**Ohio University Faculty Senate**

**Meeting Minutes for Monday, August 3, 2020**

**Via Teams for Senators and**

**Livestream for General Access, 7:00-9:00pm**

1. **Vice-President & Provost Elizabeth Sayrs**
2. **Roll Call and Approval of the May 4 and July 6, 2020 Minutes**
3. **Chair’s Report—Robin Muhammad**

      A. Updates & Announcements

B. Blackboard Discussion Boards for Faculty-led Conversations: **Bill Owens**  
      C. Upcoming Senate Meeting: September 14, 2020

1. **Retirement Plan & Vendor Change Q&A – Andrew Fodor**
2. **Executive Committee - Robin Muhammad**
3. **Sense of the Senate Resolution Demanding the Reinstatement of all Instructional Faculty, Administrative Employees, and Classified Employees Whose Employment Was Terminated in AY 2019-2020 – Second Reading & Vote**
4. **Resolution to Allow Affected Faculty to Choose from the Four Retirement Plans or Remain with Current Provider – Second Reading & Vote**
5. **Resolution to Update the Faculty Handbook with Inclusive Pronouns – First Reading**

1. **Professional Relations Committee—Char Miller**

**VI.       Educational Policy & Student Affairs Committee—Betty Sindelar** 

1. **Promotion & Tenure Committee— Jackie Wolf**

**VIII.     Finance & Facilities Committee—Doug Clowe**  
  
**IX.        New Business**  
  
**X.         Adjournment**

Meeting called to order on Teams at 7:05

Senators in attendance: Bates, Blau, Brown, Casebolt, Chen, Ciroli, Clowe, Cluse-Tolar, Crawford, Cronin, Doty, Duvert, Dyer, Farrus-Brown, Franz, Gurien, Haile, Healy, Hendrickson, Hess, Hibbitt, Hiler, Hurley, Karney, Klein, Koestler, Kuruppalil, James, Lowery, Marchenkov, Matlack, McKean, McMills, McMurray-Schwartz, Michaud, Miller, Muhammad, O’Keefe, Owens, Palmer, Pritchard, Pueschel, Reader, Ridpath, Riefler, Rosado Feger, Sandal, Sarver, Schwerha, Shao-Lucas, Shaw, Sindelar, Webb, Welser, White A., Williams K., Wolf, Wyatt, You, Young

Welcome from Chair Muhammad

Meeting formats: Fall plan will give us more time to practice our online format. Looking to enhance meetings and other for a for faculty to have discussions and bring information to the faculty. One proposal: online Blackboard discussion boards and Qualtrics surveys for faculty to generate and share ideas and problem-solve around issues of budgets, tenure/promotion, and shared governance.

Today we will have several Q&A sessions: please use hand-raising icon for questions. Allows us to follow our parliamentary procedures and get to everyone. We want to provide structure without stifling conversation. Shared governance is a process important to all of us, but we want productive conversations. Aiming for “as close” to in-person experience as possible.

We have plans to continue meeting virtually as long as necessary but also have reserved a lecture hall where some faculty members would have an opportunity to meet in person, safely.

Thank Provost Sayrs and Dr. Andy Fodor for their presence.

Called to order 7:05pm

**Report by Provost Sayrs:**

**Topic 1, Fall Planning**

* Why were changes made? Three critical issues.
  + Level of disease in community, at higher levels, testing/tracing is less effective at controlling.
  + Is enough testing available to follow recommendations? Testing shortages are limiting our ability . People who know they can’t be tested, might not seek care, which makes it harder to evaluate the level of cases in the community.
  + Is testing turnaround fast enough to effectively trace/quarantine/isolate? Test numbers have been lagging, with some taking as long as 10 days to get results. Systemic delays lead to large numbers of preventive quarantines.
* It is the right thing to do for the safety of students/faculty/staff, to reduce the density of people on all campuses. Each campus considered in its own context.
* Ohio Dept. of Health has pop-up testing on Friday 8/7 1pm-6pm at Athens High School, no referral needed, no cost.
* Important dates:
  + Aug 3, All course listings updated, including changes to teaching assignments/modes. Round 1: >500 requests, round 2: >170 requests being worked through.
  + Undergrads part of Phase 1 notified by August 4th. Graduate students, Aug 7th.
  + Announce soon what Phase 2 will look like, dependent on conditions
* Understand that this is disruptive. Students are readjusting expectations and might be disappointed. Support students, by supporting faculty.
  + Remote learning workshops, incorporating Inclusive Teaching, and many include stipends.
  + >300 instructors participating or signed up. Options for graduate students with teaching assignments as well. Any instructor can get support.
  + Thanks to OIT, OII, and University Libraries have partnered.
* Central Advising Team triages questions from students/families. Answer basic questions, and refer students as needed. Families appreciate the support.
* Options for students who prefer alternative to the delayed start:
  + Ohio GAP experience
  + Start at one of the Regional campuses
  + Transfer from Community College partner
  + Deferring Admission
  + Scholarships retained for most, and supporting requests for all-online options, exemptions from 1st and 2nd year housing requirements.
* $7M in CARES Act funding distributed to students. $2M to distribute to students in Fall. Technology grants for all incoming students across all campuses.
* Increased supplemental one-time funding, including non-resident surcharges, increased support for transfer students.
* Laptop loaner will continue. Assistant Deans will be the point people, please refer students.
* If you know student whose financial circumstances have changed, please refer them to Financial Aid for a reevaluation of their Financial aid. Please help us get that out to students.
* Planninjg for Phase 2 (Sept 28) already in progress. Original charge of Fall scenario planning was to consider many different scenarios. Their work will continue to be relevant.
* Colleges have identified programs that require F2F due to accreditation, equipment, facilities, or learning outcomes will allow to prioritize for Phase 2.
* Share next week when Ph 2 plans will be announced. But please remember plans can change very quickly.

**Topic 2: Budget Planning for Upcoming Year**

* Would like to give specificity but so much is changing that it is difficult to be specific. In June, Continuing Resolution taken to Board, not a budget. Budget will be brought in August. Budget still under development.
* Cuts to SSI lower than originally anticipated, 4.38% cut instead of 20%, $8-9M cut in addition to cut from last quarter of Spring. Good news, but still a significant cut.
* Reversed housing and dining charges for students not in POhase 1, will add back as we know which students invited for Phase 2.
* Enrollment is a critical factor, this year and as this class rolls through.
* Strategic enrollment committee working with multiple scenarios, working to identify realistic scenarios. But until we know what the enrollment is actually, we won’t have a good idea.
* Budget Study Group committee of 35 people has been meeting. Historic budget trends, staffing trends and personnel cost, and poll for issues to be addressed. Thank the people involved.
* Commending faculty senate for including inclusive pronouns into the Faculty Handbook.
* Thanking committee chairs and Exec committee for their hard work over the summer.

**Q&A**

* Q1: Why are regional campus phasing in at a different pace?
  + Ans: Several reasons, but one prime consideration is that the regional campuses do not offer on-campus housing. They have de-densified by moving lectures online and bringing students in for labs. They are in different counties at different “levels”. The residence halls make Athens “denser,” most of the regional students already live in their communities.
* Q2: Does the change in financial circumstances apply to graduate students or just undergrads?
  + Reevaluating financial Aid is primarily for FAFSA students, which is primarily undergrad. Did fund a Graduate Student support fund. International students are not eligible for CARES Act funding so institutional support dedicated to them.
* Q3: Students will be notified if they are approved for Phase 1? Will all students be notified or only those approved to return?
  + Notified students who are part of Phase 1 by today. Then email to students who are not part of Phase 1, with link to page that lists which programs are included in case they need to be reviewed.
* Q4: The website says there is an online-only option for students. How can students participate in this, will they be able to take all their courses online, and is this really an option if it might put students behind in their studies?
  + Students directed to please wait until today for updated course listing, contact their advisors to identify online sections, and to have advisors let students know that in some programs, progress may be hindered.
  + Students who want to be online, should try to register in all-online sections.
* Q5: When will we know about students who are in fieldwork or practica but not in Phase 1, know if Phase 2 makes sense.
  + Ans: Please work with Assistant Deans to determine what is the best option for individual students or programs in this situation.
* Q6: For Phase 2, is the expectation that we will still end in-person instruction at Thanksgiving?
  + Yes, except for exceptions that have been granted for specific programs.
* Q7: Is the BRICKS transition still going to be in 2021-22?
  + Ans: Yes, General Education changes are still on track for Fall 21-22.
* Q8: If a program is not included in Phase 1, what about PACE students or GA’s, can they come back and work on lab projects?
  + GA’s might be appropriate for an exception for labwork though GA work might also be able to do online. PACE are undergraduates and would need review on a case-by-case basis.
* Q9: Are Technology grants only available to incoming (ie new) students? What options are available for students with greater needs than a loaner laptop?
  + Yes. The automatic grant is to incoming/new students. The expectation is student might have resources already due to Spring. However, other needs can be addressed by Assistant Deans/OIT. CARES Act funds also cover technology needs for students due to COVID. There are some additional Hotspots for WiFi, and some laptops available from Spring.

ROLL CALL

Approval of Minutes for May, June, July

May Matlack/Casebolt APPROVED

June Owens/Duvert APPROVED

July Marchenkov/Duvert APPROVED

**Chair’s Report - Robin Muhammad**

* Question at last meeting about letters sent from black faculty, black students, NAACP, questions about scholarships and other issues relating to retention of retention of students and faculty of African descent. They have received responses to the letters, and reached out to support the conversation around race, race relations and concerns about scholarships and retention.
* OFC met and discussing situation at Akron.
* Thank Chairs of the other four senates for their work on the OHIO Pledge. The pledge will be linked to training workshops on COVID-19 responses and protocols.
* Working on populating and chairing committees. Thanks to Jennifer Kirksey on the President’s Staff.
* Turn the floor over to Bill Owens

Faculty Discussion Boards – Bill Owens

* University faces many complicated issues, and the pandemic makes it difficult to have productive, idea-generating discussions as we might when in person.
* Thought to use Discussion Board element of blackboard to facilitate discussions. Different boards can have different topics:
  + Intercollegiate Athletics
  + Budget
  + University as an Anti-Racist Institution
  + Academic Mission and Public Good
  + Shared Governance
  + Imagining a Post-COVID Ohio University
* Boards can work in tandem with Qualtrics surveys with open-ended questions.
* The goal is to expand the input on issues when discussion is difficult.
* These would be moderated conversations to promote lively yet civil exchange.
* Practical application: ideas and suggestions can be brought back to Exec Committee for further action.
* Will be seeking volunteers to moderate and to set up the polls.
* Goal is NOT to replicate a committee…it is to provide a meeting space outside official meetings, which can be used by all faculty, not just senators.
* Bill Reader input: This has come together quickly, so not fully fleshed out, but the goal would be to have open-ended polls that can bring in engagement from other faculty.

**Retirement Plan & Vendor Change Q&A – Andrew Fodor**

* Announcement sent out Aug 3 on changes to the ARP providers and plans.
* Andy Fodor present to answer faculty questions about this process and the effects on faculty.

Andrew Fodor:

* Within the committee we have done the best thing possible for faculty, fought for the best outcome for faculty and their retirement. There has been confusion and questions on individual vendors, but does feel strongly that in the end we got the best deal possible. If questions remain faculty members can contact him directly. Very comfortable with the end product, happy to answer questions about process.

Q&A:

* For the remaining vendors that did not change, is the list of available funds for investment changing?
  + As a fiduciary agent, we have to have a list of options that was reasonable. There are some reductions in what is available. For 403b there are more options/flexibility but our normal plans have a few less options but it does not reduce “good” options.
* With the possibility of the discussion boards and Qualtrics, would Andy be available to answer questions?
  + Yes, fully available and happy to help.
* The selected vendors have a lot of insurance products masquerading as investment funds while others have been removed (such as Vanguard)? Why?
  + In the universe selected, picked the lowest fee options. Some vendors did not bid, in his opinion because they could not compete on fees.
  + CM: this might be a detailed question that can be followed up with Deb Shaffer.
  + Known issue: some faculty members had investments with MassMutual, and MassMutual did not submit a bid. Current investments can stay there, but will have to move to a different one for future contributions.
* Restatement: faculty members who were in the approved ARP vendors, might still have their investment selections/fund allocations change?
  + Yes, some investment choices are no longer available, funds in those investments will be mapped to investments that “match.” Current investments can stay in place, only new contributions need to be in the approved vendors.
  + Comment from senator: some of the investments have a lot of hidden fees, that people might not pay attention, and this costs the individual retirement funds. We used to have more options for the 403b plans, which had more options, and ability to do in-service transfers. If we have to stay with these vendors, that have hidden fees, then we need to push to return to be able to do in-service transfers.
  + Ans: yes, we have to be careful about fees, and that was a conversation we had in the committee. He wanted employees to have options for their 403b plans. Now, in finding that balance for options, there will be products that have higher fees, but have different value for employees. Advocated for more options…outside the core program, there may be higher fee products that provide specific things for investors.

**Sense of the Senate Resolution Demanding the Reinstatement of All Instructional Faculty, Administrative Employees, and Classified Employees Whose Employment Was Terminated in AY 2019-2020 – Second Reading**

* Changes made to resolution per suggestions at July meeting.
* Noted change: the words “without cause” were added to the resolution.
* Comment from Senator: although sympathetic to the plight of our former colleagues, who are also friends, cannot support this resolution. Sometimes very difficult decisions have to be made to ensure the survival of an organization. Faculty solutions proposed do not cover the gap, or, are a temporary stopgap, not a solution. Until we can come up with a way to cover the financial shortfalls, cannot vote yes on this resolution.
* Motion to vote: Marchenkov/Crawford-Duvert
  + Opposed: 10 Abstain: 9 In Favor: 29 RESOLUTION PASSES

**Resolution Proposing a Safe Return to Campus in Fall 2020 – Second Reading**

* Change to resolution to reflect conditions in Spring.
* Question: Is this still relevant?
  + Might be superseded
  + But at some point, we will return and then it will be relevant.
  + Establishes the position of the faculty
* Motion to vote: Doty/Hiler
  + Opposed: 5 Abstain: 5 MOTION PASSES

**Resolution to Updated Faculty Handbook with Inclusive Pronouns – First Reading**

* Noted change to resolution, using gender-inclusive rather than gender-neutral.
* Q: can we avoid using plural pronouns (when they cause confusion? Ans: Yay

Committee Reports;

Professional Relations – Char Miller

No report

EPSA – Betty Sindelar

No report

P&T – Jackie Wolf

Revisiting the question of tenure clock extensions due to COVID.

F&F – Doug Clowe

* ARP changes triggered meetings
* Nothing official heard on resolutions, but unofficially heard the answer will be no, the resolution will not be supported.
* This will be a permanent committee, meeting 4 times per year. The faculty representative should be selected by Senate, moving forward.
* Other institutions consulted with their faculty and staff before making changes, Ohio University did not.
* Protest memo being formulated by MassMutual customers.
* Budget Study group is about halfway through their terms. Documents distributed, will figure out how to distribute the information. Undergraduate headcounts are troubling.

Mote to Adjourn: Rosado Feger/Doty

Meeting Adjourned 8:57