

Communications Report of the Faculty Senate meeting on 2021-September-30

Written by Communications Officer Dr. Dirk Grupe

1. **Meeting start:** 15:45/3:45 PM
2. **Approval of the Minutes** of the September 16, 2021 meeting: Correction: Senator White was not present at the September 16 meeting. Senator Chatham made a motion to approve the minutes with correction, seconded by Senator Hare, motion passed.
3. Announcements (02:10):
 - President Long introduced the new Faculty Senate ADS **Susan Perry** who is from his department. ADS Perry said that she is looking forward working for the senate. If anybody needs to get hold of her, her email address is *saperry@moreheadstate.edu*.
 - Faculty Senate Webpage Photos: Unfortunately using Star Wars characters as place holders was not possible due to copyright issues, but there is a picture of Beaker instead. If you do not want that picture instead of a photo, then please send a photo to Senator Grupe. President Long also reminded Senate that Tim Holbrook (t.holbrook@moreheadstate.edu) at Alumni Tower will take professional photos.
 - President Long reminded Senate that we will not have a Senate meeting on October 07, due to Fall Break and we are having that meeting today.
 - Request by Dr. Silas Session, the director of Military Initiative to speak to Senate and he made a few announcements to address Senate: October 10 is a suicide awareness football game. Dr. Session pointed out that the Military Initiative events are for everybody, not just military. They are also collecting donations for homeless veterans through the end of next week (Oct. 08). What they are looking for are personal hygiene items, socks, and things like that. Another event that is coming up is a veterans event on November 11. For this event Dr. Session asks that if you have photos of family members or yourself who have served, please send them to him. President Long thanked Dr. Session for his presentation and asks Senate to participate and donate.
4. **Presidents Report:** Not present, no report
5. **Provost Report:** Not present, no report
6. **Regent Report** (Dr. Adams, 07:40): The next Board of Regents meeting will be on October 15 during Homecoming. Regent Adams pointed out that we will be losing a third member of the OVC. There is also a memorandum from the National Labor Relations Board from September 29 relating to students who play sports. It rejects the term *Student Athlete* because these are considered to be university employees and it signals to allow students to get money for their work for the institution. Regent Adams also pointed out the collective actions taken against players who posted protests on social media regarding to social justice issues followed the murder of George Floyd.

7. **Staff Congress Report** (10:50): Chair Flora was not able to attend today, because he felt sick.
8. **SGA Report** (11:15): SGA representative Ethan Wells emailed President Long that he will unfortunately be unable to attend the Senate meeting, because he has to attend an application day for medical school at UofL.
9. **Executive Council Committee Reports:** (11:50) President Long reported that he and President-elect Finch met with President Morgan last Friday which was a long and productive meeting. President Morgan asked about the nature of the resolution on vaccine mandates which passed during the September 16 meeting. President Long explained to him that Senate had a long productive conversation about the matter and from a survey it is clear where the majority of faculty stand on this matter. President Morgan pointed out the difficulties he has to deal with different constituent groups plus financial concerns. But we did not get into agreement. President could not at the time fully support the motion, but could not reject it either. Senator Finch and President Long agreed to at the moment just wait and see what happens next.

President Long then pointed out the outstanding issues that still needs to be solved with the administration. The number one issue still is the First Year Seminar committee, second the merit pay raises and third the issue or the status of the librarians. Provost Norman has been very proactive and wants to get things done.

President Long also has met with Staff Congress Chair Flora and SGA President Emily Wiley, who both were concerned about Faculty Senate's resolution on a vaccine mandate. President Long pointed out that we made a resolution with Senates from other universities. These are individual actions and we can work together on this. President Long also mentioned that the University's approach of raising the vaccination rates is working to some degree with faculty being the most vaccinated group on campus. There was an agreement that we could have a combined effort to increase the vaccination numbers on campus by having a vaccination rally during for example home coming. President Long will meet again with the other constituent groups with President Morgan on Wednesday, October 06. President Long suggested that if we do such a vaccination rally that we have about 20-25 representatives from each group. President Long also threw in the idea of having Beaker come attacking a Virus character.

Senator Fatten was wondering if we have any more data on if the drawings have increased the number of students who are getting vaccinated. President Long said that he has not received any further information.

Faculty Regent Adams was wondering if there has been any attempt made to poll students and staff, as we did among the faculty. We know from the faculty side what faculty want. The University has IR which can quickly send out emails to targeted group and easily figure out the opinions among other constituent groups. President Long said that none of the other groups have done any surveys and they do not know where their constituents stand. Senator Grupe mentioned that the best way to do this is through a survey and pointed out that the groups could use our SurveyMonkey account for this purpose, instead of going by just some "feelings".

President Long also explained President Morgan's situation where he is somewhat in a no-win situation. President Morgan fears that we will lose students if we initiate a vaccine mandate, but as President Long pointed out we may see the opposite that we may even attract students because of the mandate. The University is taking one more step towards positive encouragements towards vaccines, but is considering negative reinforcements (like increase of health care premiums for un-vaccinated) if this is not successful.

Senator Morrison was wondering about President Biden's vaccination mandate, because we do have more than 100 employees. President Long pointed out that this was on the table but it is still under debate and also maybe followed by several law suits. Short term our best bet is on encouraging vaccinations and having a rally to encourage more people getting vaccinated.

Senator Sharp expressed her concern that if a vaccine mandate becomes effective, then some employees may lose their jobs. She was questioning if this action would not be too drastic which is regulated through Pac-22 for faculty disciplinary actions. She felt that losing a job over a vaccine mandate would be too harsh for faculty, because they will never ever find a job again as faculty. Senator Sharp said that we should not be forced to disclose our vaccination status to our employer. But she also mentioned that she won one of the \$500 stipend from the University's drawings.

President Long read a question by Senator Taylor in the chat, that there are other options, like testing. Senator Kmetz pointed out that we could go with negative re-enforcement, like we do this with tobacco use which is severe. This would not result in a termination, but would send a clear message of what the values of the institution are. Senator Lennex thanked Senator Sharp for expressing her concerns, because Senate needs to be a forum for everybody feeling comfortable speaking without expressing the opinion of a majority. But as she also pointed out that the resolution has the allowance for people who have documented illnesses that they can not take the vaccine. This is actually a normal process that when you have to be out for a medical leave you have to proof your medical status to HR. This information is kept at HR as confidential.

Senator Brock pointed out that for future steps please talk to her and her department because they are doing public relations and they do have a health communication class, so they do have the tools to convey a message on this topic to the public. Regent Adams added to this by pointing out our signature programs in biomedical science who can speak out how safe the vaccine is. She also pointed out that testing is mandatory for athletes, because it is a mandate by the NCAA. But testing is costing money, which is something that the president wants to avoid. Senator Blackledge was wondering why the administration is not implementing the social distances measures that the CDC is recommending. President Long said that he will ask this question to the Provost again. This should be an additional measure that should be in place. President Long also pointed out that there are several department offices where no masks are worn.

Finally President Long mentioned concerns in the Caudill College of Humanities and Social Sciences about possible restructuring. If you are in the college we may be planning a survey on that matter.

- **Academic Issues:** (K. Jenab, 39:00): Academic Issues Chair Jenab reported from the meeting from the previous week, where the two main topics were Double dipping

of courses between majors, minors, and certificates, as well as the 50% rule of core courses in a program. The Academic Issues committee had Associate Provost Dr. Laurie Couch as the guest to answer questions regarding these issues. Dr. Couch said that there is a concern from chairs and deans that after the GenEd reform, that students would abuse the system with double dipping and they therefore want to limit the number of courses that can be used in multiples degrees. The biggest problem here is that students may take a major or minor in the same program. Dr. Couch pointed out that SGA just the previous night passed a resolution that would limit the number of double dipping course hours to 15. However, this double dipping issue maybe less severe than it sounds, because to Dr. Couch's knowledge there are only about 5 cases per year who game the system this way. At this time, the Academic Issue committee rejects the limit on the double dipping courses.

Regent Adams pointed out regarding the 50% rule, that there is no external mandate for such a rule. Regent Adams also made Senate aware of that when SGA passed the resolution in the previous night, that they have not been given all the information and only had a choice between 12 or 15 hours double dipping. If SGA had been given the full picture, their resolution may have been different. Also when the University curriculum committee voted on the 50% rule, they assumed that this was a CPE mandate, which it is not. Decisions are made due to poor information.

- **Evaluations:** (L. Lennex, 44:30): Evaluation Chair Dr. Lennex sent a document with references Communications Officer Dr. Grupe, who will attach the information to the Communications report. This will make sure the everybody will be on the same page where this is related to our Senate constitution. Senator Lennex was referring to Article 5, Section 7 in the Faculty Senate constitution (see attachment). The first issue was the Faculty Evaluation Plan (FEP). There are still some departments that have to adjust their FEPs to the new language regarding student teaching evaluations from IDEA to "University approved student evaluation instrument". The Provost, Deans and Chairs have been informed about departments that have not updated the FEPs.

The second item the Evaluation committee discussed was on supervisor evaluations. Chair Lennex requested on September 19 a verification from interim HR director Caroline Atkins of month and year of the last supervisor evaluations in academic affairs, like deans and provost, etc. So far Senator Lennex has heard no response. Why is this important, because according to our Senate constitution we are suppose to participate in academic administrator evaluations, in conjunction with HR, as well as the use of assessment results. More explanations are given in the Appendix A.

Senator Lennox had also requested on September 19 to meet with Provost Norman and HR director Caroline Atkins regarding the development of a timeline to review UARs. There have been in the past several times when Senate was not given enough time to review an UAR appropriately. Senator Lennex wants to work with the administration. However, no response yet, although she has verification that both of them did receive the email. Senator Lennex also pointed out Part G of our mission which clearly states that the chair of Evaluations shall receive any revision of an UAR prior to any posting of that revision. Senator Lennex made clear that this applies to all UARs and is not exclusive to some. This all is in our Senate constitution which

was approved by Faculty Senate as well as the Board of Regents.

The work of the Evaluation committee over the next three weeks is to split up the FEPs among them for review. This also include streamlining the FEPs to have a more simple annual review. Senator Grupe pointed out that for the FEP revision the student evaluations should be discarded from the FEPs. We had several Senate resolutions regarding this matter which former Provost Russell did not wanted to sign, because he thought that this was up to the departments. Regent Adams wanted to clarify if Senator Grupe meant the elimination of student evaluations from the FEP. Senator Grupe said yes, because otherwise we would violate our own resolutions. Regent Adams also pointed out that former Provost Russell's interpretation was wrong because the FEPs are regulated through PG 30 and 33. Also this regulates merit pay raises that the administration does not follow either. Regent Adams also pointed out the any regulation regarding curriculum is clearly up to the faculty and not the administration, as clearly stated in SACS-COC regulation 10.4 (see Appendix B). Another example of such a violation by the administration is FYS. Regent Adams thanks Chair Lennex for bringing up the issue. Chair Lennex again pointed out that Senate has the right to comment on any UAR, regardless what that UAR is.

President Long said that regarding the FYS committee the University president should directly say why FYS is run this way to game the US World and News Report ranking system by having more staff as instructors, but then call it what it is. The first proposal for the new FYS committee was sitting on the president's desk since May 2020. President Long demanded that the administration should be direct and say what they want instead of hiding behind delays etc. It is very frustrating. If the administration would be just be honest about their motivation, like the US Wold and News Report rankings, then say so. President Long recommends to listen to Malcolm Gladwell's podcast on the US News and World Report rankings and it shows how empty the system is (<http://podcasts.pushkin.fm/revisionist-history-dillard?sid=dillard&c=kJPSM2usBzypjanNk9WslA&h=51e5c37c564f6>). There are other values in a University education than going up in rankings.

- **Faculty Welfare & Concerns** (K. Kaufman, 59:35): Chair Kaufmann said that in their last meeting the committee addressed the ad hoc committee on workload calculations. The committee passed a new membership list which was approved by Senate. The committee is planning to meet tomorrow. Senator Grupe made a motion to accept the new committee list, seconded by Senator Eisenhour, motion passed.

The second item discussed by the committee was a fast clock for tenure and promotion. Chair Kaufman also said that the committee is looking at PAc 30 and 35.

- **Governance::** Senator Finch could not be present today.

10. New Business: (01:03:00) President Long said that among the EC we discussed to perform a survey on raises. What does faculty prefer, merit raises, cost of living raises, or a combination of both. In this way we will get a better idea where faculty stands.

Another issue is the faculty email list which will be provided by the Provost to President Long.

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11. Old Business: no old business
12. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Senator Grupe, seconded by Senator Hare, motion passed. Meeting adjourned: 16:52/4:52 PM
13. The **recording of the meeting** can be found at <https://moreheadstate.webex.com/webappng/sites/moreheadstate/recording/e163ccf70454103ab8ff0050568189b8/playback>

A Report by Evaluation Committee chair Senator Lennex

Evaluation Comm Report: Please note that all references to the Faculty Senate Constitution are from Article 5, Section 7, Evaluation Committee:

1. Report on FEP alignment with student evaluation language
 - (a) (FS constitution: (b) Review the promotion and tenure plans for consistency with the appropriate policies and provide feedback to the appropriate Promotion and Tenure Committees) item Fall 2019, Provost Albert directed all departments to revise their FEP language to replace references to IDEA with “university-approved student evaluation instrument.” Evaluation committee reviewed all current FEPs. These dept FEPs were not aligned: Biology/chemistry, Kinesiology, health and imaging systems, music, theatre, and dance, and Earth space systems and physics. Earth space systems and physics is currently in review but not yet sent to Provost. Chairs for university tenure and promotion and Provost were notified of the departments and misalignment.
2. I emailed Caroline Atkins on Sept 19 requesting verification of the most recent dates (month/year) Academic Affairs supervisor evaluations would have been sent to their respective units. This would include Chairs, Associate Deans, Deans, and any unit head such as childcare services, etc. All fall within the Academic Affairs organizational chart. I am also verifying that a Provost evaluation is being planned for Spring 2022. I would very much like to discuss with you the evaluations and distribution among Academic Affairs. No response as yet.

Evaluation Committee has two responsibilities: (c) Participate in formulating tools and processes for the assessment of academic administrators in conjunction with Human Resources, and (d) Formulation and review of policies concerning the use of assessment results
3. I emailed Caroline Atkins and Provost Norman on Sept 19 requesting to meet regarding development of appropriate timeline for review of UARs. No response as yet.
 - (g) Chair of this committee shall receive from Provost UAR revisions prior to posting of final revisions. Chair of this committee shall discuss revision with Executive Council prior to posting of final revisions.
4. Moving forward, the committee is undertaking its charge to review FEPs-
 - (a) (a) Periodic reviews of department, College, and University plans for faculty evaluation and performance-based salary adjustments

- (b) As per the interest (81% in favor) from sampling at the 9.16 FS meeting, the committee is reviewing FEPs with an eye toward commonalities and alternative formats for annual review.

B SACS-COS Guideline 10.4

The institution

- (a) publishes and implements policies on the authority of faculty in academic and governance matters,

- (b) demonstrates that educational programs for which academic credit is awarded are approved consistent with institutional policy, and

- (c) places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty