



## **FACULTY SENATE**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**September 12, 2022**

**Senators Present:** Ann Abraham, Bob Antenucci, Omid Bagheri, Tina Bhargava, Jeffrey Child, Lauren Copeland, Jennifer Cunningham, Ed Dauterich, Omar De La Cruz Cabrera, Kimberly DePaul, Tracy Dodson, Yanhai Du, Vanessa Earp, Julie Evey, Claudia Gomez, David Kaplan, Edgar Kooijman, Darci Kracht, Cynthia Kristof, Janice Kroeger, Velvet Landingham, Tracy Laux, Cathy Marshall, Karen Mascolo, Denise McEnroe-Petitte, Mahli Mechenbier, Oana Mocioalca, Abe Osbourne, Vic Perera, Amy Petrinec, Linda Piccirillo-Smith, Helen Piontkivska, Lydia Rose, Susan Roxburgh, Athena Salaba, Murali Shanker, Deborah Smith, Diane Stroup, Eric Taylor, Robin Vande Zande, Laurie Wagner, Theresa Walton-Fisette, Sue Wamsley, Christopher Was, Melissa Zullo

**Senators Not Present:** Angela Guercio, Todd Hawley

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley; Senior Vice Presidents: Lamar Hylton, Mark Polatajko; Vice Presidents: Sean Broghammer, Doug Delahanty\*, Amoaba Gooden (represented by N.J. Akbar), Tiffany Murray\*, John Rathje, Charlene Reed, Peggy Shadduck, Willis Walker (represented by David Ochmann), Stephen Ward; Deans: Christina Bloebaum, Allan Boike, Ken Burhanna, James Hannon, Versie Johnson-Mallard, Mark Mistur, Mandy Munro-Stasiuk, Diane Petrella, Eboni Pringle, Amy Reynolds, Alison Smith, Deborah Spake, Manfred van Dulmen

\*Interim

**Ex-Officio Members Not Present:** President Todd Diacon, Vice President Valoree Vargo, Dean Sonia Alemagno

**Observers Present:** Paul Farrell (Emeritus Professor), Victoria Akinkuolie (GSS), Seth Young (USG)

**Observers Not Present:**

**Guests Present:** Denise Bartell, Sue Clement, Jef Davis, Chris Dorsten, Carla Goar, Pamela Grimm, Angie Hull, Karen Keenan, Valerie Kelly, Dana Lawless-Andric, Babacar M'Baye, Amy Quillen, Thomas Janson, Therese Tillett, Deirdre Warren

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Laux called the meeting to order at 3:27 p.m. in the Governance Chambers, Kent Student Center. Attendees were also present on Microsoft Teams.

#### **2. Roll Call**

Secretary Dauterich called the roll.

### **3. Approval of the Agenda**

Chair Laux asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded (Smith/Mocioalca). The agenda was approved unanimously.

### **4. Approval of the Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2022**

Chair Laux asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 9, 2022, Faculty Senate meeting. A motion was made and seconded (Mocioalca/Smith).

The minutes were approved unanimously as written.

### **5. Chair's Remarks**

Chair Laux presented his remarks. [\[Attachment\]](#)

There were no comments or questions.

### **6. Provost's Remarks**

Provost Tankersley began by stating that each and every student who attends Kent State should graduate. She added that we need to do all we can to support learning while doing so with integrity as faculty defines it. She said that our students are not a homogenous group; they are the fortunate few with available resources and the meritorious many who made it through without those benefits. The meritorious many, however, are not excelling in the same way as the fortunate few are. They are leaving Kent State University at much higher rates. Our freshman enrollment numbers are strong, but we are not retaining students from the meritorious many at a satisfactory rate. The declines in retention rates in the past few years are consistently from underserved groups, students with high financial need, and first-generation students. Not all students come with a background that can let them be successful without help from faculty. We cannot assume all students need the same level of assistance. We still must and will maintain our academic integrity as defined by faculty, but students must participate in their own education with integrity and honesty. To help them, we as faculty can improve the learning environment with evidence-based but easy-lift practices. She gave two examples: (1) messaging students early and often; and (2) letting students know that you have faith in their ability to learn the material. Overall, she urged faculty to help students know that faculty believe they can do the work and that they belong. She added that it would also help to destigmatize the difficulty of the work. Students should know that they are expected to ask faculty for help. However, faculty cannot expect them to know it implicitly. We must tell them explicitly.

Provost Tankersley also introduced Denise Bartell, the new Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. She said that Associate Provost Bartell was on the leadership team for the Student Experience Project ([studentexperienceproject.org](http://studentexperienceproject.org)), which is a project designed to increase support for students. Associate Provost Bartell has brought some of that knowledge and experience to Kent State. Finally, she added that the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has been working with strategies to support student belonging based on recommendations from Lisa Nunn's work and

our own institutional data. More information about the Student Belonging Project at Kent State can be found on the CTL [website](#).

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Roxburgh asked how high-need was defined.

Provost Tankersley said that the term refers to high financial need.

Senator Roxburgh said the explanation was helpful and that this was the most intractable need students face. She asked how we could improve retention for those students.

Provost Tankersley replied that these students need financial support, and Kent State University is investing 5 million dollars per year for four years to help those students with financial need. In addition, if students come to Kent with high financial need, Kent is offering support to help students from underserved groups manage the systems with which they are unfamiliar.

Senator Roxburgh asked whether a plunge in retention for high-need and first-generation students after 2018 could have been a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Provost Tankersley replied that this was possible, but she added that a lot of things had been done to intervene at that time. She invited Dean Eboni Pringle to explain some of the efforts that occurred.

Dean Pringle said that the cohorts that had reached parity did so partially through a Key Bank emergency grant that helped to cover gaps for those students and work with them in a case management approach that gave them individual service before they had to come and ask for help.

Senator Roxburgh thanked them for their responses.

Senator Du thanked them for sharing the information and asked whether we had information about what percentage of overall students fell into each group spoken of on the graph.

Provost Tankersley responded by saying that about a third of Kent Campus students fall into one of the categories, and regional campus numbers are slightly higher.

Emeritus Professor Farrell said that significant drop-offs in retention were in first-generation and high-need students at Kent and the regionals. He asked what the group defined as underrepresented was on the graph provided by the provost.

Provost Tankersley replied that underrepresented students were African American, Latin American, Native American, and multi-racial.

Emeritus Professor Farrell asked how many students suffered from a lack of online resources during the pandemic, and said that this might have affected the numbers.

Provost Tankersley said that might be possible and that IT worked hard to get bandwidth to those who needed it. She added that the point of the graphs was that we have not been graduating as many students as we should after they are admitted, despite the pandemic. We still need to continue to let students know we can support them, that they can help themselves, and that they can help one another.

Dean Munro-Stasiuk added some examples of students who recently left programs in Arts & Sciences after only one year and did not return to Kent. Over 100 students in four majors from high-need, first-generation, and underrepresented populations left the university entirely.

Provost Tankersley thanked her and added that we need to avoid decreases in enrollment by keeping the students we have. The demographic cliff is coming, but we need to work hard to prevent it from hitting us harder. We are here to graduate students with integrity on their parts and ours.

There were no further comments or questions.

**7. Old Business: Action Item: Academic Visitor Policy Proposal (presented by Interim Vice President of Research Doug Delahanty)**

Interim Vice President Delahanty explained the proposal. The policy clarifies what an academic visitor is and provides processes and responsibilities for involved parties. There had been no previous policy.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal (Smith/Evey).

Interim Vice President Delahanty then invited comments or questions.

Senator Mocioalca asked when the stricter controls were implemented for admitting visitors. She added that some visitors this year were unable to access Canvas from off campus.

Interim Vice President Delahanty responded that the policy under consideration did not pertain to her question—the policy is only for hosting visitors on campus.

Senator Salaba asked about the definition and responsibilities of hosts. She wanted to know whether hosts are responsible for visitors following policies, procedures, and federal laws. She was especially concerned about this responsibility for faculty hosts.

Interim Vice President Delahanty responded that the host would work with the hosting academic unit and the Office of Global Education (OGE) to address those issues. It would not be solely the responsibility of the faculty member.

Senator Salaba suggested that the policy language should be revised to reflect this.

OGE Associate Director Jef Davis said that there are a few things the faculty initiator should do including alerting the university if the academic visitor disappears or transfers to another program. He said that these requirements for faculty hosts are listed on the agreement that the faculty goes through when initiating contact with the visitor.

Senator Salaba suggested that the university should be clearly shown to be responsible rather than the faculty.

Senator Smith said she would advise no faculty member ever to be a host with the language as it is in the policy. She recognized it was not the intent of the policy, but she stated that the language needs to be changed.

Senator Smith moved to table the proposal until revised. Senator De La Cruz Cabrera seconded the movement to table the motion.

Senator Du asked about background checks for security for visitors and suggested those should also be in the policy.

Interim Vice President Delahanty said security checks are covered in the policy; OGE handles these.

Senator Du asked whether Human Resources (HR) was doing these checks or not.

Associate Director Davis explained that HR does that for all new potential employees and that the restricted party screening is done by OGE for people who come on Kent State University's visa sponsorship.

Senator Du thanked them for their responses.

Senator Piontkivska reinforced previous comments that the policy needs to be revised to reflect previous concerns as well as the visa status of the faculty. The academic host should contact the OGE office for help with compliance to keep faculty from being solely responsible for policy and regulation compliance.

Emeritus Professor Farrell pointed out that the visitor, according to the policy, would not fit the category if the professor was retired and not working for a university institution or business as specified in the policy.

Associate Director Davis said that he was unaware of this.

Interim Vice President Delahanty said they would look into revising the policy.

Senator Mocioalca said the faculty host's duties need to be clearly specified.

Interim Vice President Delahanty thanked her for her comment and said that they will work on that in the revision.

There were no further comments or questions.

The motion to table the policy passed unanimously.

## **8. New Business**

**a. Discussion Items: Racial Equity Statement and Land Acknowledgement Statement (presented by Dr. Carla Goar and Dr. Babacar M'Baye on behalf of the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)**

Dr. M'Baye presented the two statements with the goal of receiving endorsement from the senate. He explained the history behind the statements and how they were created. He also explained the makeup of the groups who created them and the purpose behind the statements – to recognize the wrongs that were done in the past and what we need to look out for in the future with regards to racial equality and land acknowledgement. He mentioned that some segments of the university have already adopted early versions of the statements.

He then invited comments or questions.

Senator Smith said the land acknowledgment statement was clear but was wondering about the extent of the racial equity statement. She asked where that statement ended.

Dr. M'Baye responded that he would reach out to Vice President Gooden for clarification.

A motion was made to endorse the land acknowledgment statement (Smith/Dauterich).

Senior Vice President Hylton asked whether this statement aligned with a previous statement that the Native American community at Kent State had created.

Dr. M'Baye said he would reach out to Vice President Gooden for clarification.

Senator Dauterich moved to table the motion until clarification was received. Smith seconded. The motion to table passed unanimously.

Senator Piccirillo-Smith said that the university website could put this up as a statement to show the work that had been done so far. This would allow people to link to more information.

Senator Roxburgh agreed with Senator Smith and said that a mission statement should have a more enduring quality and recommended that a link be provided to more current efforts once the statement is published.

Dr. M'Baye agreed to return to senate with clarifications.

There were no further comments or questions.

**b. Presentation on Academic Attendance Accommodation Process (Amanda Feaster, Director of Student Accessibility Services)**

Director Feaster explained the changes to policy. In particular, the attendance policy needed to be revised to increase interaction between the student, Student Accessibility

Services (SAS), the instructor, and relevant academic administrators. The revisions have been passed at the state legislative level, so there was no need for senate to vote.

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Walton-Fisette asked what would happen if students' needs could not be accommodated in a way that did not change the fundamental nature of the course. She also wanted to know whether when SAS consulted with department chairs and relevant academic administrators, those administrators made the final decision.

Director Feaster said that SAS's consultations with academic administrators were simply meant to get more information about how a course is being taught, but agreed that the portion regarding approval from program coordinators could be taken out of the process. She added that if a student's needs could not be accommodated in a course, SAS would work with the student to find another accommodation or another course where the needs could be met.

Senator Wamsley asked whether the process applied to online courses.

Director Feaster said that it did, but that what they are asking for might not be needed in an asynchronous course. Possible options might differ depending on the course.

Senator De La Cruz Cabrera appreciated that the process is more interactive but was worried that now challenges may come if a professor turns down a request or challenges it. He did not want to second-guess student requests, and he also wanted things to be fair for all students.

Director Feaster responded that this only applies to flexibility with attendance deadlines, presentations, or group participation. Everything else remains as it did in the past.

There were no further comments or questions.

**c. Presentation on Student Athletes, NCAA Rules and Expectations for Academic Integrity (Theresa Walton-Fisette, Faculty Athletics Representative)**

Senator Walton-Fisette presented on the expectations for student athletes and on her role as the Faculty Athletics Representative. She made it clear that student athletes must be treated in the same manner as other students. They should have no special benefits or different standards. She also explained that it was her role as Faculty Athletics Representative to report to the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee as required by the university and the NCAA. She also explained the role of Senior Associate Athletics Director Angie Hull, who oversees student athlete academic support services.

She also said that coaches and members of the coaching staff are not permitted to contact instructors with concerns about athletes per Kent State policy. She added that absences for participating in actual competitions are excused, but team meeting and training sessions are not. Senior Associate Athletics Director Hull can be contacted with questions in this area.

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Smith thanked her for the explanation. She asked what should happen if a faculty member has a complaint about a request for an accommodation from athletics staff. She gave an example from her past where a coach wanted make-up exams proctored at the football center.

Senator Walton-Fisette said to contact her first. She invited Senior Associate Director Hull to say more.

Senior Associate Director Hull agreed with Senator Walton-Fisette. She said that coaches would not be proctoring exams and that she would work with faculty to provide acceptable alternatives to situations like the one mentioned by Senator Smith.

Senator Du asked about attendance. He wanted to know about some of the attendance policies and what was included in traveling time and practice/attendance time.

Senator Walton-Fisette clarified that as far as travel time goes, students are scheduled to miss as few classes as possible, and if they are not actually in transit to a competition, they should be attending class. She asked Senior Associate Director Hull to speak about practice time.

Senior Associate Director Hull made it clear that practice time does not take precedence over class attendance.

Senator Wamsley asked how we know whether athletes are doing what they say they are.

Senator Walton-Fisette replied that communications will come from both the student and academic services in athletics.

Senior Associate Director Hull added that communication about travel and competition dates will be provided to the instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

Provost Tankersley praised the student athletes for their high academic achievement and mentioned that many of them are recognized for that achievement as well as their athletic work.

Senior Associate Director Hull invited anyone interested to visit her office and experience what the office has to offer.

There were no further comments or questions.

## **9. Announcements/ Statements for the Record**

Senator Salaba announced that the Faculty Senate Retreat will take place on October 28 at 3:00 p.m. More details are forthcoming.



Provost Tankersley praised the tech workers and staff who helped the meeting go smoothly.

Chair Laux thanked Bryan Molnar for the success of the hybrid meetings.

Dean Burhanna announced upcoming events including [Constitution Day](#) will take place this week as well as an [Affordable Course Materials Summit](#).

Dean Pringle announced that On November 7-11, Kent State will have a First-Generation Celebration. Nominations are being accepted until September 16 for the [First Gen Awards](#).

## **10. Adjournment**

Chair Laux adjourned the meeting at 5:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Edward Dauterich  
Secretary, Faculty Senate

[Attachment] Chair Laux's Remarks

On Monday August 22 I participated in the New Faculty Orientation that was held in the Student Center on the Kent Campus. It was great seeing the names and many of the faces of the approximately 60 new full-time faculty members hired this academic year.

Among the comments by Provost Tankersley at the afternoon reception, and I paraphrase, Provost Tankersley said that a goal of Kent State University was that all students who are admitted to Kent State graduate from Kent State. She immediately added that the pursuit of this goal must be as we maintain our academic standards as defined by the faculty.

I mention this for two reasons. First as most of you are aware, we currently have academic leadership that has embraced shared governance and the importance of the faculty voice. We have University leadership who has since the beginning of the pandemic implemented the Flashes take care of Flashes theme. Certainly, there may have been an occasional misstep along the way, but that can only be expected at a university as complex as ours.

Second, during my time at Kent State I have espoused to my students as well as my faculty colleagues and certainly to administrators in the academic sector that I have consistent expectations that my students must participate in their own education if they are to succeed in my class. I expect that they attend class, that they do not cheat or plagiarize. That they do not lie to themselves or to me about their academic endeavors in my class. I expect their actions to exhibit personal integrity.

Given my various roles at Kent State I have on occasion been contacted by faculty who were concerned by the actions of some of their colleagues. Colleagues who delayed the start of the semester by cancelling class meetings because they did not care to start the semester mid-week. I like to think that those faculty members either took the appropriate sick time or provided their students with substitute learning opportunities in place of the cancelled class meetings. I like to think many things that may in fact not be true. We have all heard examples where students act irresponsibly by starting our

Thanksgiving break a few class days before the break actually commenced. Yearly I hear of the similar irresponsible behavior by faculty.

Among the great advice that I have been given over the years by more than a few previous Senate Chairs was this from Deb Smith. During her time as chair she never wanted to waste the opportunity of speaking to leadership, administration leadership and faculty leadership alike. Thus, I do not want to waste the opportunity to proclaim something which many of my colleagues have shared with me over the years. It is this: If we expect honesty, integrity and personal responsibility to be exhibited by our students, then surely, we must expect the same from ourselves and our colleagues. I believe that all of us in this room, in person or virtual, have an obligation to help create an environment for everyone in which unethical behavior is unacceptable and to create such an environment by holding ourselves to high standards.