

**Executive Committee Minutes
Faculty Senate
November 20, 2023**

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met remotely on Monday, November 20, 2023 at approximately 4pm via Zoom.

PRESENT: J. Blair, V. Grabeel, L. Jones, L. Kay, R. Lauk, J. Marion, S. McGuffin, G. Spira, Sara Zeigler, and special guest Dana Fohl

ABSENT: J. Brent*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Senator Spira moved approval of the October 23, 2023 minutes as written, seconded by Senator Lauk. **Motion carried unanimously.**

REPORT FROM THE PROVOST: Sara Zeigler

There will be a *Thank a Professor Reception* on November 30th at 4:30pm in the Giles Gallery. Over 500 students participated with over 300 faculty recognized.

Several work groups are being formed as a follow up on some of the Board meeting items from last week.

- A drafting team on Academic Regulations is being formed. This group will be faculty dominant. Further information will be shared once the members are confirmed.
- Bethany Miller, Jennifer Wies, and Matt Sabin are working on collecting data on sabbaticals, how they operate, and how they contribute to the mission of the university and our strategic investment. Once the information is available, if we determine the regulation needs adjustment, the information will be shared with a larger group. If not, the information will be shared and then compiled for the Board's February meeting.
- A work group is being formed which will focus on student preparedness (academic and otherwise). The group will have a faculty co-chair and will have extensive faculty involvement, especially from areas that work with first-year students as well as the GSD course area. More information will be available soon.

Both the Senate and Staff Council have had an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed academic calendar. Most of the feedback received has been positive, and we will go from there very shortly.

The LMS Work group report will be available soon.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion Items

- *Issue with Targeted Scholarships for Underrepresented Groups*
Dana Fohl was in attendance to provide a brief update on a recent Supreme Court decision.

Earlier this summer, the Supreme Court decision related to University admissions stated that race is no longer constitutionally permissible as an exception to the equal protection clause which says race shall not be considered. The offshoot of the Supreme Court's opinion is that this will now be kind of the instruction to all of the other US Supreme Court circuits and districts to say this is now our opinion that diversity is no longer constitutionally permissible under an equal protection clause analysis.

As such, the University has recently been reviewing scholarships that were set up with criteria that required certain protected class statuses. As with anything, this is a very fact-specific analysis that depends on how things are worded. In some instances, by using broader language we can try to accomplish the intended goal without being specific and targeting a protected class.

Similarly, we had already been engaged long before the decision this summer in work related to gender-based scholarships. In 2020, the University received a complaint from the Office of Civil Rights at the US Department of Education that we had 19 foundation-funded gender-based scholarships that preferred females. So, we worked through a very similar analysis with the Development Office and Student Success to address that issue. That complaint was successfully resolved 3 or 4 months ago. We were either able to clarify that some of the scholarships they thought were specific to females were broader than that, or we were able to rework some of the language in those scholarships to accomplish the same thing without being too specific.

After learning about the Supreme Court's decision and the need for the university to update the language in a number of our scholarships, the Executive Committee was in agreement to invite Dana Fohl to the February 5th Faculty Senate meeting to share this information with the Senate.

Announcements

- *December Guest Speaker*
 - SGA President Camden Ritchie was tentatively approved.
- *December Election for Committee Vacancies*
 - Executive Committee – (1 vacancy to replace Senator Brent)
 - Faculty Welfare – (1 vacancy to replace Senator Walz)
 - Rights & Responsibilities – (2 vacancies to replace Senators Brent & Walz)

REPORTS:

- *Academic Quality Committee – Senator Blair*

The meeting was canceled this week and rescheduled for next Monday at 9am via Zoom.

- *Budget Committee – Senator Lauk*

If approved by the committee, there may be a resolution coming forward to request that a member of the Budget Committee be present during any BloomBoard conversations.

The budget overview workshop with Barry Poynter is scheduled for Monday, November 27th.

- *Elections and University Nominations Committee - Senator Spira*

The committee met on November 13th to review the internal procedures for our area and to set our schedule for the spring semester. In addition, we discussed the university committees list and determined that the charge is complete after learning that the updates will now be handled through Slate.

Our next charge is working on the adjunct faculty election in the spring semester.

- *Faculty Welfare –Senator Jones*

The committee met on November 15th. Wayne Willis, the representative from Assured Partners, came to speak about some interest on off-label use for some of the medications for weight loss. Currently, those GLP-1 meds are not approved by the FDA and are not covered. They are, however, looking at that because there have been some changes in some medications, particularly the Mounjaro brand which has been re-labeled with a different name and may be approved, but it isn't currently covered. If they do decide to cover it though, there will have to be some parameters.

Mr. Willis also noted that deductibles decreased and co-pays decreased on insurance this time. There is also some discussion about possibly expanding some coverage to some things that traditionally have not had coverage.

The committee also discussed the survey regulation that's being drafted. One of the members indicated that the president is adamant that he wants things that are on surveys to be actionable, not just surveying for the sake of surveying.

The tuition waiver and how it works was briefly discussed again.

There was also some discussion about the Policy on Policies and the lack of faculty input to that change that occurred most recently. The committee is looking into how that happened, and when that happened, and who was involved with those decisions.

- *Information Technology Committee –Senator McGuffin*

IT is not meeting next week due to Finals Week, but they are in the process of developing a Google form to get some feedback from instructors about positive and negative experiences with IT.

- *Rules Committee – Senator Grabeel*

As Senator Grabeel did not have an update, Chair Kay provided some information. One of their charges was to consider updating the archaic language in the Handbook. Senator Bishop-Ross stated that if the language is updated there it will also need to be updated in numerous places on the Senate website.

Chair Kay asked Senators Jones and Spira when they needed to have access to the updated handbook to link in their accreditation documents. Both senators noted that they were able to link directly to policies rather than to the actual handbook.

- *Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Chair Kay reporting for Senator Brent*

The draft of the Grievance regulation has been distributed. The regulation went up for comment and some comments were received. Then, we met and updated some things, and then I sent Lauren Keeler a couple of comments on the latest version. There were some questions about the transparency piece and having the data summaries released.

We came up with a system that once we've received 10 cases cumulatively over time, then a data summary can be released. By doing it cumulatively over time that would preserve confidentiality.

The committee hopes to have a summary regarding Policy 1.1.1 in January. They have a list of policies and regulations that have changed since June 2021 when Policy 1.1.1 was updated. They also have documents for approximately 17 other institutions that state Faculty Senate is responsible for these things.

University Committees

- *University General Education Committee – Vice Chair Blair*

The next meeting is scheduled for February 1st.

Other Reports

- *Senate Chair Report – Lisa Kay*

On the 8KBY28 working group, Vice Chair Blair and I had collected a lot of information from various people already about their feelings about the push to have 8,000 online students. We held two focus groups and the reactions were overall negative and skeptical. Dean Baggett decided that we could have more time so that we could also send out a survey. So, we worked on some questions and there was talk about possibly tacking those on to another survey. Those questions were then added at the end of the ECU Online Survey. After realizing that, I sent a note out to make sure everyone knew those questions were at the end of that survey. Please encourage everyone to fill out that survey so they can voice their concerns.

The Lunch and Learn on October 30th went pretty well. The President got some tough questions there. We're planning on doing another Lunch and Learn in the spring.

There continues to be a lot of comments in the virtual suggestion box. Chair Blair shared that one came in earlier asking if we're still focused on our service region for our mission and vision statement or if we're more focused on outside of our service region and how to compete with bigger more prestigious name brands in the market. Another one received today was asking for a campus-wide forum on the 8KBY28.

A lot of different things have been brought up in our problem solvers meetings. Some items discussed include advising student worker positions, timing of rolling the summer grades, recruiters, space relocation, Chautauqua, reimbursement from the university for travel (flights, hotels and meals), concerns about class and lab fees being swept, student organizations being forced to bank off campus now, and curriculum processes.

- *Faculty Regent Report - Jason Marion*

The Board met last Wednesday. In regards to the reports, the Staff Council indicated that Chair Eaves had met with them. Chair Eaves also mentioned that he was meeting with the Chairs Association maybe this week. If the Executive Committee or Senate is interested, that might be an outlet for communicating as well.

On the personnel actions, there was a loss year-over-year of nine full-time faculty, and a loss of one part-time faculty year-over-year as of October 31 this year versus last year. In addition, there was an increase in deans and administrators by six to the tune of \$1.02M. We also saw an increase of about \$2.5 million in exempt with 31 more employees. When I asked where these positions were housed, the president stated that Vice President Poynter has that information and can provide me with a summary.

There was a lot of attention to Academic Affairs at this particular meeting from the Board. There was some concern about the Sabbatical program recommendations, whether or not all colleges are eligible to get Sabbatical program opportunities, and what is the review process.

With regards to the CAA report, I moved to send the MA in the History Program back to the CAA to require a vote but the motion failed.

I also put together a resolution that the program review process, the creation of new programs, and the closure of programs should have some sort of new policy or regulation that puts them all under one roof with more transparency, and that under no circumstance should the Board of Regents be the first body nor should the faculty regent be the first faculty member voting on whether or not we should be opening or closing any programs. The Board agreed with that. I also indicated in my resolution that whatever they come up with should involve faculty, and should involve at a minimum CAA and Faculty Senate. So, I'm not for sure where that will go, but there could be a new regulation or policy. The Board expects that to happen.

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, February 21st.

ADJOURNMENT:

Senator Grabeel moved to adjourn at approximately 5:30pm, seconded by Senator Jones.