



Kent State Stark Faculty Council Minutes

February 16, 2018, 2:00 PM

- I. Chair Warren called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.
- II. Secretary Moneysmith called the roll and determined a quorum was present.

Attendance by Constituency: I: Sebastian Birch, Kim Garchar, Lindsay Starkey. II: Bei Cai, Erin Hollenbaugh, Dee Warren. III: Matt Lehnert, Oliver Ruff, Greg Smith. IV: Jayne Moneysmith, Paula Sato. V: Lucas Engelhardt, Deepraj Mukherjee, Haithem Zourrig. VI: Greg Blundell, Chrissy Kauth, Eric Taylor.

Ex-officio: Dean Denise Seachrist, Interim Assistant Dean Thomas Norton-Smith.

Excused: Stephen Neaderhiser.

Guests: Sarah Schmidt, La Tarsha Miller, Rob Kairis, Bathi Kasturiarachi, Julie Cremeans-Smith, Clarke Earley, Jim Seelye.

- III. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Councilor Garchar
Second: Councilor Lehnert
The agenda was unanimously approved.

- IV. Approval of Minutes for the January 19, 2017 Meeting

Motion to approve: Councilor Ruff
Second: Councilor Mukherjee
The minutes were unanimously approved without changes.

- V. Chair's Report

A. **Thank You to Review Committees.** Chair Warren began her report by thanking the ad hoc FTNTT review committee once again. The committee met today to review the five candidates submitting full files for renewal of appointment. That concludes our review of faculty personnel actions for this AY. Additionally, the ad hoc President's Excellence Awards review committee met today to make recommendations on four faculty nominees. Chair Warren will summarize these recommendations and submit that summary to Dean Seachrist. Finally, she reminded everyone that we will be meeting to review merit applications on Friday March 9th. Sixty-nine faculty are eligible for merit. She thanked the tenure-track members of Faculty Council in advance for their upcoming work on merit.

- B. **RCFAC.** RCFAC met February 2, 2018. Dr. Ritchey reported that preponderant enrollment on the regional campuses was down by 159 students. He advised that one suggestion to improve enrollment and retention was to address gap funding for Pell eligible students. He said this is the gap between what financial aid pays and what the student must pay. He proposed that perhaps regional campuses could fill that gap. He stated that 500 + students across the seven campuses are affected by this, and the average gap is \$800. On our campus, it is estimated that the cost to fill the gap for our eligible students would be \$151,000. This is before any scholarships that the students might get. Dr. Ritchey said that this would not be automatic, that there would be requirements students would have to meet. (He did not know yet what they might be.)

Rachael Basiman (Salem campus) gave a presentation on a project she has been working on in reference to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL), namely a center that would encompass both resources available on Blackboard (i.e., a step-by-step process for conceptualizing, conducting and publishing pedagogical research) as well as contacts on each campus who could serve as support to faculty interested in this type of research. She has asked to have the opportunity to present information on this project to each of the regional campuses. Chair Warren suggested our spring faculty meeting might be a good venue in order to reach a range of faculty.

VI. Dean's Report

- A. **Suspension of Assistant Dean Search.** Dean Seachrist said that she understood that there were questions (and rumors) about the suspension of the search, so she wanted to put that decision into context. To do so, she covered three topics: (1) the process by which Dr. Norton-Smith became the interim assistant dean, (2) budget issues, and (3) the assistant dean search process.

(1) **Appointment of Interim Assistant Dean.** Dean Seachrist explained the reallocation of responsibilities after the departure of the associate dean on October 17, 2017, and her meetings that day with the former associate dean's direct reports, the leadership team, and Faculty Council. After meeting with the full professors on Monday, October 23, Dr. Norton-Smith emailed her expressing concerns for the campus. Two days later they met to discuss the possibility of him suspending his FPIL to assume the role of interim assistant dean, which was done after consulting with pertinent administrators and gaining the necessary approvals. It was determined that Dr. Norton-Smith's primary responsibility would be overseeing the spring 2018 schedule, ensuring classes were staffed, and collaborating with Assistant Dean Mary Southards on College Credit Plus initiatives, which also involved delivery and staffing of courses. Dean Seachrist expressed her gratitude that Dr. Norton-Smith had stepped up to help the campus in this way and noted that he had done an admirable job in the last four months as the Interim Assistant Dean.

(2) **Budget Issues.** Dean Seachrist summarized our current financial picture, noting that some unanticipated expenditures in addition to unexpected mandated expenses could result in a substantial deficit if some budgetary restrictions are not enforced. Prior to this AY, Dean Seachrist had asked members of the leadership team to cut expenses by 5%, in anticipation of declines in state support, increased expenses, and

no tuition increases, among other issues. She recently has become aware that this goal may not have been met in Academic Affairs. She has directed Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith to focus on the overload and part-time faculty budget and to tighten the course schedule so it makes the most sense in terms of efficiency for our students and the bottom line. Additional measures to reduce expenses are under discussion, and all deemed feasible will be enacted.

- (3) **Assistant Dean Search Process.** On February 2, 2018, the Assistant Dean Search committee, co-chaired by Assistant Dean Southards and Professor Vulanovic, was formally charged, and soon after Dean Seachrist was informed that the job had not been posted as broadly as it should have been. For example, it never appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. As it was becoming clear that the search may already be flawed, more issues were revealed that further jeopardized the financial health of the campus. It was also estimated that the search itself would probably cost at least \$100,000. Last week Dean Seachrist met with Assistant Dean Southards to gain her perspective as a long-time administrator who cares deeply about the success of this campus. At that meeting, Assistant Dean Southards informed her that she had decided her retirement date would be in December 2018.

Given all we are facing, Dean Seachrist concluded that this was not the time to bring someone new to the assistant dean's position. This past Monday, she explained her thinking in a meeting with Assistant Dean Southards and Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith, and she asked Norton-Smith to stay on as an interim if she could shut down the search. She consulted with Faculty Council Chair Warren, VP Ritchey, Associate Provost Averill, Debbie Schneider, Rae Ann Franks, Mary Jane Hannahs in Human Resources, the search co-chairs, and the administrative cabinet. She then notified the entire campus community that the decision had been made to suspend the search. Our goal now is to bring in someone new while Dr. Norton-Smith is still on board. With the retirement of Assistant Dean Southards, we can plan to restructure Student Services and the Academic Success Center.

Dean Seachrist then asked for questions. Some councilors and guests wondered if the reference to overloads implied that faculty were being blamed for the budget problems (which Dean Seachrist said was not the case), or questioned whether reductions in overloads in previous years offset overloads for the current year. Discussion ensued on the probable causes of the current situation and how it might be prevented in the future. Because later in the meeting La Tarsha Miller was scheduled to give a budget report that might address some of these issues, Dean Seachrist resumed her report.

- B. **Emporium Grill.** Dean Seachrist reported that Stephanie Monastra and her team have been working with Aramark, and some positive changes have been made at the Emporium Grille. For example, the salad bar has been upgraded, all soups are gluten-free (unless otherwise labeled) and a dedicated gluten free fryer has been added, the omelet bar will be returning, and a waffle station will soon debut. In addition, the grab and go cooler has many new items that are made fresh daily and in house. These items have green labels and are called "Provisions on Demand." They list all nutritional information. Some favorites are still available. Finally, the Emporium Grille team appreciates the support of our campus community. Members of the campus community

can give them a shout-out for the great service they provide at www.YourDiningVoice.com. (Also, Aramark rewards the teams at the locations with the most comments and highest scores.)

- C. **China Recruitment Trip.** During spring break, Sarah Schmidt, Bei Cai, Rob Sturr, and Dean Seachrist will be going on a recruitment trip to China, where they will look into forming additional partnerships. (Dean Seachrist noted that her spouse is accompanying them on the trip, but she is paying for him, not the campus.)
- D. **FTNTT Administrative Reviews.** Four FTNTT faculty were eligible for administrative reviews this year, three of which submitted their materials (Deb Jones is participating in the UESP and will be leaving in May). Letters have been prepared for two of the faculty, and she is working on the third.
- E. **On-Campus Housing.** On-campus housing will be discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting in March. The College of Podiatric Medicine has a proposal for on-campus housing because the nearest suitable housing for their students is in Parma. This situation has created a lot of buzz, and VP Ritchey and the provost are interested in discussing the possibility of creating on-campus housing for select regional campuses, including ours. This idea is in a very preliminary stage and there still are many unanswered questions. If it does happen, it will be set up so that other people will be overseeing the housing, and we will have no financial risk.
- F. **E-Sports.** E-sports are already up and running on some regional campuses, and VP Ritchey has said in local interviews that all regional campuses will be participating. The Regional College has already created an e-sports website. Stephen Neaderhiser has agreed to be our campus contact and to help gather information on interest from our students.

VII. Interim Assistant Dean's Report

- A. **Fall Schedule.** The Fall 2018 schedule will be published in FlashFAST on Monday, February 26th.
- B. **Meetings with Department Coordinators.** Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith intends to meet with all coordinators, looking for ways of reducing overloads and adjunct salaries, culling course sections, and ensuring that we schedule using our standard scheduling blocks. To date he has met with Lucas Engelhardt regarding the Business offerings, Mary Gallagher and Dee Warren regarding Sociology and Criminal Justice, Chrissy Kauth regarding Nursing, and English with Mary Rooks. He had Rae Ann Franks create a spread sheet detailing overload and adjunct pay by department as an aide to making scheduling decisions. These two categories account for a sizeable portion of our total faculty payroll.
- C. **Faculty Searches.** There are two searches now in various stages. The tenure-track Computer Science search has identified three candidates to invite to campus. At this juncture the Office of Compliance, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action has just

passed judgment on the diversity of the three. On Tuesday, February 13th the tenure-track Sociology search committee was charged.

- D. **COMT and Zoom Courses.** Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith will be meeting with the Regional Campuses Assistant Deans on Tuesday, February 20th to discuss the scheduling of COMT and Zoom courses. We have two possible collaborations at present: Zooming MATH 34001 and 34002 to Geauga, and developing a 2 + 2 technology program with Stark State and the Tuscarawas Campus.
- E. **Professional Activities Listed in Encompass.** Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith met with Sebastian Birch and Deepraj Mukherjee on Monday, February 12th to discuss the criteria for the inclusion of faculty professional activities in *Encompass*. They had a good discussion and came to an agreement on a recommendation to bring to Council. That recommendation will be brought to Council at the next meeting.
- F. **Observations on the Assistant Dean Position.** Finally, he has been serving as the Interim Assistant Dean for 3 ½ months—and, as Dean Seachrist's email announced, he will continue to serve in this position. He thanked everyone for their support in these past few months.

He does not want this job. But he has invested 30 years in his campus, and last October it was in trouble. He was on sabbatical, and so could step in to the position with minimal disruption to anyone but himself. Dean Seachrist will confirm that he early on pressed for an Assistant Dean search.

Once the Search Committee was composed, he informed the Dean that he would not apply for the Assistant Dean's position, because he is eligible to retire at the end of next year and it would be unfair to hold the position if he couldn't promise to stay for at least five years. Indeed, he gladly agreed to serve on the Search Committee.

As Dean Seachrist explained, it was becoming increasingly clear that his campus—our campus—was in a difficult financial situation, and she believed that his continuing in the position could contribute to a solution. He believes that too. So, he said yes. He said yes for all of his friends and colleagues—past and present—who have devoted their time and effort to making the Stark Campus an extraordinary place.

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. **PAAC.** Councilor Hollenbaugh reported that the committee is now reviewing 13 travel requests. They are meeting next week to go through the travel information on the campus website, and they also considering additional activities that might be added to our travel guidelines, such as traveling to collect data.
- B. **Committee II.** Councilor Starkey reported that Committee II has worked on both parts of their charge since the last meeting—to spearhead the creation of the next Campus Vision Statement and the next Strategic Plan.
 - (1) **Strategic Plan.** Committee II had a joint meeting with the Staff Campus Vision Committee on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 to discuss the format for the first draft of

the Strategic Plan. They decided to keep the current format, listing objectives under each of President Warren's Strategic Priorities along with some key areas of focus under each objective. Committee II and the Staff Campus Vision Committee will develop separate drafts and then have a joint meeting to compare them and create a joint draft. This joint draft will be shared with the Council for comments, and then it will be sent to the full faculty after incorporating those comments. The Staff Campus Vision Committee will also share the joint draft with other members of the university community for their feedback.

Committee II is looking forward to getting to work on the Strategic Plan, though they have concerns that they may not meet the deadline of having a final draft to give to the Administrative Group by the end of the spring semester. The gathering of perspectives and feedback has taken longer than anticipated, as has coordination with the Staff Campus Vision Committee, but these efforts will make the final version of the next strategic plan stronger. Committee II will continue to work on this charge until the end of the semester in the hope of providing a draft of the Strategic Plan that incorporates at least one round of full-faculty feedback.

- (2) **Campus Vision Statement.** Committee II took the comments received at the January 19, 2018 Faculty Council meeting and incorporated them into another draft of the Campus Vision Statement. This version was sent out for feedback to the entire faculty in the form of a Qualtrics Survey on January 31, 2018. When the survey closed on February 9, 2018, 33 faculty members had participated. The committee incorporated the feedback into a new draft on which they would like to hear your feedback.

Today Committee II is asking for Faculty Council's approval of the updated Vision Statement and approval to send it to the Administrative Group so that they can make the final decision about the Campus Vision Statement. In addition to the final version from Faculty Council, the Staff Campus Vision Committee will also be submitting the version we developed jointly, which Faculty Council discussed at the January 19, 2018 meeting.

The new vision statement is as follows:

The Stark Campus Vision:

We will inspire lifelong learners, pursue academic excellence, impart a civic-service mindset, and cultivate an inclusive environment, driving a sustainable transformation of individual lives and the world around us.

After an explanation of what changes were made to create this new version and a discussion of how it could be improved, the vision statement was amended to change the first line to **The Kent State University at Stark Vision.**

Councilor Garchar moved to accept the amended draft and to forward it to the Administrative Committee. Councilor Ruff seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Councilor Garchar also commended Councilor Starkey and her committee for their continued good work.

- C. **Treasurer/Social Committee.** Councilor Sato updated the Councilors on our fund balances, and then explained that the committee was now working on plans for the spring dinner to be held in May. She asked for suggestions for gifts for retiring faculty members. Councilors' suggestions included a donation to a campus scholarship or a donation to a charity of the retiring faculty member's choice.
- D. **Colloquium Committee.** Councilor Moneysmith read the committee's report on behalf of chair Dr. Martinez, who was unable to attend this meeting. Because of low attendance for fall colloquia, for the spring the committee decided to rotate Faculty Colloquium to take place on other days of the week to ascertain if that will improve our numbers. There are two colloquia taking place in the spring:

February 21, 2018 (5:30 pm) - Wednesday

Chris Post, Geography, and Paul Sommer, Communications, will be discussing experiential learning.

March 15, 2018 (5:00pm) – Thursday

For second Faculty Colloquium of the Spring, our presenters will be Ling Liou, HDFS, and Amy Damrow, Education. There will be an open theme for this colloquium.

As mentioned at the last Faculty Council meeting, the committee is moving ahead with updating the glass exhibit case on the 2nd floor of Main Hall. They will be showcasing work of everyone who presented in this year's colloquia.

- E. **Technology Committee.** No report.
- F. **Handbook Committee.** The committee does not have a charge at this time.

VIII. Old Business: None

IX. New Business

- A. **Sarah Schmidt: International Opportunities for Faculty.** Ms. Schmidt reported on the campus study abroad numbers, noting steady growth both in the number of students participating and the range of countries visited. Two faculty-led trips will take place over spring break. Dr. Heaphy will be taking students to Xi'an, China, and Dr. Gasper-Hulvat will be taking students to Rome, Italy. We have seen a steady growth of our ESL program and continue to develop new partnerships. We are beginning to host degree-seeking students as well. For example, this semester we have a student from India enrolled. Ms. Schmidt ended her presentation by reminding faculty of upcoming events, such as an informational luncheon on March 2 and the Run the World 5K run/walk on Saturday, April 14; all registered students are eligible to win a study abroad scholarship.
- B. **La Tarsha Miller: Budget Presentation.** Dr. Miller shared campus income and expense reports for fiscal year 2018. She explained the various line items of the budget and how and when our revenue is received. We have a goal of adding \$500,000 to our fund balance at the end of this fiscal year, which may not happen now. We currently are discussing cutting back on some line items and increasing efficiencies. Councilors and

guests posed many questions, including whether there is a line or lines in the budget where we can see overload comparisons from past years, whether transfer funds from Kent offset some of the overload costs, how the budget picture looks for next year, and how the budget and any surplus have changed over the last few years.

At the end of the presentation, Dean Seachrist indicated that faculty would be kept informed as more information becomes available.

XI. Announcements: Councilor Taylor noted that if any students want an opportunity to present their research, there is still time to submit a proposal to the student conference. The deadline is March 26.

XII. Adjournment

Chair Warren adjourned the meeting at 4:30 PM.