

Fairmont State Faculty Senate

Minutes, 3/17/26

Members Present: Bob Niichel (Comp Sci Math), Barb MacLennan (Behavioral Sci), James Long(CSM), Deb Hemler (Ac Affairs), Gina Fantasia (COBA), Joe Furguson (Aviation), J Tomlin(Soc Sci), Jason Bolyard (ET), Paul Reneau(HHP), Stephnanie Jones(CSM), Kylie Ford (AAD), Jason Frazer (COBA), Alyssa Schwartz(Humanities), Troy Snyder (Humanities), Rebecca Cepek (ACF) , April Townsend (Nat Sci), Kara Burgard (BSN), Lisa Eades (ASN), Attending remotely : Angela schwer (BOG), (guest) podlakowsii, Candace Moench (Ed), (Guest) Frank Lafone, (Guest) Dianna Phillips, Chris Moss (Soc Sci)

Guests: Beal, (Proxy for Nuzum), Alan Bedford (Provost), Tim Oxley(Fac Affairs), Denise Kirhoff (BSN) Rogers (BSN), Mike Davis (President), Susan Ross (Ac Affairs), Statler (proxy for Laferre)

1.-3. Order, Agenda, Minutes: Agenda approved. Feb. 10 minutes approved (with changes to attendance by Tomlin).

4. Address of President: Mike Davis: Day of Giving raised 880k.(10% more than goal). 400k of that toward academic units/scholarships. Pres. speaker series is coming up April 7 is next (artist in residence) 6 pm at FC. April 28th sec of tourism at 6pm. Close to finalizing dates and speakers for next year. Goal to have that out to everyone by end of semester. Carrer Fair March 25 (10-5) at fc. Legislature closed its business and Gov has signed those bills he's going to. Senate budget gave 800k more this year than before. Funding formula fully met. FSU 2nd or third in state for amount allocated per student. Bill in Senate creates statewide fund for women's olympic sports. Senate Bill 490 uses part time students to use pell grants for microcredentialials. Bill 402 workforce readiness act allows for flexibility in using microcredentialials as part of 4 year degree. House bill 4002 WV collaboratory, think tank to address Higher ed issues. Housed at Marshall, but FSU involved. House 4006 WV aeorspace and manufacturing act-support for aviation programs in state (stalled in senate). House 4087 WV Ireland educational alliance. Partnering with institutions in Ireland for shared programing. Must be working with Pierpont. HB 4592 requires mapping of campuses for emergency response. FSU already in process of implemenitng this. HB4510 waives fee wavers for 60 year olds and above for credit or non credit course enrollment.

5. Old Business:

Major Items: Curriculum Proposals 25-26-04, 05, 06, 07(as listed on Agenda). Motioned for approval for second reading and seconded. Approved by voice vote.

6. New Business:

Major Items- Curriculum Proposals (listed on Agenda). Reneau and Frazer move to approve for first reading. Approved by voice vote.

Minor Items-

A) nominating committee. Need service on committee for nominating officers for next year. Long, Townsend, Snyder, Moench, Ford volunteer.

B) bylaws discussion. VP Position clarifications needed. Committee Chairs also have a communication and visibility issue. Bylaws call for “semesterly” reports but this is not done in practice. Some committees do not regularly meet. Joint committees (bookstore committee, for instance) are also oddly operated and less visible. Bylaws should reflect more clearly solutions to these issues. Handbook Committee, as another example, is poorly functioning because of this joint relationship between senate and provost. Handbook committee is being discussed as becoming fully senate run, with final approval by Provost’s office for any changes/policies made. Question from Reneau about keeping these committees from becoming unwieldy. Nichel says there are unique challenges created by the handbook itself. MacLennan asks if any funding is available to survey other universities for guidance on how they run these things. Provost Bedford agrees with need for clarifications, especially given the relationship between appointment letters and the handbook. He has experience overhauling a handbook with an outside consultant, and would be open to a similar process here. Need for faculty perspective, but also a legal and administrative perspective as well. Fantasia says she participated in recent revision of the handbook under Robert Baker. Difficult process to repeat so quickly after. Provost Bedford points out the appointment letters tell him that the handbook is not functioning as it should. Hemler points out this document was generated by Provost office in previous years, and was modified year to year by that office without faculty input. It was sometimes ignored by different provosts, and then was brought back but under the purview of the senate rather than the provost’s office. Fantasia argues it was always designed to be created in dialogue rather than one office or the other. Phillips agrees with Provost Bedford about appointment letters and handbook, adds that we brought in outside voices and analysis as well as including faculty senate and provost’s office. Fantasia suggests an advisory committee that works under the purview of the Provost, rather than senate taking over the process of the handbook. Hemler says having been on the committee, it gets bogged down very easily without Provost purview and shared governance. MacLennan suggests need for faculty with legal experience on such a committee. Townsend adds need for more experienced faculty on the committee with institutional knowledge as well. Fantasia adds more about what serving on a committee should mean. Bedford suggests Senate role is advisory, but that the engagement of

faculty is crucial for the Provost to defend the product of the committee as truly shared in perspective and governance. Townsend speaks to the communication issues between committee chairs, suggests possible training/guidelines for responsibilities of committee chairs. Hemler says when she first started the last year's committee chair convened a meeting and previous chair reported back to senate who new chair was and communicated those responsibilities. Niichel says a fix could be as simple as giving clear powers to convene an all chairs meeting to someone. Fantasia observes that on Bookstore committee, the bookstore means books/textbooks, and accordingly there should be a larger faculty presence on that committee. Schwer asks if we could ask BOG to remand those duties to another committee. Clarification from Pres. Davis about BOG mandate on textbook affordability committee (not bookstore committee). Question from Tomlin about whether faculty vote should be a majority on committee. Broad agreement on this. Question from Schwer about whether VP position should be next in line for President of Senate. Statler says VP might be well placed as president of the nominating committee. MacLennan asks if VP should be explicitly listed as proxy for president as exofficio on all committees. Niichel says VP could also be given a supervisory role over the committees. Motion from Fantasia to create adhoc bylaws committee. Seconded by Townsend. Niichel offers ammendment to include the committee members in the motion. MacLennan adds that President and VP should serve on bylaw committee. Niichel agrees. Committee would be Niichel, MacLennan, and Townsend. Motion passes by voice vote.

7. Provost: Dr. Bedford: Take a moment to celebrate promotion and tenure/sabbatical decisions. List followed. Updates since last meeting. Special session was meaningful and the input from faculty mattered. One of hotter items was external employment aspect. That is a part of WV law, although FSU is given some leeway about how to implement this. Working group is being planned to work through this issue. Concerns so far are all manageable. Remote location work is being reviewed right now, with goal to make determinations before end of march so statuses for next year are known. Gray DI contract is about to be sent to AG to work through potential concerns, and should be cleared pretty quickly. 5-6 months to get funding plugged in to implement those decisions/data. AI needs to be addressed. Adam Podlowski has volunteered to organize a survey to hear feedback on AI policy from faculty. Academic Implentation Plan, Faculty Senate has capacity to be more involved and Provost is in favor of this.

8. Reports:

a) Treasurer: Frazer: Gala is April 11 6-10 pm \$30 per ticket/\$50 per couple. Link to sign up will be sent out by President Niichel. Clarification from Eades about rafflebaskets for each department.

b) ACF: Cepek: President Davis covered all topics to discuss.

c) BOG: Schwer(remote): Schwer report is submitted electronically and read aloud by Niichel.

d) SGA: no reps present.

e) Staff Council: Nuzum (proxy by Beal): Report to be sent to Senate.

9. Miscellaneous:

a) strategic plan mission alignment statement: Executive committee is drafting this. To be put forward to full senate at next meeting.

b) committee on committees: Niichel sent out committee forms. Change to chair form will be needed. Two elections for personell committee. Those deans have been notified.

10. Open Forum:

Announcement from Tomlin about women's and gender studies and women's history month event featuring Annick Odom (FSU artist in residence).

Adjourned at 4:26 pm.