



FACULTY SENATE

Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2021

Senators Present: Ann Abraham, Omid Bagheri, Tina Bhargava, Jeffrey Child, Tammy Clewell, Timothy Culver, Jennifer Cunningham, Ed Dauterich, Omar De La Cruz Cabrera, Kimberly DePaul, Tracy Dodson, Yanhai Du, Julie Evey, Pamela Grimm, Angela Guercio, Mariann Harding, Edgar Kooijman, Darci Kracht, Cynthia Kristof, Velvet Landingham, Tracy Laux, Karen Mascolo, Mahli Mechenbier, Oana Mocioalca, Deepraj Mukherjee, Abe Osbourne, Vic Perera, Linda Piccirillo-Smith, Helen Piontkivska, Susan Roxburgh, Athena Salaba, Murali Shanker, Denice Sheehan, Deborah Smith, Eric Taylor, Robin Vande Zande, Laurie Wagner, Theresa Walton-Fisette, Haiyan Zhu

Senators Not Present: Todd Hawley, David Kaplan, Janice Kroeger, Cathy Marshall, Diane Stroup, Melissa Zullo

Ex-Officio Members Present: President Todd Diacon; Senior Vice President Mark Polatajko; Vice Presidents: Sean Broghammer*, Amoaba Gooden, Lamar Hylton, Rebecca Murphy*, John Rathje, Charlene Reed, Peggy Shadduck, Jack Witt; Deans: Sonia Alemagno, Christina Bloebaum, Allan Boike, James Hannon, Mark Mistur, Mandy Munro-Stasiuk*, Diane Petrella, Eboni Pringle, Amy Reynolds, Alison Smith, Manfred van Dulmen *Interim

Ex-Officio Members Not Present: Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley; Vice Presidents: Doug Delahanty*, Valoree Vargo*, Willis Walker; Deans: Ken Burhanna, Deborah Spake *Interim

Observers Present: Paul Farrell (Emeritus Professor), Claire Jackman (GSS)

Observers Not Present: Brandon Allen (USS)

Guests Present: Sue Averill, J.R. Campbell, Sue Clement, Emmanuel Dechenaux, Chris Dorsten, Jo Dowell, Tameka Ellington, Christopher Fenk, Nick Gattozzi, Jennifer Hebebrand, Thomas Janson, Lynette Johnson, Mike Johnson, Tess Kail, Michael Kavulic, Valerie Kelly, Dana Lawless-Andric, Michael Lehman, Babacar M'Baye, Lawrence Marks, Shelley Marshall, Jennifer McDonough, Susan Perry, Amy Petriner, Amy Quillin, Jim Raber, Dirk Remley, Kara Robinson, Therese Tillett, Julie Volcheck, Annie Zwisler

1. Call to Order

Chair Grimm called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m. on Microsoft Teams.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Dauterich called the roll.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Chair Grimm asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded (Kracht/Kristof). The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of the May 10, 2021 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the meeting (Bagheri/Mukherjee). The minutes were passed unanimously as written.

5. Chair's Remarks

Chair Grimm delivered her remarks. [Attachment]

Chair Grimm then invited President Diacon to speak.

6. President's Remarks

President Diacon began by describing a recent visit he had taken to the Porthouse Theatre. There, he met with former Faculty Senator Kathy Kerns who asked him what it was like to be the president during the pandemic. He told her that he had thought of three real notable dynamics during the pandemic. One was the speed with which big decisions had to be made. The second was the amount of effort it took to reach those decisions and then implement them. The third was the dedication of faculty, staff, and employees to the students of Kent State. He said that it occurred to him then that the Porthouse Theatre was a microcosm of the Kent State situation. He said that it was a real testimony to the producing artistic director, Terri Kent, and the executive producer, Eric van Baars, that they produced "Quilters" and "BKLYN the Musical," respectively, as well as they did. They had to make early decisions about whether to have an in-person season. They had to decide where the season could be performed in person if it was to be so and whether it would be preferable to have no one in the audience and broadcast it virtually. They even considered building mobile plexiglass boxes for each actor to protect the actors from one another. After vaccinations became widely available, they decided to have in-person productions with no limits on attendance.

They had to limit their shows to casts of seven or less because of the timing of the auditions, and they could not provide housing for actors and actresses, so they had to work with local talent, particularly current and recently graduated Kent State students.

He said that the excellence and dedication of everyone involved in the productions was clear. He mentioned that reviewers unanimously praised the Kent State actors and actresses under Eric van Baar's direction, and he reiterated that this is why it is a microcosm of Kent State in the pandemic; there were big decisions to make, great effort to implement the decisions, and a total commitment to excellence.

He finished by encouraging the Kent State community to celebrate their work and successes and to attend upcoming productions at the Porthouse Theatre. He then turned the meeting over to Chair Grimm.

Chair Grimm thanked the president and invited Associate Provost van Dulmen to speak.

7. State of the Pandemic and Prevention Strategies for the Fall (Manfred van Dulmen, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs & Dean for the Division of Graduate Studies and Julie Volcheck, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs & Director of University Health Services)

Associate Provost van Dulmen spoke on the state of the pandemic and prevention strategies for the upcoming semester. He first addressed what changes had occurred since May 2021. Fully vaccinated individuals can now be together without restrictions. CDC and state guidelines changed so that athletic venues and restaurants are all open without restrictions in our area. There is no longer a health emergency in the state of Ohio, and there are no longer health requirements in place. Domestic and international travel has reopened, and Kent State has resumed study away and abroad programs. There are concerns about the Delta variant and increases of cases domestically and internationally, but so far, the vaccine is showing effectiveness for this and other variants.

He said that for the upcoming school year, positive cases on campus are expected. Unlike Fall 2020, however, we will not have certain health measures in place such as deep cleaning, required face coverings, or required physical distancing. Like Fall 2020, we will have bipolar ionization units that are now installed across campus. He added that unlike the previous fall, an effective vaccine is widely available. The university's focus is on promoting the vaccine, and they are currently working on another educational campaign and a vaccine incentive strategy, which will roll out in the next few weeks.

He continued by saying that we control what we can control, and we currently require screening for non-vaccinated students in the residence halls, but we also have to be mindful of state regulations including the recently introduced House Bill 244, which would no longer allow universities to treat vaccinated and unvaccinated students differently. The bill goes into effect on October 12th, but it will only apply to vaccines not fully approved by the FDA.

In addition, health requirements may change based on other triggers like the disease rate, quarantine space on campus, absenteeism, and supply availability within the parameters of what the university can do given changes in state law.

With regard to available actions for instructors, Associate Provost van Dulmen said that they cannot impose other health requirements, including taking temperatures, asking for vaccination cards, and requiring students to wear face coverings. Instructors may ask students to wear face coverings, but they cannot be required. Instructors can also ask individuals to stay home when they are symptomatic, or someone is a close contact of someone who tested positive.

He added that instructors will be asked to fill out floor plans with assigned seating in classrooms to assist with contact tracing. Contact tracing information will be shared in early August through a communication and will also be available on SharePoint. He added that the university's COVID-19 response team works directly with the Health Commissioner and Julie Volcheck, and they will make a flow chart available, so everyone knows the pathway to follow when somebody in the classroom tests positive or when there are concerns about close contact in the classroom. He then invited comments or questions.

Senator Kracht asked whether faculty can ask students to wear face coverings.

Associate Provost van Dulmen replied that they can ask students to wear one, but they cannot require it.

There were no further comments or questions.

8. Enrollment Management Update (Sean Broghammer, Interim V.P. for Enrollment Management)

Interim Vice President Broghammer addressed the senate on the state of enrollment at the university. He said that for first-year students over the last 7-8 years, we have had an average enrollment of 4,200. For Fall 2020, that number dropped to 3,870, a loss of about 400 students. He said that the challenge around the pandemic is that it is not contained to one year. Because those 400 students were not here last year, from a retention perspective, the university is already behind by about 320 students. This means that the university is already down 3% in our first-year retention. They would have expected 81 to 82% retention on that class, but they currently stand at 78.6%. There is some growth in the size of the freshman class from last year. They are anticipating a class of 3,950. They hope to get closer to the 4,000 mark and there still may be opportunity there.

He continued by saying that as of mid-July last year, we had a persistence rate of about 77.6%. Just under 16,000 students registered for Fall 2020. This year, school starts with 19,620. Officially registered as of last week were about 14,457, and the persistence rate is 73.7%, for a drop of about 4%. First-year students are having a little bit higher of a drop in the persistence rate. Overall, while the university is down from the 2019 registration numbers, Interim Vice President Broghammer says that we expect to arrive at numbers similar to Fall 2020 in the upcoming days.

He continued by saying that from 2019 to current enrollment, the university is down 7% on undergraduate enrollment with similar numbers on the graduate side. Regional campus registration looks to be down around 8% for the coming year. He said that in order to stabilize enrollment, they have created a strategic enrollment management plan that is meant to bring various areas of the campus together to address their concerns. More information on this will be forthcoming in Fall 2021.

He then invited comments or questions.

Senator Smith asked whether the decline was due to the pandemic, expected changes in demographics, or both.

Interim Vice President Broghammer said that the demographic shift in the number of students was not expected until 2027-2028, and that the pandemic likely moved that forward as more families are questioning the outcomes of college education.

President Diacon added that where we see an unusual weakness this year is in the registration of continuing students. He said it appeared that the university is going to set a record for the six-year graduation rate on the Kent campus (67.5 %), which is higher than a dozen flagship universities in the rest of the United States for a university of our profile. He added that what we have noticed in the current continuing students are weaknesses that were not seen in the previous 9-10 years, so the drop in enrollment is mostly driven by the pandemic.

Interim Dean Munro-Stasiuk asked how we are faring compared to other schools in the region.

Interim Vice President Broghammer replied that he believed a majority of the public institutions will be behind from last year's numbers.

Chair Grimm asked about strategies that some schools were offering, such as free tuition, and wondered how that was working for them or whether it was impacting Kent.

Broghammer said that many schools are offering more scholarships to buy enrollment, which is probably not sustainable in the long term.

There were no further comments or questions.

9. Budget Update (Mark Polatajko, Senior V.P. for Finance and Administration)

Senior Vice President Polatajko began by discussing budget planning for the university. On June 30th Governor DeWine signed a budget bill for 2022-2023 biennium, which provided a 1% increase in the state share of instruction (SSI) for public schools and universities. The tuition and fee caps specifically for the tuition guarantee had a limit of about 3.8%, and Kent State's board of trustees at the June meeting approved about a 2.9% increase for incoming freshman cohort. This is good news from an access and affordability perspective. The Ohio College Opportunity Grant was increased by \$500 per student overall. He added that one of the guiding principles for the upcoming budget is to limit new hires, so the university can provide raises to the non-represented employees and offer other work/life enhancements. He said that the university will continue from an effectiveness and efficiency perspective and that looking at our cost structure will limit administrative and non-academic expenditures through a continued emphasis on reorganization and shared services. Balancing the budget continues to be a priority.

He said that we are projecting about a 5% decline in enrollment for the Kent campus compared to fiscal year 2021, and our regional campuses will be looking at about an 8% decline. We will increase tuition by 2.9% for incoming students, but we are not increasing any tuition or any fees for our current and continuing undergraduates and graduate students, nor are we increasing the non-resident surcharge. The 1% increase in SSI each of the years means about \$1.5 million in additional revenue for Kent State in fiscal year 2022 and then in the second year of the biennium, another \$1.5 million. The base budget will increase two years from now to about \$3 million for the upcoming year and about 1.5 million in terms of investment income. In the upcoming year, there will be a proposal to return to the budget target of about \$9 million of realized investment gains. Those are capital gains, interest income and dividends to support our operations. There is also good news about auxiliaries, which appear to be returning to normal as they relate to other revenue sources. For example, residence hall occupancy has increased to 5,000 at this point in time compared to only 2,800 last year. Athletic revenues are coming back to the levels they were pre-pandemic. Total revenues for our Kent and regional campuses will only decrease slightly.

On the expenditures side, the university will continue to support the collective bargaining agreements and align resources as contractually negotiated. A 2% increase will continue to be modeled for non-represented personnel in terms of health care benefits. In addition, as a result of some very successful voluntary separation incentive programs, there should not be an increase in the amount budgeted in fiscal year 2022 compared to where we were at in terms of fiscal year 2021. As far as scholarships, the university will continue to strive for financial aid optimization. He

said that the focus will be on aligning our resources to those core activities of access, completion, and research. The next steps are to finalize the budgets, and then communicate the information to stakeholders for feedback.

He then invited comments or questions.

Senator Vande Zande asked about new hires being limited and wanted to know whether that was across the board or only for non-represented employees.

Senior Vice President Polatajko said the hiring limits were mostly on the non-academic and administrative side.

There were no further comments or questions.

10. Presentation and Discussion about IT Governance and University Council on Technology (John Rathje, V.P. for Information Technology and Shelley Marshall, Associate Lecturer for Computer Technology and the University Council on Technology Chair)

Chair Grimm invited Vice President Rathje and Shelley Marshall, chair of the University Council on Technology (UCT) to speak.

Vice President Rathje began by discussing IT governance at the university. He said that a good IT governance framework really helps organizations better manage risk and align the efforts of IT to support the overall mission objectives of the organization itself. He said that the current objectives are to ensure that we have a broad representation of input, but at the same time, to have focused input and representation as it relates to different domains of need. Across the university, it is intended to provide transparency into projects and spending. It will also help improve leverage of university investments to ensure that the dollars that are available are being used well. IT governance should also focus on helping improve the experience users have with technology and technology services. He added that the planned governance structure will involve a coordinated approach across the university, so we can protect it's mission, needs, and goals and do not have disjointed efforts that compete for attention or priority. Another goal is to help IT continually improve through feedback and to ensure that the technology, resources, and the team that supports technology are doing all the right things.

Vice President Rathje added that part of the change would be a proposal related to the UCT. He said that the UCT was established in the 1990s, and it had not had much change in its approach to operations or aligning with other efforts on campus. He said that the proposed adjustment was meant to focus the membership and the leadership of the group around the educational and academic mission. This will help the UCT to assess needs, look at recommended changes, and improve in its use of technologies.

He then turned the discussion over to Chair Marshall.

Chair Marshall gave a brief overview of the UCT and said the council wanted to change its mission and bylaws to allow for a change in membership. The original membership reflected a council that was working more at the administrative level rather than acting as the interface between the administration and faculty, which is what it is at present. The goal of the proposed changes is to increase the membership numbers for faculty leaders who are interested in technology,

technology in the classroom, technology and research, and enterprise technology. They would also like to continue working closely with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Continuing and Distance Education (OCDE).

The presenters then invited comments or questions.

Senator Kristof asked how the libraries would be involved in the changes.

Chair Marshall said that they hope to have multiple library members on the committees and subcommittees.

Emeritus Professor Farrell asked whether they were returning to the original UCT mission and structure, and he expressed the hope that the UCT would be consulted on email, remote logins, security, and other things that might impact the research mission in addition to being focused on learning management systems and teaching systems.

Chair Marshall thanked him for his comments.

Vice President Rathje added that the inclusion of voice is a principal objective of IT governance, and he said that we need to understand that IT does not just deal with applications any longer or just a network any longer. It is a system of systems that they work with, and the approach to organizing and structuring this governance is to improve overall understanding and the ability to input, so the experience for students, faculty, staff, and researchers can be the best it possibly can be given all of those moving parts.

Chair Marshall added that the UCT wants to remain broad in its focus to help meet those goals.

Vice Chair Laux said that the UCT cannot make policy and that some technology in the classroom might not be under UCT's governance. He also applauded the idea of recruiting additional faculty to the council to help it gain a more diverse voice.

Chair Marshall agreed that they do not make policy and are a recommending body.

Senator Kracht asked what we are doing to prevent ransomware attacks.

Vice President Rathje said that the increasing threats of such attacks are very real, but the IT team is working on it. There is no such thing as absolute coverage, but he maintained that the area of concern is one in which the university will continue to invest resources.

There were no further comments or questions.

11. VPN Update Chief Information Security Officer Robert Eckman and Executive Director, Support, Infrastructure and Research Technology, Jim Raber

Chief Information Security Officer Eckman was unable to attend the meeting. Executive Director Raber began by saying that his group is working on some improvements on the VPN in order to make sure the VPN software allows good off-campus access to the university network. The current VPN solution does not support multifactor authentication based off some behavior that they have

observed. Over the next few weeks, a new VPN will be rolled out, and it will support such authentication.

He added that the new VPN works in a similar way to the old one where a username and password are entered for access. The big difference is that once those are entered, it will then prompt for multifactor authentication. This will be in the form of a code that you would get through SMS text. It will require some new software to be installed, which they are looking at automating for Windows users. Software for Mac users and others will be available at software.kent.edu.

He then invited comments or questions.

Emeritus Professor Farrell asked whether retired faculty would continue to have access to the VPN.

Executive Director Raber said they would.

Senator Bagheri asked where to download the new software from.

Executive Director Raber told him that it can be downloaded from software.kent.edu.

There were no further comments or questions.

12. Old Business

There was no old business.

13. New Business: Discussion Item: Faculty Ethics Committee Purpose & Procedures Proposed Changes (Susan Roxburgh, Professor for the Department of Sociology and the Faculty Ethics Committee Chair)

Chair Grimm invited Senator Roxburgh to discuss proposed changes to the purpose and procedures of the Faculty Ethics Committee (FEC). Senator Roxburgh said that the FEC had difficult meetings and hearings over the past year, and she added that issues arose that begged a change in policies and procedures. One concerned how to handle the requests for additional materials from both parties at hearings. The committee would like to prevent additional materials beyond what they asked for from being submitted in order to avoid a potential deluge of materials and responses. A second concern was about providing materials in a timely manner. The FEC would like to replace the phrase “timely manner” with “seven calendar days” in the committee description. A third item addressed the number of witnesses called by respondents and complainants. The FEC recommends that no more than five witnesses be called by either the complainant or the respondent. A fourth concern was the role of the chair in regard to witnesses. The FEC recommends that it is the role of the chair of the committee to explain and discuss the role of witnesses with the complainant and respondent. A fifth concern is that members of the FEC do not always know when the decisions are made about what they recommend. She added that the FEC previously had not specified in the policy that the results of the complaint be conveyed to the complainant, the respondent, the Chair of Faculty Senate, and the Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. This has been made clearer in the proposed changes. The Vice Provost

for Faculty Affairs would then communicate with the Chair of Faculty Senate regarding the decision on the FEC's recommendation.

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Smith suggested that it would be helpful if there was a mechanism for the complainant or respondent to request additional witnesses and then have it considered by the committee. She also suggested that a timely response in reporting the decision may not always be possible because of contractual processes.

Senator Roxburgh thanked her for her comments and agreed to consider the suggestions.

Senator Salaba asked a question about how complaints and responses were distributed and who should have access to those.

Senator Roxburgh said that one of the issues that they struggled with was that some materials from one side of a complaint could potentially be confidential. The complainant, however, had the right to receive all the materials that have been provided by the respondent and vice versa. In turn, both have the right to share that information with their witnesses

Senator Salaba added that she was also concerned that the portion of the explanation about how results are communicated only discusses the procedure of what happen in the case of an affirmative answer. She wondered whether or not it would be possible to inform only the complainant and respondent in the event of a negative response rather than the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

Senator Roxburgh said they could consider the idea and thanked her for her response.

Senator Mocioalca asked whether the restricted number of documents had to be submitted by a particular deadline or period.

Senator Roxburgh responded that the committee could request what they needed, but the purpose on the restriction of documents was to prevent an endless exchange of supporting materials as new materials are received.

Senator Mocioalca expressed the concern that the FEC might not know what documents to ask for.

Senator Roxburgh responded that they probably would because the chair of the committee would Be having confidential conversations with the respondent and the complainant and could relay the information to the rest of the committee.

Senator Mocioalca thanked her for the explanation.

Senator Shanker suggested that the core of the problem was not the number of documents, but whether or not the complaint and response were themselves factual.

Senator Roxburgh agreed that this was an important problem, but she added that the process was not a trial or legal procedure, and policy should not be written that would make it one.

Senator Sheehan asked whether three witnesses would be enough.

Senator Roxburgh responded that the hearings only last thirty minutes, so it was up to the complainant and the respondent to use their time wisely when considering how many witnesses they want to include.

Chair Grimm expressed her appreciation for Senator Roxburgh, Senator Salaba, and their work on the FEC.

There were no further comments or questions.

14. Announcements/Statements for the Record

President Diacon mentioned that this was Associate Provost Averill's last meeting and said that he wanted to call attention to her years of service for both the union and in her role as the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs.

Chair Grimm echoed the president's sentiments and added that we would all miss Associate Provost Averill.

15. Adjournment

Chair Grimm adjourned the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Edward Dauterich
Secretary, Faculty Senate

Attachment