



## **FACULTY SENATE**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**November 8, 2021**

**Senators Present:** Ann Abraham, Omid Bagheri, Jeffrey Child, Tammy Clewell, Timothy Culver, Jennifer Cunningham, Ed Dauterich, Kimberly DePaul, Tracy Dodson, Yanhai Du, Julie Evey, Pamela Grimm, Mariann Harding, Todd Hawley, Edgar Kooijman, Darci Kracht, Cynthia Kristof, Janice Kroeger, Velvet Landingham, Tracy Laux, Cathy Marshall, Karen Mascolo, Denise McEnroe-Petitte, Mahli Mechenbier, Oana Mocioalca, Deepraj Mukherjee, Abe Osbourne, Linda Piccirillo-Smith, Helen Piontkivska, Susan Roxburgh, Athena Salaba, Murali Shanker, Denise Sheehan, Deborah Smith, Diane Stroup, Eric Taylor, Robin Vande Zande, Laurie Wagner, Theresa Walton-Fisette, Christopher Was, Haiyan Zhu, Melissa Zullo

**Senators Not Present:** Tina Bhargava, Omar De La Cruz Cabrera, Angela Guercio, David Kaplan, Vic Perera

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley; Senior Vice President Mark Polatajko; Vice Presidents: Sean Broghammer\*, Doug Delahanty\*, Amoaba Gooden, Rebecca Murphy\*, John Rathje, Charlene Reed, Peggy Shadduck, Jack Witt; Deans: Sonia Alemagno, Christina Bloebaum, Bryan Caldwell for Allan Boike, Ken Burhanna, James Hannon, Versie Johnson-Mallard, Mark Mistur, Mandy Munro-Stasiuk\*, Diane Petrella, Eboni Pringle, Miriam Matteson for Amy Reynolds, Alison Smith, Deborah Spake, Manfred van Dulmen \*Interim

**Ex-Officio Members Not Present:** President Todd Diacon; Senior Vice President Lamar Hylton; Vice Presidents: Valoree Vargo, Willis Walker

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

**Observers Not Present:** Brandon Allen (USS)

**Guests Present:** Emma Andrus, Aimee Bell, Nathaniel Cooper, Chris Dorsten, Jo Dowell, Feodor Dragan, Jennifer Hebebrand, Thomas Janson, Tess Kail, Karen Keenan, Jennifer Kellogg, Valerie Kelly, Javed Khan, Dana Lawless-Andric, Judy Lightner-Noll, Jennifer Marcinkiewicz, Shelley Marshall, Babacar M'Baye, Susan Perry, Amy Quillin, Jim Raber, Nathan Steele, Therese Tillett, Eric van Baars, Molly Wang, Deirdre Warren, Kevin West, Sonya Williams

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

Chair Grimm called the meeting to order at 3:22 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 Grimm asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded (Sheehan/Bagheri). The agenda was approved unanimously.

### **4. Approval of the Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes of October 11, 2021**

Chair Grimm asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2021, Faculty Senate meeting. A motion was made and seconded (Smith/Sheehan).

The minutes were approved unanimously as written.

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

Chair Grimm delivered her remarks. [[Chair's Remarks](#)]

She then turned the microphone over to Provost Tankersley.

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

Provost Tankersley began by discussing the state of higher education across the state. Cuts to the number of faculty, operating budgets, and the number of programs were made at Youngstown State and the University of Akron. Both schools also faced sharp enrollment declines. Demographically, half of the states in the country including Ohio are predicting a decline in university enrollment of at least 15% over the next eight years. She added that we should expect declines, but we will not be in the same position as other universities. We have strong shared governance which is keeping us afloat. Faculty have a strong critical voice that will be part of proactive strategies moving forward. She suggested that three ways to do this are as follows: (1) streamline yet maximize programs of study; (2) enhance our revenues; and (3) support our students' progress. She then elaborated on each way that was mentioned.

One way to streamline and maximize programs is to examine course offerings and ensure that enrollments are strong and that program requirements are current and updated. She suggested that it might help to deactivate courses that have not been offered for a few years, but she added that other opportunities might exist through cross-listing courses. She also mentioned the importance of investing more in programs that are in high demand, which would bring in more students and increase the university's revenue.

Provost Tankersley then discussed the need that students will have to supplement their education over the course of their careers after graduation. She said that the university is fortunate to have hired Dr. Peggy Shadduck as Vice President for Regional Campuses and the Dean of the College of Applied and Technical Studies. Vice President Shadduck will be leading new initiatives in the area of lifelong learning, including the development, where appropriate, of microcredentials and industry certifications.

She finished by placing an emphasis on the need for increasing our efforts to support students. One way to do this is to enhance their sense of belonging. She said that a sense of belonging is not simply about finding a group of friends or a club to attend; rather, it's the sense of belonging in the college classroom itself. Many of Kent State's students question whether they belong in the classroom. As an example, she pointed out that 42% of Kent State's students identify as the first in their families who will earn a bachelor's degree. They are first generation students, and they often need help navigating higher education. They do not have the role models or the encouragement that other students might have from their families.

She then suggested ways that faculty could enhance the sense of belonging for all students. These included small things like arriving to class a few minutes early to be available to answer questions, acknowledging the difficulty of the work in the course, or requiring students to come to office hours in order to demystify the act of asking for help. She added that research has shown that students who feel like they belong have more success and graduate at a higher rate than students who do not feel such a connection. She said that this was apparent from institutional data at Kent State; a key reason students consider leaving is because they lack a sense of belonging.

She then gave examples of other efforts to enhance students' sense of connecting to the university. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is currently engaging in a student belonging project, and many faculty members in the project are already sharing ways they enhanced belonging in their classrooms on the CTL website. The provost encouraged faculty members to add their voices to the discussion. She also mentioned an upcoming workshop on fostering student belonging; an email has gone out about the workshop, which will be directed by Dr. Lisa Nunn. More information on this is also available on the CTL website.

She finished by thanking the faculty for all their hard work, and she offered strong encouragement with regard to future success.

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Roxburgh thanked the provost for her comments, but she said that sense of belonging might be a proxy for other student concerns. She said that many students were not handing in assignments, and that when she asked them why, it was clear that families and individuals at the graduate and undergraduate levels are under stress and may have mental health concerns due to economic realities as well as other problems.

Provost Tankersley thanked her for her comments and agreed that there are many mental health concerns being seen on campus. She also agreed that students are not following through with work at times and that they sometimes seem overwhelmed. She said we need to both help them know they belong and let them know that we have improved services for mental health if they need help.

Senator Roxburgh added that the economic piece is a large part of the problem because students work so much that they might not be able to take advantage of the efforts to help them feel like they belong.

Provost Tankersley agreed and said that belonging is more than friends and clubs. She repeated the idea that even small things that faculty can do to help during the school day would be worthwhile.

Vice Chair Laux mentioned upcoming decreases in enrollment and the financial impact it might have on the university; he wanted to address the debt the university is taking on. Across Ohio, universities having financial issues are often having them because they took on too much debt. He cautioned the university against incurring more debt than we can afford.

Provost Tankersley agreed and invited Senior Vice President Polatajko to speak about the matter.

Senior Vice President Polatajko emphasized that we have issued no new debt over the past couple of years and that no new debt is planned in the near term.

Provost Tankersley thanked Vice Chair Laux and Senior Vice President Polatajko for their comments.

Senator Piccirillo-Smith mentioned that many of our colleagues are experiencing problems with students similar to those that Senator Roxburgh had mentioned. She added that faculty are having problems trying to assist students with their difficulties in addition to being in front of a screen for the last eighteen months, and she said that this was probably lowering the quality of the students' educational experience. She added that there is also a concern over faculty burnout.

Provost Tankersley thanked her for her comments. She agreed that we cannot ignore the problem, and she said that we need to openly acknowledge the difficulties we are facing, so we can better address them.

Senator Wagner said that we need to reevaluate our approaches and stop pretending the pandemic is over. She argued that students need us to think about them in a much bigger way. She added that there is too much focus on technology and not enough on building relationships—too many students and faculty have been traumatized.

Provost Tankersley thanked her for her comments and agreed that trauma-based support is important.

There were no further comments or questions.

## **7. Educational Policies Council (EPC) Action Items:**

- a. College of the Arts: School of Theatre and Dance – Acting-Intended for the Returning Professional - M.F.A.: Renaming the major to “Acting” per accreditor’s approval (Fall 2022). (Eric van Baars – Director, School of Theatre and Dance)

The director explained the rationale for the name change. The name is simply being changed to align with the national accreditation body’s recommendation.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the item (Sheehan/Piccirillo-Smith).

Chair Grimm then invited comments or questions.

There were no comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

- b. College of Arts & Sciences: Department of Computer Science - Game Programming - Minor: Establishing 20-credit undergraduate minor (Fall 2022). (Javed Khan – Chair, Computer Science Department and/or Feodor Dragan – Professor and Curriculum Coordinator, Computer Science Department)

Chair Khan said this was an attempt to increase the disciplinary presence of the department. They are trying to attract some students outside of computer science to the minor. Sports administration and game design programs were in support of this.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the item (Dauterich/Kracht).

Chair Grimm then invited comments or questions.

There were no comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

**8. Old Business: Discussion Item: UCT Remote Proctoring RFP Committee (Shelley Marshall – Chair, University Council on Technology and Jim Raber – Executive Director, Support, Infrastructure, and Research Technology)**

Chair Marshall and Executive Director Raber gave an update. Executive Director Raber said that there is an RFP (request for proposal) rationale for selecting remote proctored testing services. The state requires competitive bidding for the technology, and current contracts expire in Summer 2022. There was also a 400% increase in usage at Kent State over the last three academic years. In addition, there has been a lot of innovation in available tools. ProctorU, Proctorio, and Respondus Monitor were all used in the past and are still being used. A committee will be created to collaborate with UCT (University Council on Technology), and its membership will be finalized by the end of November. Then, they will develop the committee's understanding of the requirements and decide on achievable dates. Information about the past RFPs will be collected and reviewed before Winter Break. Then, the RFP will be crafted. Market research, student surveys, faculty surveys, listening sessions, and constraints (security of data, accessibility, financial) will all be examined. The RFP and evaluation rubric will then be published. Responses will be reviewed, and finalists will be determined. Eventually, the successful vendor will be notified; the product will be configured and implemented, and training and rollout will begin. He showed senate the makeup of the committee and showed evidence that it included a strong faculty presence.

He then invited comments or questions.

Vice Chair Laux said he hoped there will be strong faculty input, but he added that there may be a problem at the end of the process; there may be no one-size-fits-all solution. A complaint could possibly come from senate.

Executive Director Raber agreed that many approaches are available, and he said that the committee would try to discuss this thoroughly.

Senator Mocioalca added that she prefers having multiple options as a faculty member. She added that a second platform could be helpful.

Executive Director Raber thanked her for her comments.

Senator Sheehan asked what the burden to and support for faculty would entail, and she said those considerations would be important.

Executive Director Raber agreed.

There were no further comments or questions.

**9. New Business: Proposed Committee Description Changes:**

**a. Faculty Senate Budget Advisory Committee (FSBAC)**

Vice Chair Laux (Chair of the Committee on Committees (COC)) presented the changes to FaSBAC. He said that the committee was no longer really giving advice; instead, faculty just listened to reports more than doing anything else. He said that Senior Vice President Polatajko has been very accommodating, but that the committee was not producing the advice it was charged to produce. He explained the charge of the committee, and he argued that a change in the makeup would help the committee achieve the goals outlined in the charge. Membership changes included a change to the number of ex-officio members. In the past, the number of administrators nearly equaled the number of voting faculty. The COC's suggestion is to make many of the administrators ex-officio members and to add some key administrators. Many other membership quotas (faculty, chairs and directors, etc.) remain the same in the proposal. In-house financial advisors for different areas are also no longer needed on the committee as members. Faculty members of the committee will also be reminded that they are not representing their areas, but rather the faculty as a whole. Members will also be required to complete training to help them understand the committee's work.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change (Smith/Mocioalca).

Chair Grimm then invited comments or questions.

Senator Smith offered a friendly amendment to replace him/her with "their".

Vice Chair Laux accepted the amendment.

Vice Chair Laux added that there are no longer student members of the committee because it is a Faculty Senate committee that will advise faculty on the budget.

Ms. Jackman said that the Graduate Student Senate Executive Chair had been ex-officio and wondered whether it was a conscious decision to have that position removed.

Vice Chair Laux said it was.

Chair Grimm asked whether students could give any input if they are not allowed as ex-officio members.

Vice Chair Laux asked whether her question was leading toward a friendly amendment.

Chair Grimm said it could be.

Senator Smith said that it might not be friendly, but she would build the addition of ex-officio student members back into the membership. She withdrew her former motion and made the motion with the new addition. Senator Dauterich seconded the amended motion.

Vice Chair Laux approved.

Chair Grimm asked whether we should vote on the motion.

Senator Smith said that the information is in the old material. Since it was written, and we could see it in the old description, we should be able to vote on it.

There were no further comments or questions.

The amended motion passed unanimously.

Chair Grimm reported that the COC recommended changes to the following committees based on the need to include more NTE faculty as the demographics of faculty have changed over time. The Senate Executive Committee crafted the language.

Senator Smith proposed that all three committee changes be voted on as a block, and Faculty Senate accepted the proposal.

b. Faculty Ethics Committee (FEC)

Four NTE, at-large faculty have been added to the committee. Senior rank must be held for these faculty. TT faculty must have achieved tenure in order to serve. This aligns with the CBA. Tenured faculty will remain the majority on the committee. NTE faculty will not vote or comment on decisions about TT personnel. Consultation with the associate provost and the TT KSU AAUP president will be made if a decision needs to be reached about NTE faculty serving on a decision.

c. Professional Standards Committee (PSC)

This change simply made it possible for NTE faculty (no more than three each year) to serve. The chair will be a tenured or TT member of the senate.

d. University Libraries Advisory Committee (ULAC)

The change involved making any full-time faculty member eligible for the committee.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the three changes as a slate (Kristof/Kracht).

Chair Grimm then invited comments or questions.

Senator Salaba thanked the COC and wanted to know how members on the FEC could be informed they were not eligible for a case before the case was screened.

Chair Grimm said that there is a prescreening process.

Senator Smith added that if the respondent is TT, the NTE faculty cannot be involved in the case. She suggested the wording be changed to reflect that NTE members will not participate in a case where a TT is the respondent.

Chair Grimm changed the language of the document on the floor and said it was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Senator Smith also mentioned that the Professional Standards Committee (PSC) might not want NTE members voting on TT decisions.

Senator Laux argued that NTEs vote on senate, so they could also vote on PSC.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the amended motion (Sheehan/Kracht).

The motion to approve the changes to the slate of descriptions passed unanimously.

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

Senator Mechenbier pointed out that mail was still taking too long to get to regional campuses and wanted to know what was being done about it.

Senior Vice President Polatajko thanked her for her comment and said he will investigate and respond to Chair Grimm as soon as possible.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Chair Grimm adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Edward Dauterich  
Secretary, Faculty Senate