

Communications Report of the Faculty Senate meeting on 2021-November-04

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: Senator Grupe made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 21 meeting contingent of two corrections. Senator Chatham seconded the motion and pointed out another correction. Senator Stephen Brigham pointed out a misspelling of his name. The minutes were approved as amended.
3. Announcements (02:30):
 - Undergraduate Research Fellows (URF) have seen an enrollment hit during the pandemic. Only about 30% of the funds have been used and the University would like to promote this research opportunity. Please contact Evan Prellberg (eprellberg@moreheadstate.edu) for further questions. Senator Grupe mentioned that faculty can also work with their department chair/associate deans to obtain new URF positions.
 - Another concern by the administration is to boost the LevelUp QEP courses and would like to double the number of LevelUp courses. President Long also pointed out that grants are available to enhance these courses. President Long asked if any senator had any further information on these issues.
4. **Presidents Report:** No report, Dr. Morgan was double scheduled today.
5. **Provost Report:** (05:00) Provost Dr. Norman said that he has received tenure portfolios from those faculty who will go up for tenure next year. He also said that this was the first time of portfolio submissions online via Blackboard. Provost Norman was very pleased with the number of faculty who proposed for the instructional mini grants. Dr. Norman mentioned that most decision letter have been sent out on Monday (Nov. 01) but there are still a considerable number of proposals that could still be funded. Finally, Provost Norman has started to visit departments to try to understand what is on the hearts and minds of the faculty in the departments.
6. **Regent Report** (Dr. Adams, 08:50): The next Board meeting will be December 02 mostly dealing with budgets. Another issue Regent Adams brought up was institutional reorganization and administrative costs. The presentation for this is posted on the Blackboard site for this meeting. The problem Regent Adams pointed out is that we are not consistently using the same definitions and terms, and "Administrative Costs" are just one of these. One of the problems here is that any changes are suppose to be "cost-neutral" but if we have an increase in administrative costs does this result in a reduction in instructional costs? For example, a department chair and the ADS are considered administrative costs, however, from an official budgetary standpoint they actually are not. According to the National Association of College and University Budget Officers (NABUCO) defined as "instructional costs" that the classification of instructional costs excludes academic personal

who's primary responsibility is administration, like a dean and a provost, but a department chair is not. The catch is that our University defines part of deans' salaries as instructional, like the fracturization of staff who part time teach. Another category is "Academic Support" and this is where we find academic administration. Also keep in mind that "administration" is not just academic. There are more administration positions necessary to run a University. Other items that also count as "Instructional" are the library and tech support as well as distant learning. Regent Adams also pointed out that a "budget" is a plan how to spend money, but it is a plan that can and will be amended. The actual list of how the money was spend is the "Audited Financial Statement". Coming back to "budget neutral" this is only budget neutral to the University, but not to our individual units.

7. **SGA Report** (Ethan Wells; 18:00): SGA VP Ethan Wells met the previous week with the Academic Issues committee to discuss the double dipping issue. Right now SGA is inconclusive in the issue, but SGA VP Wells will keep Senate informed about the issue.
8. **Executive Council Committee Reports:** (19:30): There are changes to PAc-27 concerning promotion to tenure. President Long did not had time yet to discuss this with Provost Norman. President Long was wondering if anybody had more information about the suggested changes of PAc-27. Provost Norman who was still on that call clarified the issue. The changes in PAc-27 are primarily clean-up like dates/deadlines in the PAc which we typically do not follow. It makes more sense to have a posting each Fall semester that will state what these dates are, rather than having this defined in the PAc. Another issue Provost Norman mentions are for new hires who bring in years of experience which they want to get negotiated for a faster promotion to tenure than the current 6 years. The PAc is currently with General Council to check eventual legal issues where it was sent to two weeks ago. Provost Norman is still waiting for feedback on it. Senator Morrison was wondering about the early tenure, what happens if an early tenure gets denied, is this the end of it, or does this person gets a second shot. Provost Norman was not sure either and said that the language probably needs some more clarity on this issue and he is open for further discussions.

The second item on the Executive Council agenda was the COVID -19 update and how policies might change again in the hopefully winding down of the pandemic. President Long had a conversation with President Morgan about mask-mandates and when this could be lifted, but right now all this is speculations. It is probably too early to say anything about it. Senator Blackledge Thanks President Long for having this discussion with President Morgan. However, Senator Blackledge was wondering why the signage about social distancing was not put up again at the beginning of the semester giving the surge of the Delta variant. President Long did not have an answer and asked the provost to relay this to the president to have an answer next time. Senator Finch reminded everybody about breakthrough cases and to follow the protocol for these as well. There are breakthrough cases on campus.

9. **Staff Congress Report** (33:45) Staff Congress Chair David Flora was not present, but Vice-chair Halisha Tuerk was on, but had some audio problems. President Long read the comments in the chat written by Staff Congress Vice Chair Tuerk: Staff Congress met on November 02 and approved changes to PG 48 and UAR 324. Changes to PG 48 refer

to vacation leave and accumulated vacation time. UAR 324 deals with staff compensation when moving within the University. which now allows for the new entry level or a 7.5% salary increase what ever is larger. Another item discussed was the short staffing of dispatchers at the police department. The next staff congress meeting will be December 07. Senator Grupe who as the Senate Communications Officer was present at the Staff Congress meeting said that he was shocked hearing from the police chief about the dire situation with the dispatchers and suggested that we may invite the chief of the police to speak also to Senate about the situation. President Long who was also present said that he was shocked as well and agreed that we should invite the chief of the campus police. Regent Adams pointed out that at the end of that meeting of of the fractionalized staff said that some of them are evaluated by their supervisors for their teaching, others are not. This would be another way where Staff Congress and Faculty Senate could work together. President Long also mentioned then when he was working on the report on fractionalized staff two years ago we noticed that it was a mess, some get evaluated, some do not, and very rarely they get evaluated in a productive way.

10. **Executive Council Subcommittee Reports:**

- **Academic Issues:** (A. Hassan, 36:40): Chair Jenab was at a conference and the report was given by Senator and Vice-Chair Hassan. Academic Issues had SGA VP Ethan Wells as an invited guest to discuss the 50% rule and double dipping. VP Wells explained that SGA voted on a 15 hour cap on double dipping because SGA was not aware that there was no cap at all. SGA may have to revisit this resolution given the new information that they have now. The committee also would like to address the issue of mis-information by the administration. The second issue discussed was on course fees, but the committee is still waiting to hear back from the provost. Dr. Adams drafted a resolution to get rid of the 50% rule which is currently being considered by the committee.

Last but not least, the committee discussed a survey about FYS that will be send out to faculty by Governance Committee Chair Finch. The merits of this survey are still discussed. Some committee member think that a survey maybe unnecessary because Senate already approved the new FYS committee. Senator Finch clarified the request for a faculty survey on FYS mentioning that after the last EC meeting with President Morgan, he said that he is only hearing complaints about FYS for a few faculty, but no one else on campus. The idea of the survey is to collect some broader data on the issue. Senator Finch said she would be happy to discuss the issue further with Academic Issues. Senator Finch also mentioned that she feels very frustrated that we are not moving further with FYS. Senator Hare said that he is not convinced that a survey will be helpful if we do not get to the root of the problem which is that FYS is taken out of the hands of faculty. Faculty was told that they are involved in FYS' creation but we were not. In Senator Hare's opinion a survey would do nothing because most faculty are not participating it it. The issue is not how faculty feels about it, the issue is that we are violating the requirement that faculty oversees the curriculum. The President needs to understand that. Currently he is stonewalling the issue. The administration is in the wrong with this and we need to take control of FYS again now. Asking peoples' opinion about it is irrelevant. Senator Finch

responded that many people may feel the same way as Senator Hare, but we need to know that. Plus we need to know if faculty wants FYS in the curriculum or not. The President likes numbers and these numbers may prove how upset faculty is on this issue and that it is not just a small group of people on campus who have a problem with FYS. Senator Hare suggested that then we should ask faculty what role they had and have in FYS. He assumes that the answer will be basically zero across the board. Regent Adams remarked that Senator Hare is correct, that the new FYS committee that Senate created was going to get back control of the curriculum. Faculty is not in control of 3 hours of academic credit. Regent Adams also reminded Senate that in the initial proposal of the new General Education, FYS was not part of that. However it was included in the General Education under the assumption that faculty had control over the course. Regent Adams at the time argued for the inclusion of FYS into the General Education with a reading component. Apparently according to Senator Boram there is now a discussion having that reading component in an History or English class. Regent Adams also said that all of us have specific roles on campus and we are not taking over the role of the administration in their appropriate role and she is wondering why the President does not understand why he thinks that his role is in making decisions on the curriculum. It shows that the President wishes not to work with faculty in a collaborative fashion. Senator Grupe said that he understands where Senator Finch is coming from but many faculty also expressed survey fatigue and we did vote on an FYS committee already multiple times. We all want this committee to work. We also have the nuclear option and withdraw FYS from the General Education. President Long mentioned also that these options have been discussed among the Executive Council. Also President Long asked the question that when you hear from an administrator saying they do not hear about this from other constituents, what other constituents would this be? We are taking this up with administration with the Provost in our upcoming discussion with him with the Executive Council. The only reason why the administration is doing FYS the way they are doing it is because of some kind of metric gaming for the US News and World Report ranking system. President Long invites the administration that if that is the case, then please say so if this is the primary reason for this course to artificially increase the number of "faculty". Please tell us that, or if we are not happy with this, we consider pulling FYS from the curriculum. Regent Adams also pointed out that by removing FYS from the curriculum the University would actually save money. There is money set aside for fractionalized staff as well as an escrow account for FYS. Senator Brigham requested that copies of the most recent syllabi of FYS may be posted on our Blackboard shell. President Long also mentioned that nationwide there are basically two forms of FYS courses, those for "student success" and those to motivate students by big ideas and inspire them in their majors. Also the problem with the current FYS setting is that there are some staff member who do not what to teach but they are forced to do so. This is a hostile environment for freshmen students and it probably won't give these students a positive first experience at college. Anyway, the Executive Council will take this up with the provost.

- **Evaluations:** (L. Lennex, 54:00): No report, but the Evaluation Committee is still looking at FEPs.

- **Faculty Welfare & Concerns** (K. Kaufman, 54:40): The ad hoc committee on Workload Calculations is meeting but they do not have anything concrete to present at this point, but they have had several meetings and they are working on a resolution. FW&C also discussed the fast tenure and promotion clock, but this is on hold because of the lack of information on the changes in PAc-27 and what happens with FEPs. It is tabled for now. Another item is a revision of PAc-30 which was presented to Senate in the [previous meeting on October 14. At the time two options were presented, here FW&C added a third option, which is a combination of options 1 and 2, based on the feedback from the previous Senate meeting. This new option requests at least 25% of the funds for compensation set aside for merit based compensation. If this is not set aside by January 1st no evaluation process of faculty will start. Senator Hare clarified a question by Senator Grupe, that if there is a compensation, that automatically at least 25% have to be for merit based pay raises. The goal is to streamline the evaluation process.
- **Governance::** (Julia Finch, 59:25) The Governance Committee had no report either, but they are working on the faculty interest survey which will have some questions about faculty specific skills to serve on committees. The survey will be ready by Spring.

11. New Business: (1:00:00): First new item was the Guest Speaker *Rebecca Davison* who reported on the *Green Dot Bystander* program which is a collaboration with Pathways which is our community mental health system. The Green Dot Bystander Program is a new initiative to approach sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking prevention. A number of faculty already went through the training. The help from faculty can also come from reaching out into the class rooms and the student organizations. The goal for the Fall semester was to reach about 200 students and so far they are about half way there. The goal for faculty and staff was to reach about 80 and right now 60 have completed the training. Green Dot is a new approach to sexual assault, dating violence and stocking prevention. Typically we deal with *Consent* training which is usually geared towards male students. Other examples are harm prevention, like how to hold your key walking to your car, or self defense training. However, the approach of the Green Dot program is that everybody can be part of the solution. The Green Dot is a reaction in the moment where you can directly intervene, or delegate, or distract. Another virtual Green Dot training will be available on November 19. The training sessions last for about 90 minutes. Green Dot has an MSU website which is <https://www.moreheadstate.edu/greendot>. Rebecca Davison also said that she and her presenters will be happy to come to classes to talk about the program. Senator Finch was wondering if we want to build this into our classes, if the training could be build into a 40-50 minute setting. Rebecca Davison said that they will accomplish what will fit into the schedule. Senator Finch mentioned that she liked the proactive approach of the program. Senator Grupe who attended the training the previous week also recommended the training.

Senator Morrison brought up the discussions on the value of college and university rankings. The ranking still remain a goal in the University's strategic plan. As Regent Adams pointed out, such rankings are a distraction from our educational mission. At worst these rankings actively harms the institution by diverting resources from supporting string programs to areas that need improvements of enhancements. This is gaming the system. Just

shortly after the last Senate meeting Senator Morrison came across another ranking. If we think that our public image depends on rankings and reputation than we need to acknowledge that not all of our rankings are positive. For example, in a list of worst college of for your money, published by moneywise.com: <https://moneywise.com/a/ch-oath/worst-college-for-your-money-in-every-state?amp=1>, Morehead State is listed as the worse university in Kentucky. The ranking mentioned that MSU has a low tuition and low student debts, but a survey on alumni is highly negative. However, there is no data that would support such a statement. Senator Morrison made it clear that he does not think that MSU is really the worst college in Kentucky and that the main purpose of this article is to serve as a click bait. Senator Morrison asked that if we put so much emphasis on rankings, then why don't we put this ranking too on our webpage. The reason we are not doing this is because we do not value this ranking because it is meaningless. The moneywise.com ranking relies on arbitrary criteria just designed to sell advertising and digital clicks. In short it shares the limitations of all other ranking systems, including those considered the most prestigious. Senator Morrison said we need to set aside the quest for rankings and focus our energy and resources to build and maintain strong academic programs. President Long thanked Senator Morrison for his statement and reminded Senate again of the podcasts by Malcolm Gladwell on university rankings (see communications reports from September 30 and October 21). The rankings are an inherently unfair and class-based ranking system. President Long encourages the administration to strive for us being more than just these rankings. Senator Morrison mentioned that he found the moneywise.com article by accident on Yahoo. Senator Taylor also pointed out the MSU is doing horribly on diversity rankings as well.

12. Old Business: (01:17:00):
13. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Senator Finch, seconded by Senator Grupe. The meeting adjourned at 17:03/5:03 PM.
14. The **recording of the meeting** can be found at <https://moreheadstate.webex.com/webappng/sites/moreheadstate/recording/caa7e6a61fd5103a97ff0050568cfa13/playback>