

MINUTES
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2023, 3:15 P.M.

Faculty Senate Chair Frankie Tack brought the monthly meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Members and guests participated via Zoom video conference. A list of guests in attendance is available upon request.

Members Present:

Abraham, J.	Elliott, E.	Kent, A.	Rinehart, L.
Adkins, B.	Elswick, D.	Kidd, K.	Ripley Stueckle, J.
Armour-Gemmen, M.	Feaster, K.	LaRue, R.	Rota, C.
Ballard, D.	Fidelman, E.	Lastinger, A.	Ruseski, J.
Beth Angeline, M.	Floyd, K.	Leary, B.	Scally, J.
Bhandari, R.	Fullen, M.	Li, B.	Siekmeier, J.
Bryner, R.	Galvez Peralta, M.	Li, H.	Sims, J.
Burt, A.	Gosden Kitchen, S.	Livengood, H.	Smith, D.
Casey, R.	Gross, J.	Lucci, S.	Sowards, A.
Celikbas, E.	Hamrick, A.	Lupo, J.	Staniscia, S.
Chapman, K.	Hanif, A.	Malarcher, J.	Szklarz, G.
Cohen, S.	Hatipoglu, K.	McCluskey, C.	Tack, F.
Corcoran, K.	Hauser, D.	McGinnis, R.	Terry, D.
Cottrell, L.	Hedrick, J.	Milans, K.	Thomay, A.
Crichlow, S.	Hileman, S.	Miltenberger, M.	Titolo, M.
Dahle, G.	Hines, S.	Moore, M.	Unger, K.
Davis, D.	Huber, S.	Nguyen, J.	Valenti, M.
Dey, K.	Jaynes, M.	Nix, A.	Waggy, C.
Di Bartolomeo, L.	Johnson Jr., K.	Olgers, F.	Watson, K.
Dickman, B.	Johnson, D.	Palmer, A.	Wayne, S.
Dilcher, B.	Kale, U.	Pena-Yewtukhiw, E.	Weislogel, A.
Dionne, C.	Katz, J.	Phillips, T.	Woods, S.
Donley, D.	Kearns, J.	Prinzo, L.	Wuest, T.
Eades, D.	Kelly, C.	Reece, J.	Zeni, T.

Members Excused:

Knuckles, T.	Barnes, E.	Haddox, C.	Woloshuk, J.
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Members Absent:

Bardes, J.	Descoteaux, J.	Martin, J.	Sizemore, J.
Barghouthi, N.	Dietz, P.	M'Bayo, T.	Sofka, S.
Battistella, L.	Dimachkie, Z.	Murphy, E.	Sokos, G.
Bernardes, E.	Duenas, O.	Murray, A.	Stephan, K.
Bianco, C.	Dumitrescu, C.	Myers, S.	Swager, L.
Bogdansky, K.	Ellis, E.	Nolan, K.	Totzkay, D.
Bolyard, J.	Faber, T.	Pyles, L.	Trickett-Shockey, C.
Bruyaka, O.	Graves, C.	Renzelli-Cain, R.	Vaddamani, V.
Carducci, H.	Kerr, P.	Roberts, D.	Vance, B.
Cook, A.	Knuckles, T.	Sakhuja, A.	Watson, J.
Demarco, F.	Labus, A.	Sherlock, L.	Woodberry, K.

1. Chair Tack presented the [Minutes](#) of the July 10, 2023 Faculty Senate Meeting for approval. Motion to approve carried by unanimous consent.
2. Report from Faculty Senate Chair Frankie Tack
 - a. Acknowledgement of the difficult time WVU faculty find themselves in, with half of the school's programs being under review, and faculty being uncertain as to their jobs, colleagues, and programs. Additional recognition that the process is placing strain on department chairs and other unit leaders as well.
 - b. Faculty Senate leadership continues to represent faculty input and concerns about the budget situation and academic transformation process. Activities taken since the first of July have included:
 - i. Non-R1 dollars were not presented as key data elements when selecting programs for review. Many programs have substantial non-R1 funding, much of which provides material support in those units and are in support of the WVU land grant mission. We recommended that a report of all research dollars by unit be secured and added to the determination of preliminary recommendations to units.
 - ii. Distributed the Resolution on Faculty Input to the Program Review Process that was approved at the July 10 meeting to all faculty, deans, and chairs included.
 - iii. Advocated for changes to the program self-study rubric which many expressed concern on, clarifying communications to faculty about the intent and focus of the self-studies. Those changes were implemented by the Provost's Office.
 - iv. Advocated for maximum transparency for self-studies, preliminary recommendations, and appeals, and we feel very positive that we're going to see that come to fruition.
 - v. Met with President Gee and advocated for reviews of his office staffing as well as a complete review of student life. President Gee has assured us those will be reviewed and shared openly. We also met with the Provost to discuss a review of the Provost's Office staffing. An update to Faculty Senate is tentatively scheduled for the August 28 Faculty Senate meeting to summarize that process.
 - vi. Advocating for the dean's offices, including HSC, to conduct staffing reviews and to make those reviews and decisions transparent. President Gee has said that there "are no sacred cows" and that no stone should be left unturned, and we have taken him at his word.
 - vii. Initiated discussions on teach-out plans and have advocated that backup plans be established to prepare for situations where some or all faculty may leave a unit prior to the end of a teach out period.
 - viii. Provided suggestions to Rob Alsop's team on the survey seeking feedback on Strategic Initiatives as part of his review of that unit.
 - ix. Met with Rob Alsop and received a detailed summary of WVU debt structure and public private partnerships, including occupancy rates, which have been brought up as concerns by faculty. This information was sent to all faculty via email. Rob provided detailed documents on both topics, and they are also location on the transformation tab on the Faculty Senate website.
 - x. Attended the Provost's summer workgroup, of which notes may be found on the transformation tab of the Faculty Senate website. We have been notified that the summer workgroup will continue into the fall. Notes will continue to be posted in the same location as those meetings occur.

- xi. Secured a vote from the Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate, to approve a new general syllabus statement related to Chat GPT and other generative AI platforms. The statement was developed by a team of faculty, TLC, and Evan Widders.
- xii. Reminder that the August 28 meeting will occur at the College of Law Event Hall.

3. For Approval - Resolution on Faculty Input in Preparation of Department/Program Appeals – [Annex I](#)
Motion to approve (Diana Davis). Seconded.

Member: I wanted some clarification on the resolved part. It is talking about unit leaders seeking faculty input. My understanding is that typically a department chair would themselves be faculty. The last part says “including a faculty representative on the unit team presenting the appeal”, so I’m not sure exactly what is meant by unit team. To the extent that it is a team of faculty, could the unit leader not also be the faculty representative? Can someone explain what that last part means and what the intent is.

Tack: We think it is important that faculty have input on the appeals and that they not just happen behind a closed door and get sent up. Having said that, term leader is a broad term that is being used by the Provost’s Office, and in some cases these are school directors, in some cases they are department chairs. It is a variety of types of positions that are doing these reviews. Having said that, yes, it could be the case that a faculty member is represented as the chair. Our overarching purpose in this is to avoid that the appeals are not made without input from the faculty in the unit. Would you like to make a motion to change that wording?

Member: I don’t think I can offer better wording; your explanation was helpful.

No further discussion.

Motion carried with 71 in favor and none opposed.

4. Report from Faculty Representative to State Government (Eloise Elliot)

- a. Eloise Elliott was elected as chair of the State Advisory Council of Faculty (ACF) for the upcoming academic year. ACF serves as a resource and advisor to both the legislature and to the Higher Education Policy Commission on any matters related to higher education or so related to the state.
- b. Regarding the Alderson Broaddus closure, WVU is trying to help students and recruit them to WVU. Application fees have been reviewed and we are expediting the review process for admitting first-time freshmen and transfer students from that school. We are also providing exceptions to institutional merit and need-based scholarship deadlines so that they may qualify. Information is being distributed to recruiters and advisors across campus on how to best help students coming from AB.

5. Board of Governors Report (Stan Hileman)

For Information – BOG Vote Rationale – [Annex II](#)

- a. Regarding special meeting on July 31
 - i. Reviewed rule changes to BoG 4.7 made to provide clarification.
 - 1. Passed
 - ii. Reviewed changes to the severance package which added TAPs and SAPs in the 12-week package. Amended document excluded clinical and library faculty. After discussion, that language was struck from the document and the topic will be discussed further.
 - iii. Extended President Gee’s contract for one year to get the institution through academic

transformation.

- b. Next special meeting on August 20, next regular meeting September 15

6. Report from President Gordon Gee

- a. Leadership team has been working diligently on the portfolio review process. Noted the intent to ensure the decisions made are the right ones for the university and our students.
- b. The transformation timeline reflects the expectations put in place by the Board of Governors.
- c. New BoG chair is Taunja Willis Miller, and she has been in extensive talks with President Gee regarding the pending decisions and related impacts.
- d. Emphasized a focus on improving quality while controlling costs.

7. Report from Provost Maryanne Reed

- a. Team has reviewed 25 self-study reports from academic units that had programs identified for further review. Faculty and staff in those units should have seen those reports and had the opportunity to provide feedback. If that is not the case, individuals should let the Office of the Provost know.
- b. Quantity and quality of feedback received varied between units. Some provided large amounts of their own data and information that may or may not have been relevant directly to what is trying to be achieved. Others made a good faith effort to show how they could be more efficient and effective.
- c. Met with deans individuals to receive their input since they know their colleagues, what is possible, and what is not.
- d. Preliminary recommendations will be finalized over the next few days and sent to unit leaders by Thursday. Leaders will have 24 hours to share that information with the faculty and staff in those units.
- e. Preliminary recommendations will be shared with the campus community Monday and published on the academic transformation website.
- f. Review of Academic Support Units delayed – plan is to complete that work and present it at the September 15 BoG meeting.
- g. A new academic restructuring will be announced later this week.

Reed yields floor to Rob Alsop to discuss transformation efforts on the non-academic side of the university.

- h. Work being performed on determining how the institution reviews non-academic units from an administrative perspective.
- i. Strategic Initiative Units process has begun this week. There will be a self-study with stakeholder input. Units will be benchmarked, looking at number of employees compared to metrics from other institutions/organizations. Goal is to complete the self-study and stakeholder survey within the next 9 days. Recommendations will be made internally and then discussed at the September 15 BoG meeting.
- j. Recent work with Corey Farris to perform a review on Student Life. Built stakeholder survey and self-study based off the academic service unit model.
- k. There may be a rolling request for feedback on different units of the institution, as it seemed more appropriate than a single lengthy survey on several units.
- l. Goal is to continue discussion on how to make administrative units more efficient and effective at the September meeting.

Reed reclaims floor and concludes report.

Member: Could you clarify the university's intent regarding faculty whose contracts are set to expire, in particular in the units subject to review? If a faculty member with an expiring contract is identified for non-renewal, will they be given severance pay? Will they be notified in October with the right to appeal, or would they be notified later?

Taylor: Faculty that are TAPs or SAPs, regardless of contract end date, if their program is subject to program review and their position is chosen to be eliminated, we will end their contract on May 9, 2024, and those individuals will be subject to the severance payment of 12 weeks. They will be notified in that October timeframe with everyone else. That being said, if you are a TAP or SAP and your contract naturally ends on May 9, 2024, there are some TAPs and SAPs potentially in other programs not subject to program review whose contracts may end or not be renewed. This happens every year, you know, there is always a handful where that might be the case. Our goal is to also try to notify those folks in the October timeframe at the same time so that those folks have as much notification as possible.

Tack: We have also heard a concern that there could be another wave, similar to the wave that happened this year in June. That wasn't as data driven as what is happening now, and there could be another wave of non-renewals not under the program review process.

Taylor: Just to talk for staff, whether it is classified or nonclassified, we do renewals every year at different points in time of the year for different positions for any number of reasons. I anticipate that we will continue to do so. Not all of those will be notified in the October timeframe because there will be other reasons to do nonrenewals or risk for classified folks throughout the year as is normal year to year. For faculty, it is our intent that if somebody will be renewed they will be notified in October, but those will be one-offs dependent on individual colleges and programs, so it is hard to generalize.

Member: There was an article in the Dominion Post about Marshall receiving \$24 million in appropriations to cover budget deficits, but no mention regarding our budget deficit at WVU. Could you provide information on that?

Alsop: Legislature set aside around \$260 million for deferred maintenance for all Higher Education and Corrections, with around 50-60 being for corrections and around 200 for higher education. We think WVU will receive a fair share of that \$200 million. Additionally, WVU Medicine and WVU asked for \$50 million to help attain the NCI Cancer designation to help improve cancer outcomes and increase the depth and breadth of our services as it relates to cancer treatments in WV and Appalachia. Coming off that success, Marshall asked legislature to help fund the remaining \$45 million for infrastructure relating to their facility that hosts primarily their cybersecurity programs. The legislature has told us that they will not backfill operations or budget deficits, but they will invest in projects on areas of need for the state going forward. It is my understanding that the legislature will be considering the governor's request to help Marshall complete their infrastructure that is needed for their cyber-related programs, and not to just offset a budget deficit going forward. We have heard loud and clear that we need to succeed under the funding formula that has been put into place. To that end, we are working toward the January legislative session with the types of asks we think would be successful from a legislative perspective moving forward. So, the appropriate being considered for Marshall is for infrastructure and not operational deficits.

Member: Could Stephanie Taylor clarify something she said a few moments ago? I gathered that there

are additional TAPs and SAPs that are not part of programs that have been tagged for review that are likely to not have their contracts renewed come this fall or even spring. I imagine the anxiety level for a whole lot of people went up since they thought they were relatively safe being in programs not tagged in academic transformation.

Taylor: I'm not saying necessarily that, but I am saying that each year there are TAPs and SAPs that are nonrenewed when their contract ends. So whether that is a part of program review or not, that is something that does happen and could happen again this year outside of the program review process. However, we are working with our deans and our department units to try to identify those situations this fall so that people have as much notification of that as possible.

Alsop: This is not to put every TAP and SAP on notice that they need to be looking for a job elsewhere or anything like that. I think Stephanie's comments are that this type of thing happens through the ordinary course of business. A dean or chair, as they are moving forward for their budget, could make a determination to do a nonrenewal, and we don't want there to be any surprises.

Member: Could someone provide a little update for some of the terminology we are using like, what does RIF, TAP and SAP stand for so that we can better understand what is being discussed?

Reed: TAP and SAP are teaching faculty who are classified, they are non-tenure track faculty who have a specific classification as a teaching faculty member. They can be teaching assistant, teaching associate, or teaching professor, with the same being true on the service side. This isn't as common in Health Sciences. RIF stands for Reduction in Force.

Member: President Gee, are you willing to elaborate on your plans beyond June 2025?

Gee: My plan beyond June 2025 is to return to the Law school and start teaching again. I have no plans beyond the, you know, opportunities that may exist to do some lecturing and other things. My intent is to be finished at that time and, hopefully, we will have a new president at that point.

Member: Do you have any information on when the BoG might initiate that search?

Gee: Probably next year, some time in a year from now.

Member: Do we have a team looking at the possible scenarios because of the consequences of the current decisions that are being made? You see, we are starting to lose good talent, and so we need to consider what is next for the university.

Gee: Let me say that we are going through a process that is going to allow us to be financially, structurally, and I believe academically, much stronger. We want to maintain our R1 status, which we think is enormously important, and we are working diligently to make sure that is the case. We want to grow our research efforts. We want to identify programs that will carry us into the future. We are also taking a look at a number of different scenarios, whether it be online, stackable degrees, micro credentialing, all kinds of things that I think will allow us as a large land grant university to remain competitive in what is going to be an increasingly competitive world. We are putting a lot of emphasis on student success. We want to not only have students come here, but we want them to graduate, have them be successful. We have a demographic cliff of students coming into higher education. We need to increase our market value and reassert the value proposition of higher education.

Member: Do you have a team that is already working on the future? Because there are many things you mentioned that are uncertain, that are out of our control.

Gee: They are in the door right next to me. Yes, we have a strong team of people and we are looking 3, 5, 10 years down the line.

Member: For us faculty, one thing that will help us is to know your plan or possible scenarios to see how we can help.

Gee: I appreciate that. Obviously at my next faculty or stated university address, after we are through this particular process, I will outline where I think we will need to have a common approach to where we're going over the next 4-5 years.

Tack: Follow up for Rob on Student Life. You said there was a survey coming. I'm wondering, are they also doing other more detailed reviews, like right-sizing and making sure they have the right number of employees?

Alsop: Much like the academic support units and the review of strategic initiatives as to what cuts have already been taken, what services we are providing, and the level of service, President Gee has asked the non-academic units to do that. So we have spoken with Corey Ferris and that work on reviewing the data on what student life provides, the cost of providing that, is under way. There are some meetings to occur in the next couple of days, and I think the goal is much like when we sent the strategic initiatives stakeholder survey. We've shared some information on what facilities has gone through in terms of reductions and thinking about things differently. President Gee asked administrative units to go through a similar process, so Student Life will definitely be a part of that.

Member: I know it is much more challenging because the roles are so different, but would it be possible to share some information about the process and timelines and metrics of how those non academic units are being evaluated, along with the efficiencies and savings toward the budget deficit?

Alsop: Sure. I just walked through the timeline of bringing things for the September Board meeting, and we can talk about that for other units. I will re-emphasize that, on the non-academic side, we have been quicker to move forward on those pieces for the institution. I hear you, we will get those for strategic initiatives and other units as to that process, but we have moved where we can already, almost in real time to make some of those adjustments.

Gee: We've been going through the transformation process for some time. That \$35 million loss from the state has been covered by the loss of 550 plus people, you know. So let's be very clear about the fact that we have already been consolidating, eliminating, and doing what we think is in the best interest of the institution. I think it is a great point you're making that, let's have that be part of the process. But we have had a process, it has had no direct impact on faculty, but we have been going through it for some time.

8. No new business

9. Motion to adjourn (Elloise Elliott). Seconded.

Chair Tack adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m. to reconvene on August 28, 2023.

Corey Hunt
Faculty Senate Office Administrator

Information on WVU Transformation, including updates, timeline, Campus Conversations, and FAQs can be found [here](#).

The Faculty Senate Transformation/Budget page can be found [here](#).