

Washburn University
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
April 21, 2025 at 3pm
Meeting in Kansas 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, Miller, Ricklefs, Schmidt, Schnoebelen, Scofield, Sellak, Smith, Toerber-Clark, Wagner, Williams

Absent: Mosier, Perret, Sneed, Steffen, Stevens

Guests: Bailes, Broxterman, Hutchinson, O'Neil, Burdick, Wood, Erby, Morse, Fried, Jackson, Frank, Peterson-Daly, Wade, Sollars

- I. Call to Order at 3:02 pm
- II. Approve minutes- Moved to approve by Cook, seconded by Kay. Wagner mentions that there was a misspelling in the minutes (Alex vs ALEC) which will be corrected. Motion passes unanimously (with correction).
 - April 7th Minutes (pages 2-8)
- III. President's Opening Remarks
 - Lots of discussion today. This is almost my last opportunity to say some things. One of them is that I want to highlight the importance of the process and the discussions that we have here. I learn things that are new all the time. That is so valuable. I hope all of you feel like we have had the opportunity to do some impactful things. It can seem very slow as we move through. Thanks for bringing things to the table and taking the time to work through these things. Because of participation, I have made invaluable connections across campus from these meetings. Senate has helped making connections at a time when they are valuable. Shared Governance makes Washburn stronger. It also helps with human connections.
- IV. WUBOR/KBOR Update- Tonya Ricklefs
 - KBOR - none
 - WUBOR – Will talk on May 1st as the outgoing Faculty Senate President (just to close out the year). If there are things you would like for me to share, please email them to me. I use those when I address WUBOR.
- V. VPAA Update - Dr. John Fritch
 - We're headed into the home stretch. Three weeks of classes and then finals and graduation. (Fourteen celebrations this year between WU Tech and WU.) Looking forward to that this year. White Concert Hall will allow us to shake hands/connect with students as they pass in and out.
 - We're preparing to move out of buildings. If you have questions, contact your Deans since Eric Just has to coordinate the whole campus.

- The new Student Government President is here. Kate Coulter - I consider myself a sophomore with a major in Communications and a minor Leadership. Ryan Durst is Vice-President. He will graduate in Fall 25, so we will have to replace for second semester.
- Wood (outgoing VP) – So awesome to sit in on meetings and get familiar with names and faces. Thanks for your continued support of students. Burdick – Echo what Bella said. Thanks for all you do. Appreciated working with the Faculty Senate President on some tenure concerns, think we should keep relationships up. Ricklefs – Other Faculty Senate Presidents complemented George Burdick's Statement about Tenure. It was good to reflect our experience here (vs other universities)
- Fritch – I have enjoyed working with both Wood and Burdick. As an aside, my wife has been very impressed with the students at Washburn and the teachers who come out of Washburn. (She's had a chance to work with many of them.)
- Shared Governance Committee – President will be appointing before the end of the semester. 1) Address policy for Shared Governance on campus and 2) Look at Academic Freedom Policy
- Senior Lecturers – Faculty Handbook Committee has been working on the lecturer promotion policy for past couple meetings. We will have Marc Fried, Cynthia Holthaus, and myself work on the language for that next Fall. Several Deans are here to help reflect on the Not-Tenured Termination Policy (*for cause*). (Gave them permission to leave after they talk if they need to get to other things.)
- Any Questions- *none were asked*.
- Consent Agenda – Moved to approve by Schmidt, seconded by Lolley. Passed unanimously. (Wagner noted that the Faculty Handbook Committee minutes were some that had not been previously presented. The more recent meetings minutes were accepted in our April 7th meeting.)
- Faculty Senate Committee Reports-
 - Academic Affairs Minutes 3-31-25 (pgs 9-11)
 - Academic Affairs Minutes 4-14-25 (pg 12)
 - Faculty Affairs Minutes 3-3-25 (pgs 13-14)
- University Committee Reports-
 - Faculty Handbook Minutes 12-4-24 (pgs 15-17)
 - Faculty Handbook Minutes 1-13-25 (pgs 18-19)
 - Graduate Council Minutes 2-3-25 (pgs 20-21)
 - Graduate Council Minutes 3-3-25 (pg 22)

VI. Old Business

- 25-16 Social Work Healthcare BSW Inactivation (Rhonda Peterson Dealey) (pgs 23-24) Moved by Kay, seconded by Cook. Motion passes unanimously. Going forward to General Faculty as an informational item.
 - Dealey – Lack of interest in this concentration, more interest in the Master's level for students than the Bachelors level. Hope it will incentivize students to move onto Masters. Heusi – Will there be

electives at undergrad level? Dealey – Yes, but won't be able to have this concentration. Williams – Are there other concentrations? Dealey – Yes, but students don't have to earn a concentration to get their bachelors.

- 25-15 Amendment to Faculty Handbook for Not Tenured Faculty (Wagner) (pgs (25-35) -This is the second reading. Move to approve by Miller, seconded by Cook.
 - Smith – Sent out information (via Faculty Senate secretary) from AAUP which might pertain to this policy. First one is from a Q&A source. Second one is from their “handbook”? Designed as a template that an institution could use. Wanted to make sure this was made available to this body. One thing that is important to note is that AAUP does not distinguish between tenured and not-tenured.
 - Ricklefs – Would like to let senators speak first, but would like to take advantage of having Dean's here.
 - I. Frank – Based on what I read in the minutes and from people who are on the Faculty Handbook Committee, we discussed this quite a bit. Some of the issue is that this pertains to “for cause” termination which is usually for something that is so significant/egregious that they need to be out of the classroom now. It is not safe for students anymore. In our area, the steps are Department Chair, Associate Dean, Dean, then Provost, and the Head of HR and Legal Counsel. Do we feel a Faculty Advisory Council would change the thought process of the Provost? Did not feel like it would. Had numerous discussions about levels of protection with those who are involved. For me individually, I remember one time someone said you don't write policy to appease people. You write policy that will make a difference. I don't know this policy would really make a difference. Why would we involve additional people and increase their workload, if it won't make a difference. Others may have different recollections, but that's my memory.
 - II. Erby – I think you did a good job of representing conversations. Again, emphasize this is termination For Cause. That tends to be even more egregious since it's possible to let a contract not renew if the person is a lecturer. It could involve a student, so I don't want to bring more people into that person's business. I think there are many reasons lecturers don't feel valued and I don't think this will actually help that situation. We would be saying we are doing something, but this policy would never be used. When you've seen the administrative side, you realize that this won't accomplish what it was intended to accomplish.

- I. Miller – Just to point out something: this isn't just lecturers, but at anyone who isn't tenured. How many of those steps are required by law or university policy? Frank – That was just SAS that I was talking about. At each step, would try to vet/assess the situation and see if any other options are available. Miller – Are those steps mandatory? Doesn't sound like they are if they are different between each division. The problem is that there isn't one clear policy. To say this policy wouldn't be used, implies that it won't change, but it could disappear with a different Dean.
- II. Lambing – Policy mentioned in Faculty Handbook, doesn't mention HR or General Counsel. Fritch – Won't find it in the Tenured For Cause Termination (due to Attorney -Client privilege). HR doesn't make a decision, but provides guidance. If a Dean skipped those steps, they would likely not have a job afterwards.
- III. Kay – You mentioned policy wouldn't be used. Erby – We want something that will give protections, but I don't think this does that. Maxwell – Do you have suggestions on what we should add to actually provide protection. Erby – I don't know that you can do it in a way. Maxwell – It seems like it would be more egregious with a Tenured person. Erby – With lecturers, you can just not renew contract, so the reason to use this policy would mean it's more egregious.
- IV. Smith – I keep hearing "in the classroom" which is relevant, but would like to call attention to the list of items that someone could be dismissed for. "Engaging in actions that materially disrupt..." If I were a tenure track professor and the University claimed I was materially disruptive and I did not believe this was the case, I would want faculty involved in some way. Maybe the language isn't perfect, but it would be good. This past fall, suppose a not-tenured faculty member helped organize a protest during the Israel Hamas protests. I would want some faculty input. Schmidt – So then they would just not reappoint instead of using this process. Also, I'm not sure the Senior Lecturer is the counter argument to this. I think the Academic Freedom Policy will be a better counter argument. Miller – It doesn't contain any actual punishments. The

Prohibition would come from the Dean/Provost. We still need a strong policy that allows faculty input.

- III. Jackson – I will say the first thing to understand is the committee looked at both things. The questions of whether this is a desirable policy came up AFTER the language was worked on. I think the language is good. The disagreement was more about whether it would actually protect the faculty member. Frank and Erby brought up some really good points about why it would not be likely to be used even if it was present. I actually voted for the policy on the grounds that it would not do harm, and it might provide a check at the very end of the process (in the case of a rogue dean/bad actor). I don't think this is a very strong protection. I don't think you can have that with people who are year-to-year, but it is something. The Faculty Advisory Group can be called, but the Provost does not have to listen to the Group. On the other hand, it is something.
- IV. Sollars – We haven't had to terminate many people For Cause across campus. There is a reason we don't talk about this, to make it a clean cut. It does not put colleagues in an awkward spot, or lead to potential discussion with other colleagues. I will wait out people rather than getting everyone together to deal with an issue (HR, Legal Counsel, VPAA/Provost). This helps make sure all the facts are in place. What happens when a colleague is terminated, maybe you know more than you want to know. Will you be willing to serve on the committee? The protection has a cost. The protection is not very big, but the cost to the institution/committee members could be very big.
 - I. Kendall-Morwick – Personally, I take guidance from AAUP seriously. The non-reappointment vs For Cause. I think AAUP is seeking more protection than just for this. Lolley – Are you talking about the language where it says terminated or not-renewed? Kendall-Morwick – Yes, referencing that.
 - II. Miller – Policy says specifically members will be outside the unit, so that is written in. Secondly, probably won't be used and that is good. Regardless, if someone is not renewed, they would be paid for a little longer with the non-renewal process. The ones who really do commit some horrible act, will go through the process at their level. BUT what if it was some other Dean/Bad Dean. Yes, of course people will talk to Counsel and HR. If we assume an incompetent Dean, then skips other steps and goes to Provost, this policy would make sure there are at least

- three other faculty will see the process and that is one more step which will make it a little more protective. Need to make sure that the faculty member can remove themselves from the process at any point.
- III. Dickinson – Worried about letting someone run out the contract instead of firing For Cause. This could be dangerous. We also don't know what biases anyone is bringing to the table. Not having this (faculty) input is dangerous.
 - IV. *Summary from Faculty Senate Secretary: senators from a couple of departments mentioned that in their experience having people from across campus (Faculty Advisory Council) know what happened in a For Cause Termination for a Not-Tenured position could have created more harm.*
 - V. Smith – FAC should not have been part of the Tenured process then, but since we passed it then, the two of these should stand or fall together.
 Lambing – Wasn't the charge to the Faculty Handbook Committee to make the protection more robust. The conversation across this body was to have more Faculty Input. Were all of our discussions in the Fall for naught? I think our conversations were robust and they should matter, but I want to make sure our Not-Tenured folks feel valued. Dr. Erby thinks this isn't the way and Senior Lecturer is, but I don't think it's an either/or situation. Fritch – Erby or Frank, one of them said that we worked on the language and it was the best it could be. I think the committee took it very seriously, and you heard one of the deans say they support it. I don't vote on the committee. It's important to note that it wasn't just administration voting no.
 - VI. Miller – So we are adding faculty input with this policy. I think it makes it less likely this policy will be implemented. This addition won't stop someone from being fired if the person should be removed. It will not stop any of the ways we can remove someone.
 - VII. Wagner (responding to Lambing) – We (Faculty Handbook Committee) did look at our charge from the minutes of the General Faculty Meeting and it wasn't to come up with a stronger policy, but to get the language that was being suggested by the proposed amendments.
 - VIII. Francis – My comments are really more back to what the Deans will talk about. Are we using the lens of

how frequently they are used, or are we using something as a protection to prevent capricious decisions. By its presence, does it prevent us from using this. I think the tenure protections do this – not used regularly is not a measure of whether it is needed. Does this protection as written give important security that administrators will consider?

- IX. Kay – As someone who started as a lecturer and am still not tenured, I'm hearing conflation between "For Cause" and "Letting contract run out." I'm also worried about the make-up of the committee. It does not seem to give the person who is selected to have a chance to back out. If we are thinking about firing someone for cause, this could create a dangerous situation for the three faculty members, even if they put forward the recommendation for the person not to be fired. This is an extreme example but think it should be considered.
- X. Schnobelen – Will echo what Kay said. We do care about our jobs and when it is threatened, then people can react badly. It is important to be cognizant of that. If the goal is to make not-tenured faculty feel valued, then we should have more conversations about things for not-tenured. Also want a point of clarification. What happens if we send this forward to General Faculty? Can it be added without the consent of the Faculty Handbook Committee? Fritch – I believe it can go to General Faculty, but if it passes here, it would come back to FHC (which is advisory to Provost, who is advisory to the President). FHC does not have to pass it for the Provost to advise the President. What we recommend, does not have to be done by the President. Having a good president, this is important. If you are asked to serve on Shared Governance, that is really important. That will impact this institution for a long time.
- XI. Lambing – Does A, B, and C in the full document apply to all faculty? (Yes – Fried)
- XII. Williams – It seems like the whole discussion for this particular conversation is putting the cart before the horse. It seems like the not-tenured faculty don't have these rights. I'm confused if we are trying to say not-tenured people have the same protections as tenured. Miller – No, we do have some protections, we are just trying keep someone from getting fired for them.

- XIII. Scofield – Do we need to send this to the Faculty Affairs committee to get the wording adjusted? I don't want to pass it here and then make changes in General Faculty.
- XIV. Cook – Want to restate what Fritch said, this will go to President Mazachek. Does it need to go to the board? (No.)
- XV. Heusi – We have lots of lecturers in SON, so anything we can do to make them feel valued, we should do it. Also, if we have something that will help us remove faculty that might get a dangerous person out of the classroom sooner.
- XVI. Fritch – We do have a policy in place for not-tenured faculty. I think adding this step would actually make it less likely for this process to be used.
- V. Call to question by Lolley, seconded by Schnoebelen. 24 in favor, none against, one abstention.
- VI. Holt – Point of clarification. What will happen after we vote for this? If we pass it, then we can vote for it to go onto General Faculty? Schmidt – This would only amend what was already passed. That policy is in place (Dean, Provost). Holt – In substance we are voting whether or not to add Faculty Advisory Council to this language. (Yes)
- VII. Motion to vote for amendment – 12 for, 11 against, 3 abstaining.
- VIII. Schmidt – IF we don't vote to send it forward, then it won't. Lolley – If we don't send it forward, then it will go back to FHC and...? Fritch – I will take their recommendation plus the recommendation from this body to the president. Lolley – I want to make sure faculty know that it did not fall through the cracks. Ricklefs – want to make sure discussions continue, and in some way it is communicated to all faculty that this work did continue. (Looking at the Provost). Miller – Given that it was General Faculty that made the charge, I think we need to pass it on. I move that this goes forward, Scofield seconds. Kay – I agree it needs to go forward in some way, but how are we doing that? Schnoebelen - To my mind, it is not something we would vote on in General Faculty, but we should at least discuss. Schmidt – What was the motion that was made? Maybe we need to amend that. What benefit would be having the General Faculty hash this out. (Miller modified to make sure that it would be a voting item, and Scofield agrees). Scofield – Not sure we send the same thing back to the exact same people if they have input from General Faculty. Smith - I would definitely want the ability to vote on this. Miller – The vote was about

as close as it could get. Let's send it to General Faculty to see what they think about it. If General Faculty comes back 50-50, then that will be a statement. Kay – So just to clarify, when we put this forward, are we voting to approve or disapprove this policy? (and then back to FHC).

Schnoebelen - I understand the symbolism, but it seems more appropriate to go back without a vote. Lambing – if FHC is advisory to the Provost, could the Provost take the language directly to the President (if General Faculty votes to send it to FHC). Fritch – Could I? Maybe, but I would not. For much the same reason I wouldn't skip other steps. I would be careful about voting to send it as an action item. If FHC made a change to language, would it then go back to General Faculty? I understand why you want to keep the process moving, but I hope there would be some changes if it goes back. I think Faculty Senate made some comments and FHC might take those things under consideration.

Schmidt – It will go forward either way, as a vote or as an information item. We don't have majority of total people from this body (since 3 abstained). If we want to know how overall faculty feels, then a vote may be important. I don't think it will go in with the language as it is. Miller – I would hope the general feeling wouldn't change, but ultimately if we don't know what faculty at large feel about it, then we can't ask Provost/President to push through. Morse – Wasn't here last fall, but I am quite impressed with how thoughtful this process has been, but I think it would be important to inform General Faculty as to where this is in the process and get some input.

- IX. Vote on this as going forward to General Faculty as a voting item – 21 for, 0 no's, 4 abstentions. How will we present this at General Faculty? Fritch will set up a meeting with Faculty Senate President/Officers before the 30th.

VII. New Business-

VIII. Information Items-

- Introduction of New WSGA President -happened during Dr. Fritch's time

IX. Discussion Items-

X. Announcements –

- If you advise students, make sure they know when and where they are graduating.
- Probably good to review success week policies with your Chair/Dean. Can also look policy up.
- Apeiron this Friday – Rick Barker is the Last Lecture.
- Debate –We have a team in final four, whole team is in 3rd. Maddie finished in final 8 as a freshman and one of top 4 speakers.

- Fritch – Walking through Alan Bearman noted Debate trophies are on display – and recruiters wanted to keep them on display. It's a way to say we are great at academics. These awards are ways for WU to talk about our high quality of academics. There is serious academic work on our campus. We are seeing many high quality students who want to come to Washburn.
- Next week is transition meeting for new/old senators. There are snacks. We need quorum to vote in new officers.

XI. Adjournment at 5:02 pm