



FACULTY SENATE—MEETING MINUTES

December 6, 2023

3:00 PM – Student Center Ballroom, 3rd Floor

PRESENT: Faculty Senate Officers A. Kumar, D. Hubbard, and A. Smith; **Faculty Senators** F. Abou-Ghalioum, J. Ausherman, M. Baumgartner, D. Binnie, J. Bolt, S. Brockhaus, B. Conti, B. Ekelman, K. Fuller, C. Heyward, K. Mansour, J. Matthews, B. McClain, P. McGinty, B. Nagy, G. Nelson, C. Olszewski, H. Pearson, J. Plecnik, T. Porter, A. Price, E. Rauschert, J. Sawicki, A. Severson, D. Smith, J. Sola, A. Sonstegard, M. Volk, R. Whitbred, N. Zawahri, **Administrative and Corresponding Members** L. Bloomberg, N. Sridhar, A. Kersten, M. Gruys, R. Carnell, S. Zachariah, R. Schoepoester, C. Hansman, B. Kosteas, K. Morris, T. Nikitina; **Ex Officio Limited Members** G. Dyer, M. Heath, M. Wiitala, and T. Heus.

OTHERS

PRESENT: Zoom indicated a peak of 65 participants.

Senate President Kumar called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. He noted the passing of former colleagues Jerry Mundell (Chemistry) and Alexander Dennison (Political Science) and called for a moment of silence in their memory.

I. Approval of the Agenda for the December 6, 2023

Senate President Kumar noted that a quorum was present. Senator Pearson moved that the agenda be changed to move an item (Labor Relations and Human Resources graduate program change) from the University Curriculum Committee consent agenda to the discussion agenda; Senator F. Smith seconded the motion. The agenda was approved as amended by voice vote.

II. Approval of the Minutes of the November 8 Meeting

The minutes of the November 8, 2023, Faculty Senate meeting were approved by a voice vote.

III. Report of the Senate President

Senate President Kumar provided updates on three issues. First, he noted that a substitute S.B. 83 (the “Ohio Higher Education Enhancement Act”) had been passed by the Higher Education Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives. President Kumar noted that this bill was still highly problematic for higher education.

Second, President Kumar noted that the University’s advertising campaign was at least reaching him. He stated that CSU was popping up on every website that he visits, and he commented on the billboards on highway approaches to Cleveland.

Third, President Kumar commented on the activities of the Planning and Finance Advisory Committee. He noted that combined with the work of the outside consultant, thinking about university finances was proceeding on two tracks that had to go in tandem—short-term actions to address the current budget deficit, and long-term thinking about the shape of the institution. President Kumar stated that the long-term picture has to be clear as short-term issues are being discussed.

IV. Report of the President of CSU (**Report No. 13, 2023-2024**)

University President Bloomberg began her report by expressing sadness about the frequency with which she had made condolence calls to families of members of the CSU community who had passed. She noted the deaths of two students—Dutch Pope and Madison Hampton—and of Edgar Jackson, a former director of the CSU-NEOMED Partnership. President Bloomberg said that communities grieve and remember together.

President Bloomberg next reported about government relations issues. As had been stated by President Kumar, President Bloomberg reported that Substitute S.B. 83 had passed out of the House Higher Education Committee by a vote of 8-7. President Bloomberg noted that John Plecnik, a faculty senator from the College of Law, had testified in opposition to the proposed legislation in an impressive way. President Bloomberg invited Professor Plecnik to comment on the bill.

Professor Plecnik stated that he was grateful for the Administration's support as he opposed the bill. Professor Plecnik reported that it appears that the House speaker was not going to bring the bill to the floor of the House for a vote unless substantial changes were made to it, and that we should thank the speaker. Professor Plecnik stated that the bill remains terrible, noting particularly its retrenchment provisions that would make Ohio the least attractive state in which to be a university faculty member and that would be a handicap for Ohioans. Professor Plecnik stated that not a single currently employed Ohio professor has spoken in favor of this bill, and that it was important to communicate opposition to representatives.

President Bloomberg turned to Ohio Senate Bill 117, which mandates that a center for civics be established at CSU and that the Board of Trustees appoint an academic council by December 31, after which the next step would be to hire a director. President Bloomberg said that the actions of the trustees would be communicated to Senate.

President Bloomberg next discussed organizational resilience and financial stability, referring to a detailed email that she had sent to the university community earlier in the day ("Next Steps for Organizational Resilience and Financial Stability"). President Bloomberg said that the University had retained the consulting services of EY-Parthenon, a higher education consulting group with extensive experience. She characterized this consulting group as knowing the values that are important to universities, but also as being soberly analytic, and described an analysis of the sort that would be conducted as a good thing to do. President Bloomberg said that she was seeking external funding for the work of EY-Parthenon, but that she would use discretionary funds available to her to pay for this work if sufficient external funding was not secured.

President Bloomberg said that EY-Parthenon would look at strategies for both cost containment and revenue generation, and that its interface with the campus community would be through a nine-member steering committee composed of administrators and trustees. President Bloomberg said that she anticipates a report from EY-Parthenon before the end of the academic year, and committed to being as transparent as possible concerning organizational resilience and financial stability.

In responding to questions about the EY-Parthenon contract and paying for it, President Bloomberg said the cost of the consultation was \$800,000 plus travel expenses, and that concerning strategies, everything is on the table including streamlining of administration.

President Bloomberg concluded her remarks by noting that education and civil rights go hand in hand, and that 2024 would be the 60th anniversary of both the establishment of CSU and of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. She anticipates events celebrating both during 2024.

V. University Curriculum Committee

The chair of the University Curriculum Committee, Michele Heath, noted that the Writing Across the Curriculum form had been updated. (The updated form was included with the meeting materials.) **(Report No. 14, 2023-2024)**

Professor Heath brought a consent agenda from the committee. (One item—Labor Relations and Human Resources graduate program change—had been separated from the consent agenda when the meeting agenda was amended at the beginning of the meeting. No additional items were separated for individual discussion.) The consent agenda **(Report No. 15, 2023-2024)** was approved by voice vote with no dissenting votes, and included the following:

- ART - 354 - Medieval Art -Course Modification - Restore WAC course
- CIS - 265 - Data Structures & Algorithms - Modification/Deactivation – Course description and prerequisite
- Environmental Engineering Certificate Program - 1080 - Fall 23 –GRAD New Certificate
- Exercise Science Minor - 1090 - Spring 24 - UGRD New Minor or Certificate -Addition of minor in exercise science
- SWK - 495 - Social Work Licensure Exam: Strategies and Stress Reduction Techniques – Course modification
- CMG - 490 - Senior Construction Management Capstone - New GenEd Course
- Computer Science Education Endorsement Program for P-12 - 1090 - Spring 24 - 23-24 UGRD New Minor or Certificate
- General Business Major, B.B.A. - 1110 - Fall 24 - UGRD Program Change
- Historic Preservation Certificate - 1110 - Fall 24 - UGRD Program Dormancy/Deactivation
- Sport and Entertainment Management, MSEM - 1110 - Fall 24 - GRAD Program Change
- UST - 205 - Public Service Careers - 24-25 UGRD New Course GenEd
- UST - 309 - Urban Planning -24-25 UGRD New GenEd Course
- Upper Division Requirements - College of Arts and Sciences - Ad hoc proposal
- Integrated Degrees
 - Sociology + Journalism - approved

- Economics + Mathematics - approved
- Computer Science + Electrical Engineering – approved
- Criminology/Sociology + Journalism – approved

Senator Pearson posed a question about the Labor Relations and Human Resources graduate program proposal, which included the requirement that students take an examination for which there is a fee. The question concerned who would pay the exam fee. Senator T. Porter stated that the College would pay the exam fee. Senate approved the proposal.

- Labor Relations and Human Resources, MLRHR - 1110 - Fall 24 - GRAD Program Change

At the invitation of the committee, Vice Provost Holcomb spoke about integrated degrees, four of which had just been approved by Senate as part of the UCC's consent agenda (**Report No. 16, 2023-2024**). He explained the idea and purpose of these integrated majors and noted that this was an opportunity to lead in Ohio with this innovation. He stated that there would be a total of 20 proposals in the first set of integrated-degree proposals; that in developing these proposals, proposers were trying as much as possible to use existing resources; and that these proposals were going through the regular curriculum review process. Dr. Holcomb characterized this project as a "whole university" effort.

Dr. Holcomb stated that although integrated degrees that were entirely within the Washkiewicz College of Engineering might seek ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) accreditation, generally accreditation for these integrated degree programs would not be sought at this time and that students would have to be made aware that these programs were not accredited. Dr. Holcomb was asked who would get credit for these degrees; he replied that for any course as part of an integrated degree program, the offering department would get the credit.

VI. University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC)

UFAC Chair Gary Dyer reported that the committee had collected input from standing committees concerning their responsibilities as described in the University personnel policies and said that UFAC would work on appropriate revisions in the Spring semester.

VII. Undergraduate Student Success Committee

Using a set of slides distributed in advance of the meeting (**Report No. 17, 2023-2024**), Laura Northrop, Director of Research and Assessment, provided information about and student feedback from a course, UNI 102, offered in Spring 2023 to students who had been placed on academic warning after their first semester.

Students were asked about whether they had felt supported in courses in which they had earned Ds, Fs, or Ws; how they might have been better supported; and about factors that impeded success in these courses. Among the factors reported by students as impeding success were teaching quality, course expectations, issues with instructors, and personal issues and behaviors. Student responses concerning how CSU or CSU faculty can better support success included instructors checking in on students; flexible policies on deadlines for assignments and on attendance; and support with time management and study skills.

VIII. Budget and Finance Committee

Committee Chair Deborah Smith began her report from the Budget and Finance Committee by responding to an earlier question about library personnel compared to peer institutions. She showed a slide indicating that CSU has 12 full-time librarians, curators, and archivists compared with 11 at Kent, 13 at Youngstown, and 28 at Akron.

Professor Smith added some detail to previous descriptions of the work of the EY consultants, stating that recommendations concerning both the short-term budget plan and a long-range plan would be provided intermittently through the project period.

She provided information to respond to questions that had been asked previously. She stated that debt service on the assets of the Euclid Avenue Development Corporation (EADC), which include Fenn Tower, Euclid Commons, and the East 21st Street parking garage, is covered by lease payments. She said that EADC would apply for a grant to remove asbestos from Rhodes Tower.

Professor Smith reported that David Jewell, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, is assessing how to preserve institutional knowledge in the face of substantial numbers of resignations and retirements.

Concerning health care costs, Professor Smith reported that the finance team is working on improving healthcare contracts, which are increasing at an annual rate of about 15%, and that according to Mr. Jewell, fighting these increases is a priority. She reported that increasing on-campus health services is a priority; that we could look forward to a substantial relaunch of VikeHealth in 2024; and that having health savings accounts as an option is under consideration. **(Report No. 20, 2023-2024)**

IX. Electronic Learning Committee

Using a set of slides distributed in advance of the meeting **(Report No. 18, 2023-2024)**, Carole Heyward provided an update on the state of e-learning at CSU. She reported about new and relaunched online programs, noting in particular the growth of the JD online program, and identified new programs that would begin next year.

Professor Heyward identified two partners that CSU has engaged for its e-learning efforts—Keypath and Collegis—and described their roles and the services they provide. She then addressed a number of questions that faculty have had concerning e-learning and these partnerships, including compliance with FERPA, intellectual property issues, the purpose and role of success coaches, and communications between and among faculty, students, and success coaches.

Professor Heyward presented a draft communication to faculty explaining the role of success coaches in online courses; this includes a draft syllabus statement that explains to students the role of success coaches.

X. Ad Hoc Committee on the Core Curriculum

Committee member Jeffrey Bolt reported on progress on development of the proposal for a new core curriculum. He thanked faculty for attending the November 20 town hall and stated that the committee was creating a document that would include responses to questions that had been asked at that meeting. Dr. Bolt stated that the committee intended to finalize its proposal within the next two weeks, that the committee would propose removing the capstone requirement, and that the committee would propose that students complete two writing across the curriculum courses.

XI. Ad Hoc Committee on the Student Evaluation Instrument

Committee chair Thijs Heus updated Senate on the progress of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Student Evaluation of Instruction questionnaire. He reported that 62 people had attended (by zoom) the presentation given by Professor Regan Gurung of Oregon State University on November 28, and that the Committee would have further discussions with Professor Gurung on Friday, December 8. Professor Heus noted that Professor Gurung had said that Oregon State University went through a four-year process of evaluating its system of evaluation of instruction.

Professor Heus noted that the Committee had conducted surveys of instructors and students concerning the SEI; said that the Committee's fact-finding report would be forthcoming; and stated that the Committee's attention would next turn to how to increase response rates.

XII. Student Government Association Report

SGA President Kayland Morris reported that the SGA has passed resolutions concerning the need to address problematic WiFi issues on campus; supporting Cleveland State University's student population affected by the ongoing events in the Middle East; and maintaining non-partisanship and free speech standards in SGA. These resolutions were included in the meeting materials **(Report No. 19, 2023-2024)**

XIII. GPSA Report

GPSA President Tatiana Nikitina spoke about the availability, or lack thereof, of health and wellness services on campus, noting that there are students who are unclear of their options and concerned about the costs for them.

XIV. Report of the Provost and Chief Academic Officer

Provost Sridhar began by expressing gratitude for the care and diligence that faculty had invested in innovative development of a new core curriculum and integrated degrees.

The provost acknowledged the contributions of Dr. Roland Anglin, outgoing dean of the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education, and said that he looked forward to welcoming new dean Dr. Jill Gordon in January.

Provost Sridhar reported that an audit of WiFi services on campus was being undertaken.

Provost Sridhar noted that he had been studying the dossiers of faculty applying for promotion and tenure and that his heart was filled with pride as he read about the accomplishments of these faculty members. The provost said that he was grateful to have these faculty members as colleagues.

The provost stated that the University was launching a phased retirement program that would permit faculty over a period of several years to reduce their level of effort while receiving full health care benefits.

The provost noted that Cleveland would experience a total solar eclipse on April 8.

In response to a question about the sweeping of course fees and lab fees, the Provost stated that there was no intention of taking this money away from departments and using it for anything other than its intended purpose (i.e., to fund needs for the courses for which the fees were collected), but that the Provost's Office was attempting to understand why large amounts of money of this type accumulate. The provost said that the implementation of improved financial reporting should facilitate this.

XV. New Business

There was no new business.

XVII. Adjournment

There being no further business, and following a motion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED ON JANUARY 31, 2024

Albert F. Smith

Faculty Senate Secretary