

# Communications Report of the Faculty Senate meeting on 2021-October-21

Written by Communications Officer Dr. Dirk Grupe

1. **Meeting start:** 15:45/3:45 PM
2. **Approval of the Minutes** of the October 21, 2021 meeting: Correction: Senator Sharp is listed twice. Motion to approve the minutes after corrected by Senator Chatham, seconded by Senator Jenab, minutes approved.
3. Announcements (02:40):
  - President Long had only one announcement expressing his sympathy to the family of the recently deceased student Elizabeth Creamer.
4. **Presidents Report:** No report, President Morgan was not here today because he had to attend a financial meeting.
5. **Provost Report:** Provost Norman was attending the Meet MSU Night in Pikeville tonight. However, Associate Provost Dr. Laurie Couch was present to give the provost report instead. Dr. Couch presented a list of items Provost Norman wished to discuss. Dr. Couch said that this has been a difficult week on campus due to the loss of a student. There are several memorial services planned on campus. Because of this recent event, counseling and health services have extended hours.

The Deans council currently has Pac 27 for review which will go first to General Council and after that will be presented to Senate. The main issue here is when the tenure clock starts ticking.

We started a new process for attendance tracking on campus which is part of a requirement for federal financial aid. It worked really well with a 91% response rate. There were some hiccups. However for the second half semester courses things did not go so well and the response rate was only 50% which caused some hold up at Financial Aid. Dr. Couch asked if faculty have suggestions how to improve the system the provost office is interested to hear about them.

Regarding Faculty 180 there is a progress report expected from the committee coming very soon and Provost Norman will share the information once that will be available.

With respect to the process of electronic submissions of portfolios for tenure and promotions David Flora has created a Blackboard shell that can be used. So far this has been successful.

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning was hosting several sessions this week for faculty to learn how to deal with students with mental health issues. Nearly 40 faculty participated. One outcome of these sessions was also a request to have workshops on faculty mental health.

Finally there will be an announcement of the Posters at the Capital coming out in Monday, which will be in person in March and the deadline will be December 01. Senator Sharp

had a concern regarding one of her URFs who will be on an Native American reservation in North Dakota in Spring and that it is a requirement for URFs to give a presentation. Dr. Couch said that this can be done remotely during the Celebration of Student scholarship.

Regent Adams was interested when the revision of PAc 27 will be send to Faculty Welfare & Concerns. Dr. Couch responded that it was just send to General Council this week and once it has been checked there it will go to Senate.

6. **Regent Report** (Dr. Adams, 12:30): The Board of Regents met on October 15th in the afternoon which was primarily an informational meeting, in particular looking at guidelines for naming, so when people give money to the University.

Another item was an update on the student numbers. The numbers can be seen in the Regent's report which is available on Blackboard.

CFO Mary Fister-Tucker gave a report on the Health care plan and the upcoming open enrollment. The rates will remain the same for 2022. Again a snapshot of the premiums are given in the Regent's report.

VP Rick Hesterberg reported that the Foundation reached the \$70 Million mark thanks to fundraising and the gain in the stock market. There was a video shown of thank yous to donors as well as a video about the Space Science Center and the trip of Lunar Ice Cube to the Moon.

In the President's report Dr. Morgan reported that 30% of the students are vaccinated and 70% of the employees are vaccinated. Still the University only wants to "encourage" but not mandate vaccinations. The Strategic Plan of the University, SOAR, will be extended, because the University did not finish all points on that plan. Currently we are in the last year of this plan. The president still hopes that MSU will be #10-15 on the US News and World Report's ranking, currently MSU is #21. Many faculty have approached Regent Adams with concerns regarding the US News and World Report's university ranking. Regent Adams provided various resources that are listed in her report. These links are also listed in the Appendix A at the end of this report.

7. **Staff Congress Report** (David Flora19:10): Staff Congress had their last meeting on October 05. The Benefits committee is working on the second revision of UAR 324 which outlines staff compensation for moves within the University. Their plan is to bring the UAR for vote to the next Staff Congress meeting. The committee is also working on the staff survey and the supervisor evaluations. They are also looking into how hybrid staff is evaluated and compensated. The Credentials Committee still has vacancies. It shows how hard it is to get folks motivated. There was also a motion to change the title from Chair to President and Vice-chair to Vice-President and the committee is looking into what it takes to change the bylaws. The staff issues committee was investigating if it would be possible to have the HR Learning Cafe virtual so more people could attend. HR also reported that they are working with Kim Oatman to provide healthy options in vending machines. Another suggestion was to add items like gloves, masks and hand sanitizers to the machines. There will also be workshops by Aramark on how to make your meals healthier. At the last meeting for the first time an SGA member was giving a report and Chair Flora really appreciated this developments hearing from the students directly. The next Staff Congress meeting will be on November 02, virtually.

8. **SGA Report (22:30):** SGA Vice President Ethan Wells had the good news that he was accepted into the medical program at UofL. All SGA meetings were canceled this week due to the sudden death of a member of the student community. SGA held a workshop the previous night on how to deal with the emotions and feelings, grief, and anxiety regarding this death. Vice President Wells also announced the candle light vigil at the Bell Tower for this night. SGA also wants to make sure the students have sufficient mental support on campus and off campus.

Senator Jenab brought up the double-dipping resolution and asked Vice President Wells about details regarding this resolution. Senator Jenab clarified that there is no limit currently on double dipping based on UAR 143, but SGA passed a resolution limiting this to 15 hours overlap. VP Wells responded that this is a good question and that he needs to follow up on it. Senator Jenab was interested where this idea came from and who was driving it. VP Wells said that the intent was to help the students so they do not have to take unnecessary courses, but as Senator Jenab pointed out this resolution does exactly the opposite, because UAR 143 has no limitations. VP Wells invited Senator Jenab to come to the next SGA Senate meeting and talk about this issue. Senator Jenab also invited VP Wells to the next meeting of the Academic Issues committee on October 28. Regent Adams clarified that during an Academic Issues committee meeting when this item was brought up, we were surprised to hear from Associate Provost Dr. Couch that SGA passed a resolution that would limit double dipping to 15 hours which would not help students. Regent Adams was wondering how SGA was approached, like here is your choice 12 or 15 hours and SGA picked 15 without given the proper information that double dipping is allowed without limit. VP Wells said he will bring this issue up when he has his next conversation with SGA president Emily Wiley. President Long suggested that SGA VP Wells stays on for the Academic Issues report which will be one item on the agenda.

9. **Executive Council Committee Reports: (29:10)** President Long mentioned that the Executive Council is planning a survey on Faculty's preference for salary increases, being it across the board, or merit raises, or a combination of both. President Long also said that pay raises will be a talking point at the next meeting with President Morgan next week. As President Long pointed out that most FEPs mention merit pay raises, but in reality the assessment of faculty's professional performance is never rewarded. Raises in light of many many years without any raises are a good thing, but not having merit pay raises is very frustrating. Faculty with exemplary performance should be rewarded for that. So watch out for the survey which will be a simple survey, similar to the recent survey on vaccines. Senator Hare commented that why are we even asking the question. At other institutions across the board and cost of living raises as well as performance based pay raises are written in the policies. We have nothing like that. President Long said he was in full agreement with that, maybe we do not need the survey. Senator Hare proposed that a group within Senate would work on a policy that would involve cost of living raise as well as merit. Senator Jenab commented that also the inequity of salaries even within departments which could be \$10k need to be resolved as well and requested that this issue maybe addressed first. Regent Adams remarked that this issue was addressed by the President on the compression piece, however it did not do much to the low number of funds put aside for this adjustment. Senator Morrison suggested that we should just ask the simple question: Merit or Across the Board. Because merit hasn't really worked

over the last decade here, he thinks that most faculty probably will go with the across the board option. Senator Taylor suggested that the cost of living raises are a basic right. Not keeping up with the living costs is really inhumane. President Long also pointed out the increased inflation we have seen over the last year.

President Long mentioned that the Executive Council will be meeting with President Morgan next week. If anybody has a question for the President Morgan then please send an email to President Long.

- **Academic Issues:** (K. Jenab, 38:40): During the last meeting on October 14 the AI committee's first item was to discuss Double Dipping. The committee is still waiting for feedback from the Deans Council. The committee will also follow up with SGA. The next item was the budget allocation. Senator Jenab encouraged every senator to read through the AI committee minutes and pointed out that the budget allocation for research for the 2021/22 year is zero! On the other had allocations for student aid and student services jumped from single digits to double digits.

- **Evaluations:** (L. Lennex, 41:00): Committee Chair Senator Lennex reported that the committee did not meet last week, but the continue to work on the FEPs and the annual evaluations.

- **Faculty Welfare & Concerns** (K. Kaufman, 41:40): Chair Senator Kaufman reported that the first item on the agenda was the ad hoc committee on Faculty Workload Calculations. The ad hoc committee had their first meeting on October 01 and will have their second on on October 22. Their recommendation is to amend UAR 136 so that colleges can come up with their own workload calculations. The idea here is to come up with 4 different workload calculations, one per college. Senator Sharp said that she will give a full report at the next Senate meeting on November 04.

The next item discussed was the fast clock for Tenure and Promotion. The committee is looking into language in PAc 2 and PAc 27 that other institutions are using in order to allow a shorted time to apply for Tenure and Promotion.

Last but not least the committee is working on evaluation issue in particular Senators Hare and Kiffmeyer. The suggestion is an amendment of PAc-30 and suspend annual evaluation which are linked to merit pay raises which currently are not honored by the administration. Suggested changes are under "Administration of the Plan" with two options:

- (a) **Option 1:** No evaluation will take place unless the President allocated funds for performance-based compensation plan by January 01.
- (b) **Option 2:** The President allocates no less than 25% of funds of the total allocation to faculty compensation to the performance-based compensation plan.

Senator Kaufman invited Senate to discuss the two options. Regent Adams said that she liked Option 1 because it would eliminate unnecessary work for faculty, which is not totally clear in option 2 because it does not put a limit on excess paperwork. Senator Kaufman remarked that this was also the assessment of the committee because so much wasted time and effort goes into these unnecessary evaluations.

- **Governance::** (Doug Chatham, 47:20) Senator Finch was attending the Meet MSU Night in Pikeville and was unable to participate in the Senate meeting. Senator Chatham was reporting on behalf of the committee. The first item discussed by the committee was a revision of the committee description of the Student Media Board. The problem here was that the Board of Regents approved the changes without sending it through senate. The committee now had a chance to review the changes. The revisions reduce the number of people on the board and how many times the board has to meet during the year. The other changes are minor. The Governance looked through the proposed changes and agrees with them. Senator Hare made a motion to accept the revisions, Senator Kaufman seconded, motion passed.

The second item was a resolution on virtual meetings (see Appendix B) which was inspired by the student media board description which allows the board to meet online, in person, or a mixture. The committee felt this was a good idea that can be used for other meetings as well and is proposing to do this. This will give all University committees a permanent option to meet virtually. Senator Kaufman moved to accept the resolution, seconded by Senator Hare, motion passed.

#### 10. New Business: (54:00)

Regent Adams on SACS-COC and the 50% rule: This is coming out of the Academic Issues committee and we want to clarify some things about SACS-COC. What apparently some administrators do not get straight is the difference between a mandate and an option. Administration is referring to the 50% core courses in a program to SCAS-COC 9.1, but there is no requirement for such a rule in the guidelines. What SACS-COC demands is coherence, but not any percentage of courses. Our 50% rule does not meet what SACS-COC defines. Many problems can be pinned down to the administrations misunderstanding of SACS-COC rule 10.4 on shared governance which gives faculty full control over the curriculum. The problem we run into are manufactured assessment mandates, as we have seen it with the assessments of Minors, which Senate had stopped. Faculty is told about external mandates that create a lot of work, but as it turns out those mandates are actually not real.

Another problem is manufactured consent. Years ago faculty agreed to the 50% rule, because it was supposed to be a CPE requirement, but there is no such a requirement. Again misinformation led to an agreement to a requirement that isn't real. How do we know that we do not violate SACS-COC rule 9.1, well, we just were accredited again by SCAS-COC. Manufactured consent is not full consent. The same just recently happened to SGA who were told that there will be a limit on double dipping, what do you want, 12 or 15 hours, and SGA picked 15, without having all the information.

And the climax of all this is FYS. Where is FYS's problem with 10.4? The current FYS was setup as a temporary solution that when the previous QEP was resolved which was linked to FYS, somebody decided to redesign FYS. This FYS was sold to faculty as a temporary solution that would be back under faculty control, but this never happened and it is violating SCAS-COC 10.4.c. So currently we have 3 hours of academic credit under the control of an administrator and not under faculty. There are some good elements in the FYS program created by handpicked faculty on the committee, which is great, but this is not a broad faculty involvement and not faculty control. This is why Faculty Senate passed

an FYS committee description back in February 2020 in order to address the problems with the current FYS. This proposal has been sitting on an upper administrator's desk since 1.5 years! Regent Adams pointed out that we want to work with the administration to streamline the process. Academic Issues would like to get help dealing with this.

Senator Sharp remarked that she is really fed up with the curriculum proposal process where she is told that a minor change would be a major change and oh btw, you can not do this because Middle Grades Education is not in compliance with the 50% rule. However that program has been re-accredited. Regent Adams said that all we want is the system to work without misinformation making more work for faculty. Senator Sharp also pointed out that the lack of reading comprehension by some administrator ultimately hurts our students. By demanding requirements which externally do not exist, we are hurting students (and faculty) because what could be a simple process is turning into a highly complicated one. Senator Jenab said that we should explain this to our faculty so they are informed.

11. Old Business: (01:11:00): Senator Sharp asked that the chat comments on Webex should not be included in the Minutes. Senator Sharp said that a long time ago there was a discussion in Senate about the minutes and its format. At that time it was decided that the minutes only reflect the decisions and actions during the Senate meeting. Senator Morrison remarked that he wasn't very keen on seeing the chat in the minutes either. He also said that the minutes could be a mixture of details and only briefly summarizing the action points. This could be up to the Senate President. Senator Sharp also pointed out that for the verbatim report, the Communications Report was created. Senator Lennex also agreed with Senator Morrison that the minutes should be a mixture and it depends on the President's preference. Senator Lennex also clarified that the Communications Reports are posted on Scholar Works. The Communications Report is not approved by Senate and is written as an addendum. Senator Sharp expressed the opinion that the recordings of the minutes should only be used for the secretary to write the minutes. Senator Lennex argued that the chat should be part of our official minutes and that's why she suggested it. Senator Jenab pointed out that all elements of the meetings, including chat and recordings, are official documents of the meeting. Senator Taylor remarked that some non-tenured faculty are afraid to speak up in senate due to the fear of repercussions. President Long said that the Executive Council will take this up for further discussions and suggests that this will be an agenda item for the next Senate meeting.
12. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Senator Taylor, seconded by Senator Chatham, motion passed. The meeting closed at 17:05/5:05PM.
13. The **recording of the meeting** can be found at <https://moreheadstate.webex.com/webappng/sites/moreheadstate/recording/6d76245f14d5103ab7ef0050568c0563/playback>

## A Resources regarding the US News and World Report’s university ranking system

- Malcom Gladwell “The Order of Things” (The New Yorker 2011, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/02/14/the-order-of-things>)—his “Revisionist History” podcast episode, “Lord of the Rankings,” (2021) updates the precious article, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/lord-of-the-rankings/id1119389968?i=1000527176172>
- John Tierney: “Your Annual Reminder to Ignore the US News & World Report Rankings” (The Atlantic 2013), <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/09/your-annual-reminder-to-ignore-the-em-us-news-world-report-em-college-rankings/279103/>
- Scott Jaschick: “8 More Colleges Submitted Incorrect Data For Rankings” (Inside Higher Ed, Aug 27, 2018), <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2018/08/27/eight-more-colleges-identified-submitting-incorrect-data-us-news>
- Valerie Strauss: “US News changed the way it ranks colleges. It’s still ridiculous.” (The Washington Post, September 12, 2018), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2018/09/12/us-news-changed-way-it-ranks-colleges-its-still-ridiculous/>
- Dip and Gluckman. “Colleges Still Obsess Over National Rankings. For Proof, Look at Their Strategic Plans.” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 13, 2021), <https://www.chronicle.com/article/colleges-still-obsess-over-national-rankings-for-proof-1>

## B Resolution on Virtual Meetings

### Resolution for a Permanent Electronic Meeting Option For University Standing Committees

- Whereas, during the current pandemic emergency, university committees have met electronically based on temporary authorizations and directives, and
- Whereas, the Student Media Board has a provision in its description that gives them a permanent option to hold meetings virtually, and
- Whereas, the Faculty Senate believes it desirable for other committees to have an electronic meeting option that will continue to operate after the current COVID pandemic ends,
- Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Faculty Senate recommends that all University Standing Committees be given a permanent option to meet virtually, with the following statement added to every Standing Committee’s description:
- *Meetings may be conducted wholly in-person, virtually, or a mixture of both to allow those who wish to attend virtually the opportunity to do so.*