



FACULTY SENATE

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2022

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, Yanhai Du, Julie Evey, Pamela Grimm, Angela Guercio, Mariann Harding, Todd Hawley, David Kaplan, Edgar Kooijman, Darci Kracht, Cynthia Kristof, Velvet Landingham, Tracy Laux, Julia Levashina, Denise McEnroe-Petitte, Mahli Mechenbier, Oana Mocioalca, Deepraj Mukherjee, Abe Osbourne, Vic Perera, Linda Piccirillo-Smith, Helen Piontkivska, Susan Roxburgh, Athena Salaba, Denice Sheehan, Deborah Smith, Diane Stroup, Eric Taylor, Robin Vande Zande, Laurie Wagner, Theresa Walton-Fisette, Sue Wamsley, Christopher Was, Haiyan Zhu, Melissa Zullo

Senators Not Present: Tracy Dodson, Cathy Marshall, Karen Mascolo

Ex-Officio Members Present: President Todd Diacon; Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley; Senior Vice Presidents: Lamar Hylton, Mark Polatajko; Vice Presidents: Sean Broghammer*, Doug Delahanty*, Amoaba Gooden, Rebecca Murphy*, John Rathje, Charlene Reed, Peggy Shadduck, Valoree Vargo, Jack Witt; Deans: Sonia Alemagno, Joycelyn Harrison for Christina Bloebaum, Ken Burhanna, James Hannon, Tracey Motter for 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: Vice President Willis Walker; Dean Allan Boike

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

Observers Not Present: Brandon Allen (USS)

Guests Present: Richard Adams, Matthew Butler, Bryan Caldwell, J.R. Campbell, Jessica Cervenak, Sue Clement, David Dees, Chris Dorsten, Jo Dowell, Susan Emens, Jennifer Hebebrand, Thomas Janson, Lynette Johnson, Tess Kail, Michael Kavulic, Karen Keenan, Dana Lawless-Andric, Jennifer Marcinkiewicz, Shelley Marshall, Jessica Marzullo, Bryan Molnar, Susan Perry, Amy Petrinec, Amy Quillin, Jim Raber, Johanna Slivinske, Susan Stocker, Therese Tillett, Zhiqiang (Molly) Wang, Deirdre Warren, Kevin West, Lana Whitehead, Nicole Willey

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 (Kracht/Sheehan). The agenda was approved unanimously.

4. Approval of the Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2021

Chair Grimm asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2021, Faculty Senate meeting. A motion was made and seconded (Kaplan/Piccirillo-Smith).

The minutes were approved with a correction to attendance.

5. Chair's Remarks

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

There were no comments or questions.

Chair Grimm then turned over the microphone to President Diacon.

6. President's Remarks

President Diacon began by recommending an article in Inside Higher Ed called “The Piranha Feed” by Matt Reed which inspired some of his remarks for the day. He continued by saying that all professors have a bedrock commitment to thoroughness and getting things right. He added that one constant during the pandemic is that we do not have time to be thorough and get things exactly right. Administrators have to make their best judgment based on limited information, especially during the pandemic, but often, people making those decisions will be judged as if the future was clear. The president then reminded us how we need to guide responses during the pandemic. His recommendations are to (1) follow CDC guidelines; (2) listen to the advice of Kent State professors from the College of Public Health who serve on the Pandemic Leadership Committee; (3) be transparent about data related to the pandemic through the Coronavirus Dashboard, public appearances, Faculty Senate, and AAUP-KSU; and (4) be ready to change procedures as the situation changes—even if all the information is not available. He stressed that unanimity of opinion on the pandemic is not possible, but the open dialogue is necessary.

He then invited comments or questions.

Senator Kaplan thanked the president and said that Kent State seems to have a lower vaccination rate than some public Ohio universities. He suggested that this could be based on how metrics are determined.

President Diacon said it probably has to do with regional campuses and whether their numbers are reported differently at other schools.

Associate Provost van Dulmen added that universities vary in who they count (vaccinated fully vs. 1 or 2 shots).

Senator Piccirillo-Smith said she appreciated the president's comment about open dialogue, and she added that she participated in a recent town hall meeting and said that comments in the chat for the meeting were said by some critics to not be representative of many faculty members' voices. She said that she had spoken to people who did express anxiety over the pandemic, and that at the time, there was a sense that concerns were not being taken as seriously as had been hoped.

President Diacon said that he understood there was anxiety at the beginning of the Omicron variant surge. He acknowledged the varying levels of concern, and he said that he will continue to follow the four principles he mentioned earlier.

There were no further comments or questions.

7. Educational Policies Council (EPC) Action Items:

- a. Division of Graduate Studies: Division of Graduate Studies – Restructure and revise name; new name is the Graduate College (Fall 2022). (Dean Manfred van Dulmen)

Dean van Dulmen explained the rationale for the proposal, and he stressed that the change is being made as part of a larger program to reconsider how we treat graduate students. We are currently the only public university in Ohio that has no school or college for graduate instruction; in addition, it is part of building a better brand name in accord with strategic planning initiatives. He also listed the accomplishments and connections that have been made by the division over the last few years.

The dean then invited comments or questions.

A motion was made to approve the item (Sheehan).

Senator Smith said she is in favor of the proposal, but she wanted to know how faculty governance will take place in the college (CAC, CCC, etc.).

Dean van Dulmen said he had not yet thought about it, but he said there will be conversation with senate and other appropriate groups to make sure this happens smoothly.

There were no further comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Office of Admissions: Admission of Graduate Students – Revise policy to align with policies at other Ohio public institutions, emphasize holistic review of applications and expand access to graduate programs (Fall 2022). (Interim Associate Vice President Lana Whitehead)

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said that the policy revisions fell into three categories: (1) minimum qualification for unconditional admission; (2) test score requirements; and (3) transcript requirements. The minimum GPA for unconditional

admission was changed from 3.0 to 2.75 for GPAs at the general admission level. This allows program flexibility and access to increase, and Kent State will also align more fully with other Ohio institutions. The GRE/GMAT requirements have been waived at many schools and will be at Kent State in general, although programs may elect to require it at the university if they wish. Finally, students will no longer have to provide official transcripts from every institution they attended. From now on, they will only come from places where a degree was conferred.

She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Kaplan stated that he was uncomfortable with the change to required transcripts. He said having all the grades from other institutions is important when admitting graduate students. He suggested maybe departments could make their own decisions and asked whether we could just accept unofficial transcripts.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead thanked him and said she would consider his remarks.

Senator Roxburgh said she agreed with Senator Kaplan and asked whether there could be some condition specified under which we would require transcripts from other institutions? She said she would not be inclined to vote for the proposal as written.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said that it would be possible to leave this up to departments.

Senator Sheehan said that she agreed with the previous senators, and that it is imperative for them to know as much as possible about prospective students.

Senator Child asked whether there could be consensus around a friendly amendment to allow departments to accept unofficial transcripts so they could still get the information.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said that we are one of the few institutions that has such a strict transcript policy.

Senator Kaplan said he wants to get a sense of the bigger overall picture before voting on it. He would like unofficial transcripts to be accepted, and he suggested he was unsure whether it should be a departmental or university level requirement.

Provost Tankersley said different programs gather different types of information and said that the current proposal applies to the university as a whole, but departments and programs can still add requirements in all three areas if they want to do so.

Emeritus Professor Farrell suggested that the references to the Division of Graduate Studies needed to be changed to the Graduate College based on the motion passed earlier in the meeting.

Senator Mocioalca said she is uncomfortable with the third point and would like a clear number of years selected for which transcripts need to be sent. She added that the burden is being put on the department to collect the information.

Chair Grimm replied that the unit will never be required to gather the information. The department or program would pass the information request to the proper admissions office, and that office would be responsible for retrieving it.

Senator Mocioalca said she still disagrees if the proposal does not have a certain percentage of transcripts.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said there was a university requirement for transcripts from any university where eight or more semester hours had been taken in the past, but departments and programs have also asked for transcripts on which students received fewer credit hours. She added that unofficial transcripts would be at the purview of the programs, as would the amount of coursework required for the request of transcripts.

Provost Tankersley said that requirements are all made at the program level, and the work will still be done at the graduate admissions level. There is not extra work for the program or information lost to the program unless they choose for it to be so.

Senator Kracht asked whether there was a minimum number of credit hours that must be taken at a school before granting a degree.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said that most schools say 60 hours is the minimum.

Senator Smith said that even if it can be handled at the program level, the more flexible university policy might make programs feel pressured to follow that policy. She offered a friendly amendment to add explicit language about programs being able to choose the number of transcripts and whether or not those should be official or unofficial.

Secretary Dauterich seconded the motion for the friendly amendment.

Senator Kooijman said that he is only concerned with transcripts showing degrees. He said he thought that this was the case with all departments—only the degree granting institution matters. He said that he supports the proposal.

Senator Bhargava said she does not see the need for specific language related to transcripts because the policy already covers it.

Interim Associate Vice President Whitehead said the language could be added for increased clarity about transcripts.

Senator Smith agreed that this was the intent. Without the specific language, units will not be aware to act on transcripts or feel empowered to do so.

Senator Roxburgh said that the amendment offers a potential solution, but we also need to consider how individual units will be made aware of the change in policy.

Senator Piontkivska said she would like to make a friendly amendment to the amendment and asked whether we could generally accept unofficial transcripts unless the university suggests otherwise. She cited financial burden to students as one reason for this.

Senator Smith said she disagreed with the idea. She wanted the amendment to remain as described.

Chair Grimm suggested the following wording: "Additional transcripts, official or unofficial, may be required by the program."

Senator Smith agreed to the proposed wording for the amendment.

Chair Grimm called for a vote on the amendment.

The friendly amendment to the proposal passed.

Senator Bhargava said she had to provide lots of transcripts when applying to programs in the past, and it was prohibitive. She is concerned we will lose applicants without the passing of the proposal. She also suggested that we refer to the changes as a "different bar" rather than a "lower bar" for admissions.

Senator Walton-Fisette agreed with Senator Bhargava and added that acquiring too many transcripts is definitely difficult for some students if not unrealistic. Money and other structural factors come into play.

Chair Grimm called for a vote on the amended proposal.

The policy change passed unanimously.

- c. College of Arts & Science: Department of Sociology – Revise name to Department of Sociology and Criminology (Fall 2022). (Department Chair Richard Adams)

Chair Adams explained that the change was being made to reflect what graduate students and undergraduate majors were doing. There is a lot of recent attention to criminology as a field, and there are more hires in that area.

A motion was made to approve the change (Kooijman).

There were no comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

- d. College of Applied & Technical Studies: Social Work - B.S.W. – Establish major/degree hybrid online/on-ground on Ashtabula, Salem and Tuscarawas campuses (Fall 2022). (Program Consultant Matthew Butler)

Mr. Butler explained the need for the major and degree. He presented evidence of the demand for the major and added that many jobs are available, and they continue to increase in number. He also discussed the student demographic who might be interested in the social work offerings. He finished by offering reasons for why Kent State would have a competitive advantage compared to other universities who might offer such a program (rural focus, hybrid instructional capacity, lower cost through regional campuses). He also provided evidence of community support.

He then invited comments or questions.

A motion was made to approve the item (Mechenbier).

There were no comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

- e. University College: University Readiness Standards and Placement Assessment – Revise policy to adhere to new test-optional admissions (Fall 2022). (Placement and Testing Coordinator Jessica Cervenak)

Ms. Cervenak said the change is being done to align with the university adopting test-optional admissions.

Senator Sheehan moved to approve.

There were no questions or comments.

The motion passed unanimously.

8. Old Business: Action Item – Motion: Delete Policy 8-01.4 from the Policy Register and approve the revisions to Policy 4-02.3 (see specific proposal) to cover academic complaints University-wide. Draft Revisions to Policy 4-02.3 Administrative Policy and Procedure for Student Academic Complaints as approved by the Professional Standards Committee on January 3, 2022 (Deborah Smith – Chair of the Professional Standards Committee and Professor of Philosophy)

Senator Smith explained the past history of the motion. She presented and described the changes (redlined and clean versions were provided). Changes from the previous meeting included making the policy more accessible for graduate students and allowing deans to delegate their role to a college or campus administrator with faculty rank. She also pointed out that there is an informal resolution aspect to the policy and explained why the position of “complaint coordinator” was eliminated from the process.

She then invited comments or questions.

A motion was made to approve the item (Smith on behalf of the PSC).

Senator Mechenbier asked about whether a student had to major in the area of the complaint to serve on the committee or whether any student at a regional campus would be sufficient. A friendly amendment was made and seconded to change the language from an undergraduate “major” to “student” (Dauterich).

Senator Mukherjee asked about what would happen if graduate students were not available.

Senator Smith responded that this could be handled by each academic unit based on the availability. The policy has been made more flexible, but committees could remain as they were in the past.

Senator Guercio thanked Senator Smith and asked whether deans could delegate any or all duties with the sole exception of the final decision to an administrator with faculty rank.

Senator Smith said this is possible, and that PSC wanted to move away from the idea that there was a mediation of the discussions taking place during the process.

Senator Guercio asked for some clarification for the number of students that could be on a committee.

Senator Smith offered some changes to the language to make it clear that students could be added to committees as applicable. There would be no set number of students.

Senator Wamsley supported the policy. She asked what the faculty advisory body on regional campuses was.

Senator Smith said it would be the Faculty Council on a regional campus.

Senator Wamsley asked about the process and how it worked formally or informally.

Senator Smith explained how the steps for student complaints should work either informally or formally through a complaint.

There were no further comments or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

9. New Business:

- a. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Syllabus Statement from the Anti-Racism Task Force Transition Team Subcommittee for DEI Syllabus Statement (Nicole Willey – Professor of English)

Professor Willey explained the rationale for the statement and the history of how it developed. She then invited comments or questions.

Senator Piccirillo-Smith spoke in support of the statement.

Senator Laux spoke in support of the statement as well, but he added that language needs to permeate all areas of a culture to help transform it. He said that he noticed three university divisions (Intercollegiate Athletics, Student Affairs, and DEI) have a type of diversity statement or inclusive language, but he was concerned that most other divisions have nothing in that regard and suggested that other areas like the Office of the Provost, the Office of General Counsel, and the Faculty Senate website need a similar statement if we want any change in the university culture.

Senator Vande Zande asked whether there was any language about diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences that had been considered.

Professor Willey said that the “not limited to” portion of the statement covers it and that there was a concern about adding too many specific examples to the statement.

There were no further comments or questions.

b. Faculty Senate Resolution in Support of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Syllabus Statement (Chair Grimm)

Chair Grimm read the following resolution into the record:

“Whereas the values expressed in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Syllabus Statement are in full accord with Kent State University’s core values;

Whereas Faculty Senate recognizes the importance of conveying our institutional commitment to live by those values to all members of our community; and

Whereas the classroom, real and virtual, is the primary meeting place where students and faculty are called upon to undertake their scholarly endeavors within the context of our values; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate:

1. endorses the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Syllabus Statement developed and presented to this body; and
2. recommends the adoption of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Syllabus Statement by individual faculty in their syllabi as well as by unit administrators who develop checklists for faculty to utilize in preparing their syllabi.”

The resolution passed unanimously.

10. Announcements / Statements for the Record:

a. Elections Update

Chair Grimm announced that ballots are due February 25, 2022.

b. Survey on Student Expectations

The survey will go out on February 15, 2022.

c. Associate Provost van Dulmen announced that the process for re-envisioning the Kent Core has been started.

11. Adjournment

Chair Grimm adjourned the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Edward Dauterich
Secretary, Faculty Senate