**Faculty Senate Minutes**

**04/22/2020 Regular Business Meeting 3:00-5:00 pm via ZOOM**

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

**ROLL CALL**

* Present: Michael Boatright, Chancellor Kelli Brown, Kristin Calvert, Todd Collins, Heather Mae Erickson, Enrique Gómez, Yancey Gulley, Jeremy Jones, Sudhir Kaul, Rebecca Lasher, Will Lehman, Niall Michelsen, Sean Mulholland, Amy Murphy-Nugen, Kadie Otto, Matthew Rave, Carrie Rogers, Ken Sanney, Roya Scales, Ophir Sefiha, Damon Sink, Richard Starnes, Martin Tanaka, Peter Savage, Cheryl Waters-Tormey
* Members with Proxies: Elizabeth Tait
* Members Absent: Saheed Aderinto, Indi Bose, Sharon Metcalfe, Charmion Rush, Laura Wright (on leave Spring 2020)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of Regular Business Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2020

* Poll anywhere was used. Minutes approved.

Approval of Regular Business Meeting Minutes from March 25, 2020

* Poll anywhere was used. Minutes approved.

**REPORTS**

**Chancellor’s Report: Kelli Brown**

Chancellor Brown thanked everyone for their steadfast patience and flexibility throughout the evolution of this pandemic. As a community, we have rallied together and helped each other in ways big and small and she encourages us to stay positive and stay safe. We are not out of the woods and the repercussions will be felt for many months to come.

**Actions in process:**

* We have begun the process of pro rata refunds to students for housing and dining payments and expect that process to wrap up by the end of April.
* We are working with the UNC System Office on budget priorities going into the next legislative session that will begin later this month. WCU’s funding for NC Promise and the steam plant are both still on the short list and that list is indeed MUCH shorter than it was before the pandemic.
* We are developing criteria for distribution of grants to students funded through the CARES Act. The UNC System is on tap to receive an estimated $174 million through the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act to assist with revenue lost because of COVID-19.
  + Western Carolina University’s share of that is approximately $8.6 million, with 50 percent of that amount going towards direct relief to students and the remainder to help offset costs associated with COVID-19.
* We are also working diligently to outline the myriad issues that we will need to tackle as we turn our eye to the fall semester.

Later this summer and into fall, we anticipate that we will need to address other issues such as:

* Orientation and other summer programming scheduled for July and August
* Ensuring completion of the move-out process for students whose belongings remain in the residence halls
* Rescheduling May commencement
* Options for employees if the restrictions remain in place and/or remote work
* Contingency and scenario planning for fall semester

As you know, this pandemic has been a rapidly moving and evolving situation, and it probably will remain so for the foreseeable future.

*Question: A lot of states and private schools announcing cuts...any discussion for WCU?   
Response: WCU has good financial footing and continues to have good leadership across campus. At this point in time, we have not heard anything at the system level. Right now we are doing our very best that we continue to work and move forward.*

*Question: When the 2008-09 recession hit, we were hit hard. We had to make deep cuts. It is something a lot of us are worried about.  
Response: I am aware of it and familiar with what WCU went through. Again, none of us know how quickly the economy will turn back around from this. There are a lot of ifs out there. This is a little different. I hear what you are saying and I am aware. I will do my best to be transparent as we can with everyone at the university moving forward.*

*Question: What is your read on the football season beginning in fall...marching band...etc.?   
Response: The President met with myself and others, it is not that we aren’t involving athletics. Even though they won’t be on the call, athletics will be part of the conversation.*

**Provost’s Report: Richard Starnes**

We recently completed a Blackboard login analysis and determined there were 904 students that had not logged in since 3/23/2020.

We are working on tracking withdrawals and looking at enrollment and enrollment management.

We are looking into contingency plans moving forward, and Interim Provost Starnes is bringing a group together to discuss challenges we may face in the fall, such as:

* Altering calendar
* Other institutions
* Hybrid model
* Online model

We will be using some one-time funds to pay faculty to do online course development. Associate Provost Brandon Schwab is working on this.

We have suspended the College of Business Dean search for now. We have identified finalists and will invite them to campus at a later date.

There should be an announcement about the College of Health and Human Sciences Dean coming in the next two weeks.

*Question: We are hearing a lot about testing and local testing. There are people in the university that have expertise and we have the infrastructure to do this. Any thoughts to do testing at WCU?  
Response: This is an interesting idea. We have not had this discussion yet. We know there are folks and we do have the lab, we are not sure of the sustainability or legal entanglements involved., but we will dig into it a little further to see all of the possibilities.*

*Question: Have we solved the mystery at HHS?  
Response: I suspect they are all caught up in COVID; we have not seen a follow-up report.*

*Further discussion proceeded.*

**Chair’s Report: Enrique Gómez**

The University Athletics committee will now give a report in the fall.

The Taskforce on Student Mental Health needs time to process language and the crisis. We will continue the work over the summer and present something later on.

Received feedback from faculty about remote working and transitions. 26 of 41 say things are going well. We also heard good responses about how the university has been communicating. Many concerns have to do with technology and infrastructure.

The Faculty Assembly Executive Committee asked for a report that was delivered last week.

*Question: We are using the LMS so much and are looking to reduce cheating. Is the university going to put in more technology for proctoring?  
Response: The system that the UNC system used went down due to COVID- 19. We are looking at a number of options. There are many online proctoring packages with lots of options.*

**Staff Senate Chair: Alison Joseph**

Staff Senate has been focused on communication this month. We remain in regular contact with senior administration regarding questions and concerns of campus community members.

We also remain in frequent contact with our counterparts at other UNC campuses through the Staff Assembly. We provide feedback to inform system-level discussions, particularly those with Matt Brody who heads Human Resources for the UNC System. I would note that from what I’ve heard from sister campuses, the timeliness and thoroughness of campus communication that we have received at WCU has been excellent.

This month, for our regular Question of the Month data collection, we are asking about telecommuting and remote work, and trying to capture information about what is working and where folks are struggling, so we can begin to record lessons learned from this period.

As I mentioned last month, we recently started up a Facebook group called WCU Employees. All campus staff, faculty, and administration are welcome to join. This is a good place to share news and resources with each other, especially when we are physically separated. More than 150 campus employees have joined.

We recently had elections and yesterday we were able to notify newly-elected senators. Officer elections for the upcoming academic year will take place next month. Ben Pendry will chair the Senate next year, and he is developing his proposal for Senate initiatives for the coming year.

For community service, we continue to advocate for engagement but also to encourage folks to exercise caution about getting out into the community. Most opportunities currently are around food preparation or delivery. I would also like to mention that the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning selected the Staff Senate as one of the Top Community Engagement Teams at Western Carolina University for the 2019-2020 academic year.

On behalf of the staff, thank you for all you are doing to support our students and our community!!

**Student Government Association Report: Dawson Spencer**

**UNC ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT GOVERNMENTS**

* $65,000.00 -> Total
* $3,400.00 -> WCU
* BCBSNC two Anonymous Donor matched us with an unknown total

**SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING**

* Supp. Funding #2 (FBLA-PBL)
* Supp. Funding #3 (Finance Club)
* Supp. Funding #1 (Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc - Zeta Xi Chapter)
  + Student Senate Allocation $3,000

**INTERNAL ACTIVITIES**

* Discussion about ETSU Bus Trip where 60 Students attended and were transported to Johnson City to support the Men’s Basketball Team
* SGA Office Plans Presentation – SGA office will be moving from the second floor of the UC to the first floor
* Chair Nominations
  + Diversity Committee (Aniyah Henderson)
  + Campus Safety Committee (Susannah Lester)
* Election Report (Alejandra Cespedes) – we hosted SGA Elections two months ago and the 97th Session Student Body President and Vice Presidents winners are Dawson Spencer (me) and Aaron Speyer

**RESOLUTIONS**

* **S20-04 Grade Replacement Policy** If the University looks favorably upon the resolution: when a student repeats a course, the highest letter grade will be the one that is used in the calculation of the student’s grade point average and towards graduation.
* S20-05 Elections Draft
* S20-06 Sponsorships
* S20-07 Spanish Resources
* S20-08 R&R Logo Development
* S20-09 Greek Deferred Recruitment
* S20-10 2020-2021 Membership Compensation Act
* S20-11 Sine Die

(Note that none of these resolutions have been distributed yet but will be in the next week. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Most of these resolutions cover complexities of campus. These resolutions only call upon the university to have such conversations.)

**COUNCIL and COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**APRC Report: Ken Sanney**

APRC has reviewed over 100 proposals in the last couple months. We are down to 4 left for review.

We also have the University Withdrawal Policy resolution to review a little later in the meeting.

**FAC Report: Amy Murphy-Nugen**

FAC will report out later in the meeting under Old Business.

**CRC Report: Elizabeth Tait**

No report for CRC.

**EXTERNAL REPORTS**

**Coulter Faculty Commons: Jonathan Wade**

**LMS Review Update**

Thank you to the senate. We have been able to eliminate a good number of false positives in the reading Provost Starnes shared earlier. The clearest picture you can get is to go to the retention center within the blackboard course so you can see the last time the student has logged in.

We are continuing with the LMS search. We extended the pathfinders reviews to April 30, 2020. This should not impact our ability to review the data and make a recommendation on which LMS is the front runner. It must be in place Spring 2021. Blackboard will go away Summer 2021. We are on track.

**Office of Advancement: Jamie Raynor**

A one-page report was shared with senate.

**Fundraising Update**

Fiscal Year 2020 Fundraising Year to date - July 1, 2019 through April 20, 2020:

Gifts/Cash $6,380,628.34

Pledges $2,466,708.27

Private Grants (through Q3) $1,116,189.62

FY20 Total to Date $9,963,526.23 (79.4% of $12,554,690 goal)

Total Gifts: 7,453 Total Hard Credit Donors: 2,869

Remaining FY20 Advancement Priorities

* Wellbeing of our alumni and donors through thousands of “check-in” calls by our staff and Chatty Cat student callers through mid-May
* Online Alumni Engagement (Zoom socials, launch of digital book club, cultural arts and academic opportunities)
* Solicitations for student emergency funds through email, direct mail, and social media will be ongoing through June 30th with a special campaign on Tuesday, May 5 as #GivingTuesdayNow. We have partnered with Jackson County non-profits to present a united campaign for COVID-19 related support on that day.
* Communication and transparency to our donors regarding volatile economy/market and impact on endowment funds.

**Policy 104 – Review of Gifts that Affect Academic Freedom or Curriculum**

One New Program Endowment for FY20 include:

* Jack and Judy Brinson Honors College Program Endowment for Experiential Learning
* Created with a $300,000 gift in October 2019
* For undergraduate students and programs within the Honors College including experiential learning support, undergraduate research, study abroad, training, etc.

**Faculty Senate Student Emergency Fund Support**

Thank you to all the current and former supporters to the Faculty Senate Emergency Fund, which has supported students during the COVID-19 pandemic with over $60,000 awarded.

*Question: From your perspective, will the changes in gifting and endowment from the Great Recession have an impact here in this day and time with the pandemic we are in?  
Response: Jamie will share some historical data with senate. In her experience people give in other ways and that is what we have seen. It may delay the gift, but it doesn’t seem to stop people from giving.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**SAI to Student Perception of Learning Update**

Amy Murphy-Nugen shared several documents with senate.

**Overall Approach:**

* Scaffold implementation of initiatives
* Gather continuous feedback until fully implemented
  + Initiative 1: Near-Real-Time Instructional Input for Faculty
    - What:
      * Separate from the Student Perception of Learning Instrument;
      * Optional, faculty-initiated and targeted for a specific feedback purpose, which will be delivered to the faculty member only;
      * Creates a common mechanism that is adaptable for a course/activity, which is also easy for faculty and students to use
    - Examples:
      * A faculty member recently introduced service learning into their course and would like specific and targeted feedback on the instructional modality and student learning experience
      * A faculty member received lower scores than ideal on their SAIs/SPLs and they would like specific feedback from students
    - What we already have (optional support):
      * Coulter Faculty Commons (CFC) has developed instruments that faculty may use or will be in development (e.g. lab/group work; cooperative learning; assignment wrapper; exam wrapper)
      * CFC mid-semester analysis
      * CFC assistance with interpreting the data results and forming an action plan
    - When we plan to have other tools/resources:
      * By the end of summer 2020, examples of optional sets of questions/instruments shared on website
      * By early fall 2020 (and repeated annually), professional development training demonstrating how to implement questions/instruments and also how to interpret and use feedback to inform instruction
  + Initiative 2: Student Training for Civil and Constructive Feedback
    - What:
      * Brief online training module that offers instruction on how to provide civil and constructive feedback (i.e. video & website prepared for student audience; rubric examples)
      * Developed in two phases (phase 1: training module developed; phase 2: evaluation of module for WCU-customization of video/module)
    - Examples:
      * Develop from UC-Merced materials
    - When we plan to have other tools/resources:
      * By fall 2020, implement phase 1
      * To be determined, based on feedback, implement phase 2
  + Initiative 3: Compliments and Concerns Web-form Tool
    - What:
      * Separate from the Student Perception of Learning Instrument;
      * Form to create actionable, confidential student feedback
      * Form available through students’ myWCU homepage & includes dropdown menus & text boxes for easy completion
      * Consideration of routing process & if there is need for level-response (e.g. level 1: response filtered to faculty; if does not respond, goes to level 2: department head; determining where to address student input in routing process)
      * Creates a common mechanism for continuous feedback and action, which is also easy for students and faculty to use
    - When we plan to have other tools/resources:
      * At department head retreat in June 2020, share initiative, get feedback, and recruit for pilot
      * By fall 2020, template/pilot form is developed
      * By spring 2021, pilot form in a couple of colleges/units
  + Initiative 4: WCU Student Perception of Learning (formally SAI) Instrument
    - What:
      * Distinguished from student assessment of instruction—focus here is on student perception of their learning
      * Integrates one “constructive input scenario question” linked to initiative 2
      * Integrates contextual questions (i.e. current grade, attendance, reason for taking course, etc.)
      * Integrates a standardized, validated question set for all courses
      * Allows for additional, optional questions developed at dept. level/DCRD
      * Integrates a brief series of open-ended questions that follow a SAFE feedback framework
      * Proposed to administer SPL at 2-points in the semester—mid-term & final
    - What we already have:
      * TALQ validated instrument
      * IDEA instrument
      * Shadiow & Weimer’s 3 open-ended prompts
      * SAFE feedback framework
      * Optional CFC assistance with interpreting the data results and forming an action plan
    - When we plan to have other tools/resources:
      * By the end of summer 2020, share examples of TALQ, IDEA, Shadiow & Weimer, SAFE feedback framework and get feedback from students, administration, faculty
      * By the end of fall 2020, explore options for departmental-level question sets/instrument
      * By early spring 2021, (& repeated annually), professional development training demonstrating how to use and interpret questions/instruments

We are trying to address issues that faculty would want feedback on. Say limiting a timeframe for feedback. We hope to have optional questions and instruments and we would hope to roll out training in summer/early fall.

We also want to offer assistance to our students with a brief online training module to help offer instruction and want to implement Phase 1 by fall 2020.

We also want to create a web-based form or tool to allow concerns/compliments. We want the SPL to focus on the students' perception of learning, but we want to offer an avenue for students to give compliments and raise concerns. We initially set this up to go to department heads. We anticipate there may be a department head meeting in June where we could develop the form and get feedback. Then pilot this in 2021.

We also need to revise the SAI to the SPL. This distinction must be clear. We have found a couple instruments that could work. By the end of summer we want the instruments up. By the end of fall 2020 we want to have discussions. By early spring 2021 we hope to offer training on how to use and interpret those instruments with the new SPL.

*Further discussion proceeded.*

**Faculty Assembly Report: Rebecca Lasher**

The report was really in line with Chancellor Brown’s report.

The only addition is that it does not appear the UNC President will be named in July. Dr. Roper will serve in the position as long as need be.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Library Faculty Handbook Changes Resolution**

The library brought forward the following ***Resolution Approving Faculty Handbook Changes to the Evaluation of Library Faculty:***

Whereas, the Library Faculty contribute to the teaching/librarianship, learning, and research mission of WCU by facilitating access to intellectual content and information, and collaborating with others to promote discernment in the use of information; and

Whereas, Library Faculty members are evaluated on accomplishments in their assigned professional disciplinary role within Hunter Library; and

Whereas, the Library Faculty voted in Academic Year 2019 to approve changes to the Faculty Handbook to clarify and elaborate on the evaluation of their teaching/librarianship; and

Whereas, the WCU Faculty Handbook requires any change to the Faculty Handbook be read and approved by Faculty Senate; now, therefore,

Be it Resolved, that Faculty Senate approves the following language to amend Section 4.05, Subsection B, Item 3 of the Faculty Handbook, to be effective beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Current Handbook Language

3. Evaluating library faculty

~~Library faculty members’ contributions may or may not include formal classroom instruction. The “teaching quality and effectiveness” of the library faculty are identified by the following:~~

**Librarians have faculty status, hold appropriate rank, may attain tenure, and are employed and evaluated according to the appropriate criteria and procedures outlined in the departmental collegial review documents. Library faculty members have disciplinary roles and primary responsibilities associated with those roles; their contributions may or may not include formal classroom instruction. The evaluation criteria for teaching quality and effectiveness of the library faculty include the following, as relevant to their assigned responsibilities:**

· Managing personnel and other resources effectively and/or ensuring unit goals are in concert with overall library and university goals.

· Acquiring, organizing, and creating means of access to information resources.

· Developing library collections, both in physical and electronic form, to ensure that the collections meet the instructional and research needs of the University.

· Assisting patrons in the use of library services and collections either as individuals or groups.

· Applying and developing technology to enhance library services.

· Assessing and evaluating library operations, resources and services, strategic planning, and developing library promotional materials.

Library faculty members must include data from at least the following two sources:

· Colleagues’ review of relevant materials

· Faculty member's self‐report and evaluation

***Poll anywhere was used. Resolution approved unanimously.***

**APRC Withdrawal Policy**

APRC brought forward the following ***Resolution to Revise University Withdrawal Policy:***

Whereas, the current University Withdrawal policy has the unintended consequence of harming students’ academic standing for withdrawals that are a result of verified extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control.

Whereas, the current policy treats withdrawals for non-extenuating circumstances the same as withdrawals for extenuating circumstances.

Whereas, no clear rationale exists to treat university withdrawals for extenuating circumstances that are beyond a student’s control the same as university withdrawals for non-extenuating circumstances.

Whereas, the Director of Advising, the University Registrar, and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success have all requested the Academic Policy and Review Counsel’s (APRC’s) assistance in revising the University Withdrawal Policy.

Whereas, such requests for revisions have focused on aligning the university policy with the reality that University Withdrawals for extenuating and non-extenuating circumstances require different approaches and outcomes for the students.

Whereas, the APRC, after deliberations and advisement, has determined that it is in the best interests of our students and the University to revise the University Withdrawal Policy.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate support the following proposed changes to the University Withdrawal Policy as requested by the administration.

1. University Withdrawals as a result of extenuating circumstances will no longer negatively impact a student’s academic standing. Such University Withdrawals, once approved by the appropriate institutional office, shall not hold the student accountable for the term nor resulting cumulative completion percentage. Thus, the student’s academic standing will not be negatively impacted.

2. When a University Withdrawal for extenuating circumstances is approved, the Registrar will apply the student’s academic standing at the end of the previous term to the end of the term of withdrawal, thus not penalizing the student’s academic standing as a result of a university withdrawal.

3. The WCU Course Catalog, and all corresponding institutional messaging, referring to university withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances, shall be revised indicating university withdrawals before or after the withdrawal deadline will not impact the student’s academic standing at the end of the term of the effective withdrawal.

4. In regards to UNC Policy Manual, Chapter 400, Academic Programs, Amendment 400.1.5 [G] Guidelines Related to Fostering Undergraduate Student Success, 01/13/18, WCU shall update the Current Catalog to comply with these standards.

A. Withdrawal with Serious Extenuating Circumstances

1. Consistent with the requirements set out in Section II.C., of UNC Policy 400.1.5[R], each campus must develop a policy whereby undergraduate students can request course withdrawals due to serious extenuating circumstances. Each campus must widely distribute this policy.

2. Campuses will need to code the course withdrawals in their ERP systems as separate grade codes in order to distinguish between withdrawals with extenuating circumstances and those without extenuating circumstances.

3. Campuses should not communicate on the transcript that a course withdrawal was for extenuating circumstances. Campuses should develop a mechanism whereby withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances are designated on the transcript in a manner that respects and protects the privacy of the student.

*Kadie Otto suggested to table this to the fall semester.*

*Travis Bulluck shared that many students could be impacted by this and suggests it be reviewed this semester.*

*Kadie Otto motioned to table this resolution. Yancey Gulley seconded.*

*Enrique Gómez will decide when the resolution will be brought back up.*

***Poll anywhere was used. A vote to table the resolution was approved.***

***Enrique decided to conduct the overflow meeting next week, April 29, 2020.***

**MEETING ADJOURNED**