

**Kent State University at Stark
Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2018**

- I. Chair Warren called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.
- II. Vice Chair Hollenbaugh, filling in for Secretary Moneysmith (absent) 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. Stephen Neaderhiser, Paula Sato. V. Lucas Engelhardt, Haithem Zourrig. VI. Greg Blundell, Chrissy Kauth, Eric Taylor.

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

Excused: Jayne Moneysmith, Deepraj Mukherjee.

Guests: Cindy Barb, Rob Kairis, Clarke Earley, Rachael Blasiman

- III. Approval of agenda

Motion to approve: Councilor Lehnert

Second: Councilor Garchar

Amendment: We presently do not have minutes from the March meeting to approve (we will vote to approve them at the May meeting); suspend old business because Secretary Moneysmith is not in attendance

The amended agenda was unanimously approved.

- IV. Approval of March 16, 2018 Council meeting minutes (removed by amendment).
- V. Chair Warren's report
 - A. **RCFAC.** RCFAC met on Friday April 6th. Dr. Ritchey has been out due to health issues, so the report was quite short. The only thing he really mentioned was information on the Kent Campus budget shortfall that I am sure the dean will be speaking about in her report.
 - B. **Faculty Council Elections.** Otherwise, we are in the midst of Faculty Council elections and I should be able to report the results Tuesday or Wednesday of next week.
 - C. **Public Safety Manager.** Chair Warren also serves as chair of the public safety manager search committee (the search to replace Jim Anderson's position). We had

150+ applicants that we have narrowed down to 9 that we will be scheduling for phone interviews. The campus would like to have that position filled by July 1.

- D. **Retirements/Emeritus Status.** We have three faculty members retiring this spring (Brian Newberg, Robert Miltner, and Deb Jones). I have reached out to them inquiring if they would like to be considered for emeritus status. Two of them, Brian and Robert, have requested consideration. I am in the process of collecting materials from them (CV and letter of interest) which I will share with council prior to our May meeting for deliberation.
- E. **May Faculty Council Meeting.** Finally, at cabinet we discussed the possibility of moving our May council meeting from May 4th to May 11th, due to May 4th activities that will be occurring on the Kent campus. As our meetings are set by the handbook, I need an official motion to move the meeting to May 11th, as we will need to vote on this issue.
- a. Councilor Hollenbaugh moved to suspend the rules and move the May 4, 2018 meeting to Friday, May 11, 2018 at 2:00 PM in Conference Room #1.
Second: Councilor Garchar
Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Dean Seachrist's report

- A. **Spring Full Faculty Meeting.** Dean Seachrist stated that she received positive feedback regarding the spring full faculty meeting. She is planning a similar meeting for staff on May 15, 2018 at two times (9-10 a.m. and 3-4 p.m.) to accommodate work schedules. Julie Spotts is setting up a Qualtrics form so staff can submit questions anonymously.
- B. **Merit Awards.** This week, the dean is making the determination of the final 20% of merit funds (due to the Provost's office on April 24, 2018). Faculty will receive an official letter from the Provost regarding salary adjustments. Of the remaining 20%, the dean can distribute it at her discretion, including to those who did not apply but are eligible.
- C. **Fine Arts Building Construction Update.** Brian Gardner and Dean Seachrist met with the Fine Arts faculty and learned of some whining sounds bleeding through the duct work. Contractors are taking responsibility and fixing the problem, at their cost. Councilor Birch added that the building is beautiful and invited everyone to walk through. Dean Seachrist resumed, saying that when the Fine Arts renovation is complete, there will be a celebration of the whole building. Flaws that were identified have not yet cost the campus additional money.
- D. **Greenhouse and Gardens.** Councilor Lehnert was awarded a grant to construct a greenhouse on campus. The original site was meant to be by the existing raised garden beds, but that would cause troubles with the sewer line that would be very

expensive. The new site will be between the library and pond. Carrie Schweitzer received a grant to create an evolution garden. A local company is providing around \$2,000 worth of plants for free. The dean is also planning to bring back the memorial garden idea.

- E. **Budget Update.** The dean reported on several meetings of the Academic Leadership Group and with VP Ritchey regarding the expected shortfall of \$23 million system-wide next year. Various scenarios are being considered in order for President Warren to present a balanced budget at the June 6 Board meeting. There is talk of increasing the regional campuses' service fee 1%; if that is instituted, the Stark campus would pay 15%, and increase of \$440,000 next year. The dean said she is considering a number of options, such as restructuring some staffing areas and making use of people's talents in new ways. She is establishing a list of priorities, including 1. What do we HAVE to do? (e.g., Main Hall elevator), 2. What do we WANT to do but can put on hold? (e.g., outreach with Rising Scholars), and 3. What are some things that we are either going to STOP doing or not do at all? (e.g., eSports). The dean said she is being vigilant in investigating "pockets" of money, such as bookstore profits, and invoicing foundation fund (where gifted money resides) when appropriate.
- F. **President Warren's Comprehensive Campaign Convergence Plan.** President Warren's \$1 billion master plan, which she presented at the ALG meeting, she presented a Comprehensive Campaign Convergence plan, an aligned, synchronized, interlocking system that shows the strategic roadmap, facilities master plan (Kent Campus), and capital fundraising. As a campus, we are trying to show that we can fundraise and help achieve especially in the first priority: Strategic Opportunity for Academic Reach and Success – The Kent State Promise ties in with the comprehensive fundraising campaign:
- a. Prioritizing student success – regional campuses (especially Stark) are especially working on this goal through featured projects, such as presidential scholars, study abroad/away, dynamic education and engagement for diverse students, and rising scholars.
 - b. Elevating faculty talent (endowed professorships, chairs, faculty travel).
 - c. Igniting innovation (for examples, brain health – working on potential projects for concussion at the Pro Football Hall of Fame?).
 - d. Building the future (Kent campus – College of Business building, aeronautical engineering, MAC Center renovation, re-imagined student center).
- G. **Student Housing.** The President gave us her blessing for us to explore student housing options, but the dean said she does not expect for this to happen anytime soon.

H. **Questions.** Several councilors raised questions about the ability of the Stark campus to resist an increasing service fee, engineering vs. Regional College name, and open Rising Scholars program director position (which would be housed at the Kent campus and paid out of VP Ritchey's budget, but may or may not be filled, given our financial state). Dean Seachrist explained that the current 14% service fee is charged off our gross revenue; the actual fee is 15.8% of net revenue at present.

VII. Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith's report

A. **Schedules and Overloads.** Proposed Spring 2019 schedules were due from coordinators on April 13th. Rae Ann and Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith will again meet with coordinators to find ways of reducing unnecessary overloads and adjunct salaries, culling course sections, and ensuring that we schedule using our standard scheduling blocks. Just for your information, this process allowed us to eliminate about 124 sections (335 credit hours) from the Fall 2018 schedule—about 10% of our offerings—at a salary savings of about \$295,135.

B. **Searches.** There are two faculty searches now in various stages. The committee searching for a tenure-track Computer Science position has submitted its recommendation. The tenure-track Sociology search committee is now bringing candidates to campus. Finally, we have a potential interim Theatre Director in the works.

C. **Meeting with Regional Campuses Assistant Deans.** Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith met with the Regional Campuses Assistant Deans on Tuesday, April 10th to discuss upcoming changes in Nursing, to review enrollment in summer DL courses, and yes--Zoom. (Apparently President Warren called Zoom technology "the future of higher education" at a gathering at Geauga.) Related to Zoom, there was a training for faculty interested in teaching using the technology today at 11:00.

D. **Summer Course Enrollments.** Interim Assistant Dean Norton-Smith calculated the break-even numbers in preparation for the 2018 proportional pay letters for our full-time faculty who are teaching this summer. The Office of Academic Affairs is now working on Fall 2018 workload letters.

E. **Funding Cuts.** As was hinted earlier, the current financial uncertainties have required an amendment to full-time faculty travel. The percentages faculty will receive (e.g., up to 90% for presentations) will remain unchanged. However, a maximum of \$1,200 will be allocated for each full-time faculty member during the fiscal year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). Similarly, there has been a 5% reduction in the funds that the Campus Activities Budget Committee can recommend for allocation, dropping from \$45,000 to \$42,750.

VIII. Committee reports

- A. **PAAC.** Councilor Hollenbaugh reported that the committee is reviewing April travel requests. She reminded faculty in attendance that load lift applications are due at 5 p.m. today, and PAAC will begin reviewing those after that time. Councilor Hollenbaugh presented proposed changes on three travel-related websites. Discussion about what items were allowable and unallowable for reimbursement ensued. Councilor Hollenbaugh asked Faculty Council members to review the recommended changes and email feedback to her in anticipation of a vote at the May Faculty Council meeting.
- B. **Committee II.** Councilor Starkey presented a first draft of the strategic plan. Because the current committee is done in May, they are hoping this draft could serve as a basis for the next Committee II's work. Councilor Starkey asked Faculty Council to review the draft and come back in our May meeting with recommendations. The strategic plan will later be used to devise a strategic map. Councilor Garchar publicly acknowledged Committee II for its commendable work.
- C. **Social Committee.** Councilor Sato requested a change for the spring dinner from May 4 to May 11. Councilor Sato has not yet sent out the request for reservations. Council agreed to this change. In the past, retirement gift amounts were determined by what was available. This year, we have a lot of retirees, plus promotion/tenure, OAT/DTA, etc. If they bring a guest, that results in over \$600 (leaving \$240 in the fund). When asking for guidance on gifting, Councilor Hollenbaugh recommended she send a reminder for contributions to the Faculty Fund to increase available monies.
- D. **Faculty Technology Committee.** Councilor Neaderhiser reported that the committee is currently reviewing one request.
- E. **Handbook Committee.** Councilor Engelhardt reported on the committee's charges:
- a. Charge 1: Conference participation: Added a few sentences clarifying that summer should be treated differently because of the compressed timeline of a summer class. Also, provided a clarification for what absence means in an online class (unavailable to interact with students). Councilor Neaderhiser asked to change "will" to "may not be considered available." Dean Norton-Smith suggested "should not be considered available..." Also, Councilor Neaderhiser asked for clarification on the time per credit hour. Following discussion, it was decided to remove time reference and adopt "should." (see handout)

Adopted language:

Conference Participation. Participation in conferences is an important part of a scholar's professional growth; however, it should not be done at the expense of student instructions. Normally, classes should be covered during an instructor's absence. That may mean that conferences of more than a week or multiple conferences within one semester will be discouraged. Summer courses often meet on a compressed timeline

compared to regular semester, which should be taken into account. During a summer term, faculty who expect to attend conferences that lead to absences for more than the equivalent of a semester week should not be considered available to teach the course, except in extraordinary cases of program need. (For online courses, “absence” should be understood in terms of being unavailable to interact with students.) Travel to conferences or professional meetings should be cleared in advance with the Dean.

Motion to approve revised language: Councilor Engelhardt

Second: Councilor Ruff

The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Charge 2 – Review merit process and provide clarification where needed. The Handbook Committee presented the following suggestions for consideration:
- i. Provide directions or an Excel file to calculate SSI’s for courses (online and more recent).
 - ii. Uncompensated overload hours – Recommend deleting this and instead ask them to be discussed narratively.
 - iii. Add text block at the end of A allowing for narrative description of
 - iv. Grants in progress – apply the same rule as is used with papers. Only include grants when decisions were received during the merit period. Discussion about whether we should consider unfunded grant applications. If so, then the date they submitted the grant is significant and should be included. Decided that since we don’t get credit for papers under review, we should only include grants when decisions are made, but note whether funded or unfunded.
 - v. Split service table into uncompensated and compensated service.

Discussion – Councilor Birch recommended adding a column in teaching for load hours to make it clear how much faculty were compensated for courses. Others discussed whether we can make the changes that are needed with a provision to allow for revisions to the worksheet in response to any other SSI changes (or others). It was recommended that this document be presented to Faculty Council for review prior to the next merit process.

Clarke Earley recommended the following handbook language: “For online courses, it may be necessary to compute the mean. Detailed instructions will be provided in the merit form.” Doing so will keep up from having to update the handbook each time SSI changes.

Council decided to send these recommendations back to Handbook Committee. They will bring a revised copy back to Faculty Council at our next meeting.

F. Colloquium Committee. No report.

IX. Old business

- A. Update on meeting minutes distribution – moved to May 11 meeting.

X. New business

- A. **Rachael Blasiman, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Center.** Rachael Blasiman gave a presentation on the SoTL Center at the Salem campus. She built a Blackboard site populated with SoTL resources and a step-by-step guide. Planning to invite Stark campus faculty to be added to the Bb site via an email sent out by Chair Warren.
- B. **Ad hoc Faculty Budget Committee.** Dean Seachrist collected 10 nominations and have selected 5 members: Deepraj Mukherjee, Don Thacker, Mary Gallagher, Chris Post, and Erin Vaughn. Requesting support from Faculty Council.

Motion to support the proposed committee composition: Councilor Garchar

Second: Councilor Birch

The motion passed unanimously.

- XI. Announcements: Dean Seachrist is inviting this Faculty Council to come to her home for a reception (date and time TBD).

Councilor Neaderhiser announced that he conducted an exploratory eSports event. The Gaming Club hosted an evening of Hearthstone to gauge interest. Five students outside the Gaming Club attended. None of the students in attendance expressed interest in eSports.

XII. Adjournment

Chair Warren adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.