

Washburn University
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
October 19, 2015
3:00 PM – Kansas Room, Memorial Union

PRESENT: Alexander (Rebecca), Ball, Childers, Farwell, Francis, Jackson, Kwak, Leung, Mansfield, Mastrosimone, McHenry, Memmer, Moddelmog, Pembrook, Petersen, Porta, Routsong, Russell, Sadikot, Sanchez, Schnoebelen, Smith, Sourgens, Stacey, Steinroetter, Stevens, Stevenson, Weiner, Wohl, Worsely, Zwikstra

ABSENT: Alexander (Ryan), Garritano, Mapp, Mechtly, Palbicke, Scofield, Treinen, Tutwiler,

GUESTS: Gonzalez-Abellas, Ogawa, Zhang

- I. President Ball called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.
- II. The minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting of September 21, 2015 were approved.
- III. President's Opening Remarks:
 - Ball met with the current WSGA President and Vice President this week. They asked to bring up the possible smoking ban (discussion reflected below).
- IV. Report from the Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents:
 - Ball attended the Audit meeting and regular meeting on the 25th. The Audit meeting was standard. At the general meeting, there was a discussion of the Marketing firm for the University that has since been announced.
- V. VPAA Update—Dr. Randy Pembrook:
 - Survey regarding guns: The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) has a group that is made up of student leadership (student body presidents) that gives feedback to the Board. This group wanted to find out what students in Kansas felt about this. They initiated a survey that will probably go out in the next week or two to the seven Regent schools. The question that came up among executive staff is if we're going to take the time to do this survey, should we also survey other constituencies on campus. The students felt (perhaps) that if there was strong students sentiment not in line with the policy, maybe they could act to present this data to people who could make a change. Moddelmog and Francis both argued that one would be useful. He noted that he will ask staff council about this as well.
 - The Frank agency: We are in the final stages of contract negotiations with them. We should, in our various areas, think about what information we can provide to this organization as they begin their work.
 - I commend everyone involved with the John Lewis visit.
 - Thanks to those involved with the announcement about the major gift from the Blitt family to the university.
 - For those who still want tickets to the homecoming week-Bow-Tie Bash, you can probably still get in.
- VI. Faculty Senate Committee Reports: None

VII. Zhang answered questions about recent changes to faculty funding for overseas trips. He noted the funding can also cover unpaid teaching—not just research. He reported that the committee had discussed this topic a few times and, because they have seen other international trips funded by Grants, C-TEL, etc., they elected for the change. He also noted that the fund they operate is pretty small, so given the demand for funding of international travel by faculty, the committee felt that a change was necessary to make it more rigorous. Ball clarified that this was a resource issue and it helps decision-making. Zhang agreed that this clarification was appropriate. Petersen asked about faculty who may be in the fine arts and who don't produce conventional papers but who may miss out on opportunities to travel. Zhang said that such creative works were also considered just like scholarly papers. He then added that this fund has been running at a deficit for a few years and this can't continue. Zhang noted that two months into the semester, half of the funding is already gone. Moddelmog noted that the Social Science division has formally requested a change back to allow for other transformative-type activities (why help fund these types of activities for students through WTE funding when we won't any longer for faculty?). Zhang noted that the funds are limited to \$1500 per person, so it's not all encompassing. He also wondered what to do with this request. Ball noted that his isn't a Senate committee so we can't write policy, but it's helpful to know why these changes were made. The fund was created to help with some travel—not to pay for it entirely. Porta wondered how many proposals were in this "other" category that wouldn't get funded. Zhang responded that he didn't have those figures but when applications have been rejected, he is quick to point out other sources and to suggest talking to the Dean's office. Petersen wondered if the real question is a lack of knowing what committees fund what types of trips, suggesting that such a clarification could help make funding requests more efficient. This may also point out if we have a gap in funding for these trips that we may not know about. He suggested that perhaps a diagram of this process would help faculty make the most of these funding sources. Ball finished by asking them to reconsider; Zhang noted that there are representatives from every division and area on campus on this committee and noted that those concerned should talk to their representatives on the committee to ask for change.

VIII. University Committee Reports:

- The Assessment Committee Minutes from September 10, 2015 were received.
- The Graduate Council Minutes from August 24, 2015 were received.
- The Small Research Grant Committee Minutes from September 30, 2015 were received.
- The Faculty Development Grant Committee Minutes from September 30, 2015 were received.
- The Curriculum Grant Committee Minutes from September 29, 2015 were received.
- The International Education Committee Minutes from September 3, 2015 were received.

IX. Old Business: None

X. New Business: None

XI. Information Items: None

XII. Discussion Items:

- Ball asked for a vote to include the added topics from the ad hoc Faculty Handbook revision committee via Routsong. Those present voted to add both. (these are the last 2 items under discussion in these minutes)

- **Accommodation for absences due to approved activities: do we need a policy?** Ball noted that there is a policy that we should encourage students to be excused for religious observances and that we should accommodate, but we don't have much communication about when the religious holidays are. She added that, in terms of sporting activities, some coaches are great about notification and some are not. Ball asked if we need guidance here or some sort of more visible policy for students. Pembroke added that his office will get a request every now and then regarding these notifications that led to this question. Do we need it once a year and you choose what's important to you? Do you want individual teams to send out announcements? Russell: Is this something we can add to the general syllabus? Some type of policy for recognized activity may be in order. Pembroke noted regarding religious holidays, Pam Foster has reported that the importance of the religious observance is defined by the student not the holiday, so it is difficult to establish parameters. Wohl noted that there is a distinction between those who are on scholarship for athletics and need to be excused and those who just belong to a club and want to go somewhere. Stevens noted that all faculty staff e-mails from coaches might help. Smith said that he prefers individual students to address it with the professors. Memmer would prefer to have the student contact faculty as well, but disagrees with the scholarship distinction since not all who are on the teams necessarily receive scholarships. Porta said the onus should be on coaches to contact the professors. Scofield said the e-mails could be overwhelming; perhaps if we could post it on a cloud or link on MyWashburn faculty could verify without all of the e-mail. On religious holidays perhaps we can work with Student Services to make accommodations. Ball clarified that these are still often opt-in accommodations made by professors (As in Student Services asks instructors to "Please try to accommodate"). Wohl: I have a syllabus note that asks for athletes to inform him regarding dates. Sadikot: Isn't there a rule regarding religious observances? With more and more international students attending, this could create a large demand for accommodation. Sanchez: the "please try to accommodate" perspective is appropriate given the varying conditions under which these absences may happen. Petersen: Is this a syllabus policy or a university policy? These types of things may be hard to define on a campus-wide level, but it may be easier to do as individual faculty members with the syllabus. Pembroke noted that awareness is a key issue and how we deal with it is up to the individual faculty members. Sadikot wondered how we discriminate between students who want to 'celebrate her or his holiday' or not. Childers preferred the student responsibility route but wanted to know these things as early as possible. Ball clarified that perhaps a clearinghouse of this information and these dates might be helpful. Pembroke wondered if a policy could be established.
- **Faculty input needed on possible smoking ban on campus.** Modelmog said she didn't want a ban for the inconvenience of faculty and staff. Ball said that the WSGA was suggesting a ban on the entire campus and smokers would have to cross the streets. Pembroke wasn't sure about parking lots and there is a question about where city easements are that could complicate the restrictions of such a ban. He also noted this could be an issue for surrounding neighborhoods and safety. Ball reported that the a recent survey indicated a majority of students were in favor of it. Pembroke said national and state data is headed in this direction. Mastro Simone said this will likely be a key issue for law students who smoke. Ball noted a colleague of her suggested a designated entrance or 2 to each building be labeled smoke-free. Stevens said her experience with such bans at Stormont Vail Hospital indicates that people will adapt. She added that perceptually it can look bad when a lot of smokers hang outside of

buildings. Routsong noted that those with windows have complained about second-hand smoke getting in which may be a factor. Ball concluded that action from the WSGA would likely come up soon. Pembroke said Senate should prepare for how we want to have the discussion in the future. He also noted that enforcement will be an issue. Steinroetter asked if there was data on those who smoke in Topeka versus other areas. Sourgens noted that absolute bans will lead to the problems we've been talking about.

- Faculty input needed on what type of direction we want from administration regarding active shooters on campus. Ball has heard concerns about a lack of information about these other than iAlert systems. McHenry said that he invited one of the police officers to come and talk to his class about these types of situations and it was enlightening. Petersen noted that the protocols for a fire are much different than an active shooter; we need education (i.e. what to do in a classroom versus what to do in an office?). Modellmog asked for a best practices list. Sanchez said that it may be expensive, but we should ask for training. Steinroetter always wondered about why classrooms can't be locked? McHenry said the police said to barricade them in an active shooter situation. We should also investigate the services that follow such shootings so that we're prepared with that information. Pembroke noted the literature indicates shooters shoot until they (police or bystanders) start shooting back, so we should focus on 1) getting police there as quickly as possible and 2) ensuring that that shooter can't get to other buildings. Ball asked if it would be appropriate to ask for forums for faculty about this issue; Pembroke said yes it would.
- Need for the Personnel Committee and the Grievance Hearing Committee (Tracy Routsong). Routsong said it had been suggested that perhaps the Personnel committee could move to faculty affairs. This committee would then be tasked with forming the Grievance Hearing Committee when there is a need. Wohl thought this Personnel committee used to be under Human Resources and became the Benefits committee that we know today. Petersen noted that the Grievance Hearing Committee could come under the Senate. It could also be a mix of faculty and staff. He also said this seems more of a Due Process issue. Ball said the rest of the policy works; the question is who appoints the Grievance Hearing Committee. Routsong noted that it is a fast-moving committee. Ball then said that since that is the case, perhaps the executive committee could be in charge of appointing members. Russell said to just make it appointed by the Benefits committee. Pembroke said that the senate is involved in appeals during the termination process; perhaps the "Grievance" process is similar and so it can go along with this. Jackson noted that the Benefits committee would be a better place. The Senate overwhelmingly expressed that the Benefits committee should be the body to oversee the Grievance Hearing Committee.
- Should the handbook include procedure for Performance Improvement Plans—and if so, what should these look like? (Tracy Routsong). Should there be standardization? Wohl said there is standardization for tenure-track individuals in order to terminate them. Pembroke argued this was a related but separate issue and said that we are being asked whether the plan should have specific dates attached to it and should the forms and methods of improvement be standardized. Mastrosimone argued that we would probably want it to be as standardized as possible for employment fairness. Routsong wondered if we should ask Chairs for their thoughts before the Senate acted in any way. Porta wondered who can initiate them; Pembroke said it was Chairs and Deans. Ball summarized that going to the Chairs at this point is key.

XIII. Announcements: None

XIV. President Ball adjourned the meeting at 4:43pm.