to be clarified. Provost Albert indicated he would continue this conversation with faculty.

Regent's Report

Faculty Regent Pidluzny reported on the highlights from the Board of Regents meeting that had occurred earlier in the day. Since the meeting proceeded as expected, last week's report covers most of the details. Of particular interest to this body, also as expected the BOR approved PAC-2 which FS worked hard to revise last year.

In other news, the Friends of Kentucky Folk Art Advisory Committee was asked to submit its list of directors, which are approved by the BOR in keeping with the advisory committee's by-laws. The BOR approved all those who were eligible to serve another term. Regent Pidluzny explained further that some directors "had timed out so there will be some changes [to membership]. The President had asked the Friends Board to add some local individuals, particularly since the Tourism Commission, county and city had all put up some money. The Friends BOR said they did not think that was a good idea at this point. So the Board will change some, but it will be all people who have been serving up until this point."

Three items from the President's report that our Regent wanted to mention were: First, discussions continue about turning Laughlin into a community center which will advantage MSU since the county and city will pick up the maintenance cost of the building and put it to use for all members of the community. They may even make some improvements to the building. Evaluation of that building continues.

Second, the Health Insurance Taskforce's recommendations were "concerning." So there was much discussion about "how to mitigate the cuts to that important benefit." The hope, subject to revenue projections, is to keep the same benefit structure meaning that we keep the same plans, same providers and the same features with an understanding that the cost share will move some ways down from the current 81-19 split. "The hope is that it won't move as dramatically as the taskforce had recommended in order to realize the \$1.5M in savings," he said. The hope is that we will be able to move somewhere between a 75-25 and a 77-23 split. That will mean finding about \$400-500K this year in revenue or savings. Discussions with the administration are still ongoing and during previous discussions, Regent Pidluzny praised Chair Hare for being an "assertive defender" of that benefit.

Third, President Morgan testified before the Interim Joint Committee on Budget Review in Frankfort last Thursday. His presentation was about the performance funding model. Apparently, there are some unintended consequences of the model. For example, an institution that raises tuition can spend more on instruction and on student services. The more you spend on those items, the more money you get from the state. "So there is this kind of perverse incentive built into the model to jack up tuition," said Regent Pidluzny. And there are more unanticipated problems with the model. Regent Pidluzny said he thought that the President hoped that by presenting it that way we could work toward improving the situation for the smaller schools since they realize they stand to lose under this model.

MSU is slated to lose about \$385K next year, but once the stop loss provisions expire next bi-annum, without any changes we would incur a \$3.5M to \$3.6M reduction in state appropriations. This is why Dr. Morgan is lobbying state legislators and raise awareness about problems with the model. Regent Pidluzny said that the media coverage has been based on the work of the Presidents of these smaller schools who are working to remedy these problems.

The next BOR meeting is October 19, a Friday, in the afternoon to coincide with Homecoming events, such as a ribbon cutting of ADUC and the naming of the COB.

General Education Report

There was no report. The Committee has not met.

Faculty Senate Committee Reports from 2017-2018

Academic Issues: No report. Meeting next week.

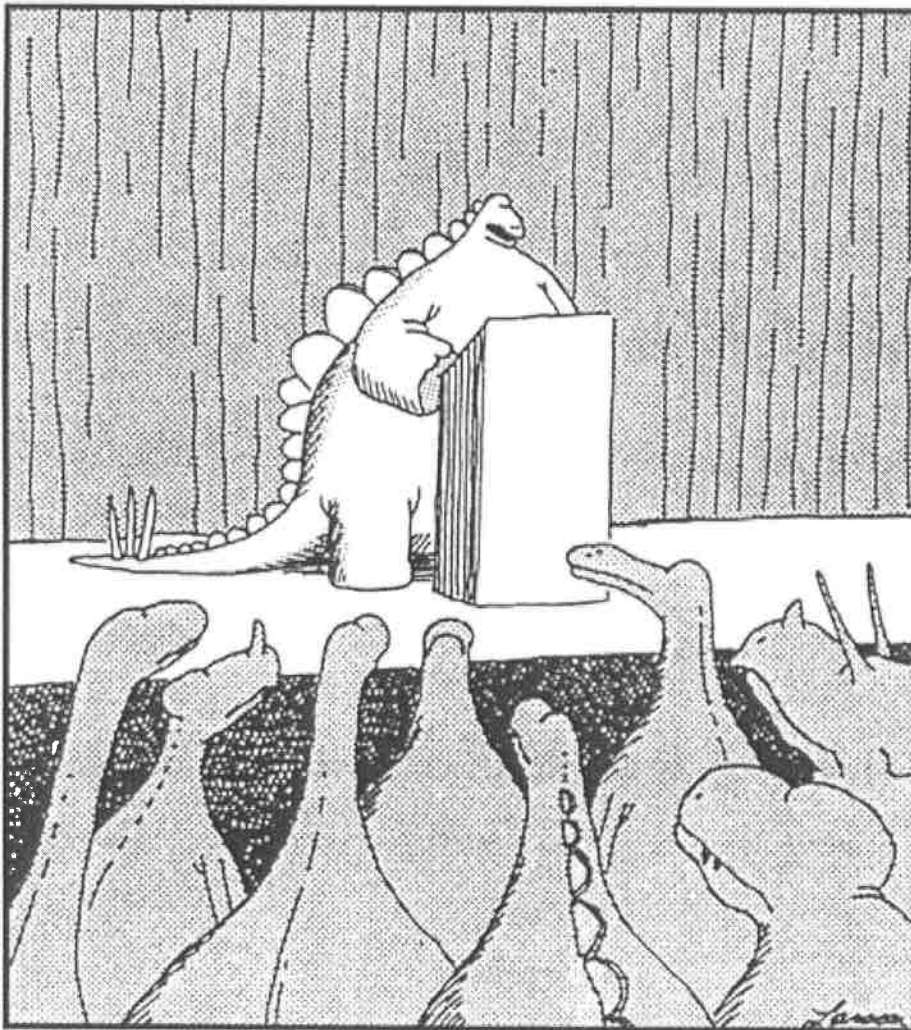
Evaluation Committee: Sending e-mail to set up meeting next week.

Governance Committee Chair Lennex announced that Jody Fernandez was nominated to continue on the Graduate Curriculum Committee. FS voted to approve.

Faculty Welfare and Concerns: No report. Chair Carlson was at a conference out of town.

Issues Committee: No report. Will meet next week.

With no further business, Chair Hare adjourned the meeting.



"The picture looks pretty bleak, gentlemen. The world's climates are changing. The mammals are taking over and we all have a brains about the size of a walnut."

Report submitted to all MSU faculty and beyond by Sue Tallichet, Communications Officer.