

The Communications Report

10/17/2024

This meeting of the Faculty Senate was an open forum meeting held in the ADUC theater. President Lenex called the meeting to order at 3:45 pm but allowed a few minutes of conversation for those signing in and collecting handouts to take their seats.

Announcements

President Lennex began the meeting by reminding all faculty to check their October 30 paystub to make sure they had received their raise. She then relayed that the searches for the Deans of the Colleges of Education and of Science and Engineering were underway and that the campus should expect to see candidates for both in January 2025. The search for the new Provost is also proceeding, with the hope of concluding by the end of January 2025.

Minutes

The minutes from the September 12 Faculty Senate meeting were approved unanimously, without revision. The minutes can be found on the Faculty Senate Blackboard shell.

Regent's Report

Regent Stubbs presented the Board of Regents Report (available on the Blackboard shell). One fact covered by the Regent's report was that, at the October 14 Board of Regents Meeting, The Morehead State University Strategic Plan was extended through 2028. There was some discussion about this action and some clarifying questions were asked. The strategic plan was extended without revisions. Regent Stubbs was not able to relay any particular reasons as to why the strategic plan was extended. It was asked where the strategic plan could be found, to which Senator Kessinger explained how to use the search bar.

It was noted that the extension of the strategic plan was not approved unanimously. One nay-voter was the Student Regent, who was in attendance at the open forum. He declined to express his reservations to the group assembled, having arrived without the intention or preparation to speak.

Provost's Report

The Provost was not in attendance, he was attending a Pass (Pursuing Alignment for Student Success) conference. In his stead, the meeting was attended by Associate Provost Schroeder. Associate Provost Schroeder said that all he was planning to report were updates on the assorted ongoing administrative searches that had already been discussed, but that he would be around for questions, should they arise.

Committee Reports

Governance committee: Senator Kessinger presented several committee appointments that needed Senate approval. This included several appointments that were brought forward for

approval at the asynchronous September 12 Senate meeting. There were not enough votes to reach a quorum, so they were brought before the Senate again during this meeting. These appointments received unanimous approval, except for appointing Tathagata Ray to the Level Up! Committee, which was met with one vote of dissent.

Faculty Welfare and Concerns Committee: Senator Kmetz guided us through the handout (available on the FS Blackboard shell) prepared for this committee report. This report consisted primarily of a timeline of events surrounding Dr. Riegle’s eventual departure from the college. The primary issue at stake was Dr. Riegle’s inability to comply with the “policy” of every faculty member having at least one in-person course every semester and her seeking an accommodation for this “requirement.” Senator Kmetz then explained that there is no official policy of having at least one in-person course per semester at Morehead State University. There was a question as to whether this was a situation similar to that of the nursing faculty exodus. Senator Kmetz answered that the situations were different, as the issue with the nursing faculty was not about ADA compliance. There followed some brief conversation about whether or not the University was doing enough to meet accommodations in general.

The second portion of the FWC report detailed a planned meeting of the Faculty Welfare and Concerns committee with the Provost and the Department of Mathematics to address concerns from the Mathematicians that their dispersal across campus and their lack of an invitation to the new Science, Technology, and Engineering, is detrimental not only to faculty morale but student success.

Academic Issues: Senator Adams reviewed the prepared handout (available on the Blackboard shell). This report contains two standards/requirements from SACSCOC (9.3 and 10.4). These rules establish the faculty of the institution as bearing responsibility for what is included in the academic curricula, in particular, general education. The proposed changes to the First Year Seminar originated from and are being shaped by the administration. Academic Issues argues that the proposed changes to FYS are being carried out in a manner that runs contrary to the SACSCOC rules, which appear to dictate this change should be faculty-centric. Moreover, the Faculty has yet to be presented with any data motivating a need to change FYS at all, much less on such a small timetable. President Lennex then presented a draft survey for the faculty about how FYS should be constructed (in terms of content and delivery. There were some comments and suggestions about the survey and then the Senate voted unanimously to send the survey to faculty.

Evaluation Committee: Senator Ash presented the Evaluation committee report. She spoke to concerns about the creation and alteration of Departmental FEPs. Between various programs being merged into single departments, and the creation of the new Sr. Instructor position, many departmental FEPs were edited very recently. There was concern from faculty about it not being abundantly clear what changes to their FEPs were needed, and that any changes to an FEP should come from the faculty.

There was a concern expressed by Dr. Hardesty about the competitive nature of the Sr. Instructor Promotions and the apparent lack of an appeal process. These concerns were echoed by others in attendance, accompanied by a desire for more transparency.

Special Topics

Executive Council: President Lennox presented the results of the Poll of all faculty regarding their opinions of Provost Parikh and his job performance. With over 35% of those

polled responding (109 of 309), more than half (60 of 109) reporting an “unsatisfactory” rating of the Provost’s job performance, and over 72% (79/109) reporting a negative opinion of the Provost’s performance (rating of either “poor” or “unsatisfactory” in regard to performance). President Lennex then reiterated that these results are merely faculty opinions and not a formal job review. She said she likes to view this polling data as “constructive criticism” and her hope was that the Provost would have been there to respond in person. This was not the case.

There was a discussion about the polling data and what should be done with the information. This concluded with a unanimous vote to make the information available on the Faculty Senate Blackboard shell and via ScholarWorks. There was a concern raised that the University would have it removed, so we shall see.

There was no old business nor new business to address. The meeting adjourned at 5:27 pm.