

Washburn University
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
February 10, 2025 at 3pm
Meeting in Forum Room Hosted by FS Executive Committee

Present: Cook, Dahl, Davies, DeSota, Dickinson, Francis, Fritch, Hansen, Hartman, Heusi, Holt, Hu, Kay, Kendall-Morwick, Lambing, Lolley, Maxwell, McHenry, Mosier, Perret, Ricklefs, Schmidt, Schnoebelen, Scofield, Sellak, Smith, Sneed, Steffen, Stevens, Toerber-Clark, Wagner

Absent: Miller, Williams

Guests: Bailes, Broxterman, Grospitch, Hutchinson, O'Neill, Worsley, Wood, Enos, Camarda, Florea, Morse, Wynn, Lieurance, Riley

- I. Call to Order at 3:02 pm
- II. Approve minutes- Moved to approve by Cook and seconded by Kay. Motion approved unanimously.
 - January 27, 2025 with Faculty Handbook Handout (pages 2-6)
- III. President's Opening Remarks
 - Lots of things are coming up, and priorities keep coming up in conversations with more coming forward almost daily. I got to speak with the Regents (*at WUBOR Meeting*) on Thursday and asked them to keep values of Washburn, making sure everyone has access to education and a diverse faculty. This will take strategy to navigate. Thanks to Provost Fritch for getting us on the schedule quickly. We received positive feedback from the Regents, encouraging me (*Ricklefs*) to reach out and communicate with them. Now we have a new conversation starting with the bill introduced into the Kansas Legislature about tenure. It feels like we're being hit with a firehose. Exciting things are also happening – celebrating donations, our students (hearing that we are trying to take care of them), also sending back messages that they value faculty.
 - Two weeks from today will have a reception and Question & Answer period. Asking people to fill out questions on an index card so that people who don't want ask themselves they will still have their questions asked. You can also ask in person. Will see if there are "themes" to put questions into a group. I've had some questions about Lecturer promotion process, and think that will come up at this time. I will try to update people as we hear about changes, but things keep coming up.
- IV. WUBOR/KBOR Update- Tonya Ricklefs
 - KBOR – Senate presidents are in a meeting right now (*to discuss HB2348*), hearing that KBOR may be opposing, but things are changing by the hour. Faculty Senate presidents were emailing each other and trying to organize. Will send people to testify from Faculty.
 - WUBOR

V. VPAA Update - Dr. John Fritch

- Interesting times....
- Talking about the Tenure bill later (Discussion Item)
- There are good things going on. 1) (Most Valuable Professor) MVP Day for Basketball on Saturday. Really awesome event. Players identify a faculty member who has made a difference to them. It comes from across campus. Think it's cool when they pick out math and science professors, newer faculty (Matt Ellis math coach).
- We received a 50 million dollar gift and it's all for academics (buildings for academics). Excited the alumni recognize the difference Faculty make in their lives.
- Department of Education and other potential changes - that we don't know what will happen. Right now, NIH funding is gone. What is happening here: 1) Status of students and faculty on campus. When I read the story of Washburn's founding and Ichabod Washburn's reason for contributing, I was applying to Washburn for this position. Washburn was established 160 years ago, and the 14th amendment was ratified 158 years ago, meaning we probably has students on our campus who were not citizens at the time. We have always been open to people who can be on our campus. How do we support students? Obey the rules of government but also stay true to values of Washburn for both students and faculty. The Provost is a member of the Faculty of each School and College. (I think it's cool for Law, maybe a bit scary for School of Nursing). My job is to make sure I'm supportive of all faculty. That is more than just words to me.
- Tenure Bill (C. Holthaus) – This is unbelievable. It came up over the weekend to everyone's surprise. Someone from Emporia will be speaking, but as a private citizen. Still trying to figure out what we are going to do. Mazachek will be there for the hearing tomorrow. She wanted to convey that she is a stalwart supporter of tenure (as is the board), and they will do everything possible to maintain this. Washburn will oppose this bill. Have many things to do (lobbying, individual meetings, Washburn is well respected). Will take questions now but probably won't know all the answers. Francis: Is there a sense of how other institutions are responding? Holthaus: Don't know for sure. Don't know what Emporia State will do, but we know KU and K-State are opposing. Lambing: You mentioned someone speaking out as a citizen. Can you give some guidance on boundaries related to that. Holthaus: Person speaking as a citizen is speaking on behalf of the bill. Right not it is too hard to give specific guidance for this case (*because so many things are still unknown/changing*)... We will think about the broader question and try to give guidance. Fritch: Make sure to make clear you are speaking as a citizen, don't use Washburn technology or Washburn email address (unless you've been asked by President's office to do so.) I have some history with this coming from Iowa. They have been proposing this for 10 years. The first time it was very sudden. The plea that was

successful was “slow down, this is very fast.” The second year, the compromise was “we will do post-tenure review if you’ll stop.” The third year, relationships became critical. Talk to people off campus. People who are sponsoring this don’t like faculty much. When Business and Industry came on board, then it tended to stop. Faculty are largely independent contractors helping the community. The Universities showed this did not save the University money. There is a 10% savings in (*tenured*) faculty salaries since their jobs are secure. More turnover will cost more for searches and throw accreditation into jeopardy. I am very certain salaries would skyrocket in different areas if we’re trying to keep them. Would make it harder to recruit if other schools still have it (*tenure*) and we don’t. We have to educate people about the benefits of tenure. I get to sit on local Chamber of Business board, so will educate them about why this is not a wise move. Cook: Do we know if this was voted on by ESU Faculty? Fritch: Don’t know, so I will answer broadly. We have been in touch with KU to see what they are doing. Trying to align efforts. They didn’t know that this was coming up. Morse: A question about timing. I appreciate the economic/community argument, but we just got this news over the weekend. That’s long-term building (*economic/community discussions*). Do we think we can turn down the spigot, and then come back after to do the long-term? Fritch: We’re trying to decide where there might be support for this, where we need to address the issue. If this is like bills in other states, it will keep coming back. It only takes one person to sponsor a bill, and then it has to move through the process. How do we handle this and educate the lawmakers?

- Smith: A question for Cynthia (*Holthaus*)? Just want to make sure that language wise, it won’t matter if we aren’t a KBOR. (*Holthaus*: Yes, language affects all post-secondary institutions). What happens if it goes all the way through? How is it legal to take something away that has been given. Francis: That issue is being litigated in other parts of the country. It’s one thing to say “henceforth” but to take away without due process is another thing. (Particularly trying to take it away without the due process from those who have already received it.) That is the argument, but it’s not resolved yet. Morse: This creates another legal argument, because it would cost lots of money if everyone fights to keep their right. Francis: It was sponsored by Lovett (attempt by Emporia State to do an end-run around having to pay for taking rights away.) Florea: What is the motivation from professors like us in support of the bill? Fritch: Almost everyone can point to a professor who was “bad” and would have been fired if that person who didn’t already have tenure. “I have a friend who’s kid couldn’t pass X and it’s all the professor’s fault.” Once that story is accepted, it’s hard to dislodge. People also say, “No one in the real world gets a job forever..” I’m not sure if that’s true. Ask people in other industries, and they don’t really fire people if they’ve been in their position for many years. We probably do more evaluation than many companies. Sellak: How does this affect petitions that are put into your office this

semester? Fritch: It does nothing. The bill says you can still have Tenure and Promotion, but can't have the property right with it. Hard to think through what it means without the property right. Kay: Not sure who this goes to? Are we at a point where we are making plans for what would happen in a post-tenure Washburn. Fritch: There are some schools that don't have tenure. We haven't done that (*think about a post-tenure Washburn*) and I don't want to do that. Ricklefs: Asking this question since I have had to testify for other things. Sometimes I've gotten approval from Washburn and other times I went through different routes. Sometimes they ask questions afterwards (*when you are no longer testifying*). How should faculty respond? Holthaus: You might say, "Let me get back to you", "I'm happy to get you the answer in writing," etc. Always wise to make sure you understand what they are asking. Always need to let Washburn know if you are testifying (now or in other situations), just so that there are no surprises ("How do you feel about X's testimony?"). Morse: I am signed up to testify tomorrow. What should I say about whom I'm representing? (President of AAUP vs Washburn University - *Holthaus indicates AAUP*) Ricklefs: Just be aware that people can ask questions, even if you don't testify. Make sure you don't make a casual comment that could lead to unintended consequences.

- VI. Consent Agenda – Moved to accept by Stevens, seconded by Lolley. Motion passes unanimously.
 - Faculty Senate Committee Reports-
 - Graduate Council Minutes (11-4-2024) (pg 7-8)
 - University Committee Reports-
- VII. Old Business
- VIII. New Business-
- IX. Information Items-
 - Presentation by Chief Enos:
 - Ricklefs: There have been multiple questions about process. What is the protection of faculty and students? (in the safest way possible.) Enos: I'm here because if you have concerns, I have concerns. Most of the questions are about Federal Law Enforcement coming to campus. We really haven't seen much of that even regionally. Will send article about where regional Law Enforcement is coming from. I am concerned that we are starting to see people taking advantage of the headlines and impersonating Law Enforcement. If Law Enforcement appears in your space and they demand something, reach out to us. You can say something like "I'm happy to help. Let me get Washburn University Law Enforcement since they are the best to help us. (phone number is 785-670-1300) It's unlikely that legitimate Law Enforcement will come into your space. Professional courtesy means they will usually reach out to us first. This is true anytime for any group of Law Enforcement. This is tough to be faced with when they come suddenly. Schnoebelen: Would a member of WUPO be with them? Enos: We would do our best to never go to a classroom, period. Don't want to be disruptive. We want to not create

noise, but that may not always happen. If there is any pushback, then it's time to call 911 because real Law Enforcement should not try to prevent you from contacting Washburn Law Enforcement. We want to keep everyone safe. Impersonation did happen at Temple University (students impersonating) but they are now facing charges.

- When we've seen something like this in the past, it is victimization through phone or email. If you have students dealing with stuff like that, please help them contact us. We are not here to check immigration status. Our job is to make sure we have a safe campus environment. Heusi: In nursing, we are sometimes not on Washburn property, but we are acting on behalf of Washburn. Can we still call you? Enos: Yes, please give us a call. Ricklefs: I had this issue when I was out of the country. The people perpetrating fraud figured out who local officers were and used those names to say I couldn't get back into the country. Enos: We've seen students victimized by these exact tactics. It's easy for me to say call Law Enforcement, but not everyone feels safe with that. You can also call Eric Grospitch (VP for Student Life), Mark Fried (University counsel)... Our first step is to make sure we know who they are (*the people making contact*) and the second is are they legal. Grospitch: Remember everything is covered by FERPA, so you can't give them anything beyond name and the warrants won't likely cover them.
- Fritch: I appreciate working with Chief Enos. My impression is that he is really concerned about our students. Enos: If you have concerns, please reach out. I'm also happy to come meet with a smaller group.

X. Discussion Items-

- House bill for removal of Tenure – Ricklefs: Lots of this discussion happened earlier. We can still talk about this now. Questions I'm being sent are about the Department of Education federally or how losing grants is impacting Washburn. Does anyone have other questions?
- Francis: Have we missed the deadline for a representative of Washburn testifying tomorrow? Is a representative of Washburn testifying tomorrow? Holthaus: That has yet to be determined, but Dr. Mazacheck will be there. Waiting to see if she can be included in testimony. Ricklefs: Just to clarify, there are other conversations happening. What you see is not the whole picture. Hartman: Is anyone planning on attending tomorrow? Ricklefs: Sometimes difficult to get on the list. Morse: Just found out FHSU AAUP President is presenting via web. Smith: Kansas S(tate?) Chapter of AAUP is testifying and it's good. Morse: Lots of voices coming from a lot of different places. Fritch: We are "on record" for opposing this bill. KBOR attorney is going to testify against it. KU and K-State are also on record as opposing.
- Morse: The situation with ESU is blowing my mind. This puts KBOR in a tough situation when a citizen brings something forth. Fritch: Other universities are aligning behind a different position. Can make arguments that this is changing our (universities') business model. We need to build how tenure impacts our institution, our students, etc. I don't want to imply

you need tenure to make an impact, but it does enable institutions to do many things. I've often said there are only two things that the US leads the world in: Agriculture and Higher Education. We need to be careful when we talk about making education more like business (where we can have bankruptcies). Cook: We know for sure KU and K-State are going to oppose, but do we know about the others? Fritch: No, can't know for sure. Dickenson: Do we know whose name is on bill, or just coming out of committee? Holthaus: Just that it's coming out of committee. Ricklefs: Get there early if you're going. Holthaus: It should be streamed live. Steffens: Changes being made so that more people can show up for this (based on what I've heard through the grapevine...) Ricklefs: We're all in wait and see mode to see what these things mean. Students are asking if Department of Education folds, do loans have to be paid back? Be prepared for lots of questions. Know whom you can send students to (for expressed concerns).

XI. Announcements

- Reception after February 24, 2025 Faculty Senate Meeting at Ross House. Question and Answer time – Index card and in-person questions. This has a 5 pm start-time, so will try to make this meeting end on time. If there are specific people whom you think should be there, please let Tonya Ricklefs know so that we can pass that information onto Dr. Mazachek. She does understand maybe everyone can't stay until 7, so no need to worry if you can't stay the whole time.
- Grospitch: Our WSGA president submitted language in opposition to bill on behalf of SGA presidents.
- Career Fair next week, frequently attended by lots of outside law enforcement. Many federal groups have withdrawn since they don't know if they can hire.
- Fritch: Take care of yourselves. It's a time of change. Know how much I appreciate the work we do here. A quick shout out to Eric Grospitch. There's lots of change going on in his office. There are a lot more students than faculty. He's another person who has the best for students at the top of his mind.

XII. Adjournment at 4:09