



Faculty Senate

December 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved at the 2/6/2023 Regular Senate Meeting

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

3:30 – 5:00 pm

Curriss Center Barkley Room

Public Access Zoom link: <https://murraystate.zoom.us/j/83844364068>

Senators in attendance: Oliver Beckers, Michael Bordieri, Brian Bourke, Michael Busby, Whitney Cassidy-Caywood, Melissa Chapman, Paul Foote, Stephanie Ford, Nikki Gaylord, Eran Guse, Jeff Henry, Ray Horton, Amanda Joyce, Naveen Musunuru, Heidi Ortega, Michelle Panchuk, Barbie Papajeski, Paul Foote proxy for Jeremy Phillips, David Pizzo, Ted Porter, Ben Post, Thomas Powell, Brenda Reeves, Selise Ridolfi, David Roach, Jenny Rogers, Faris Sahawneh, Cintia Segovia Figueroa, Shri Singh, Jan Super, Ken Sutrick, Justin Taylor, Carol Terracina-Hartman, David Wilbanks, Jenilee Williams, Andrea Willson, and Abdul Yarali.

Guests in attendance: Faculty Regent Melony Shemberger and Provost Tim Todd.

- I. Call to Order at 3:32pm.
- II. Approval of Minutes. Senator Pizzo made a motion to approve. Senator Farris seconded. Minutes approved by 23 yays, 0 nays, and 1 abstain. Secretary Bordieri reminded senators that minutes are posted on the faculty senate canvas page shortly after each meeting and that corrections can be emailed to msu.facultysenate@murraystate.edu
- III. Welcome and Sign-in
- IV. Agenda Discussion --- Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - a. President Roach reminded senators of the purpose of faculty senate as defined in the Faculty Senate Constitution (faculty handbooks § 1.4.2.1). He noted that we have a lofty purpose and that we should keep focused on our core mission.
 - b. President Roach informed the Senate that the 2023 Faculty Handbook update has been completed. It is published on the senate website ([Faculty Handbook](#)) and will be presented to the Board of Regents this Friday (12/8) as an information item for the purposes of transparency and communication.
 - c. President Roach informed the Senate that a problem has arisen as a result of updating department names in the faculty handbook. He noted that our constitution uses the terms department, unit, and divisions in different places when describing Senate membership (Faculty Handbook § 1.4.2.1”). As a result of recent changes, three departments are being removed from our list of departments, which could result in the potential removal of faculty senate representatives:
 - i. Military Science --- place holder department with no MSU faculty.
 - ii. Center for Academic Success --- unit was dissolved and the faculty were distributed among other departments.
 - iii. Applied Health Sciences and Nursing have been combined into the School of Nursing and Health Professions with six units.
 - d. President Roach discussed possible solutions that could involve a constitutional amendment or bylaws change. Senator Pizzo asked what the problem would be with giving each nursing unit a

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senator. Vice President Ortega noted that it is important to ensure equity in representation across departments/units. Senator Rogers noted that the school of nursing has approximately 21 full-time faculty. Senator Henry noted that the Board of Regents teaching award is based on the number of faculty in each college and that it might be a useful model to consider. Senator Reeves noted a broader concern regarding wording in our constitution and encouraged the senate to more thoroughly review language in the constitution. President Roach stated that the Faculty Senate Rules, Elections, and By-laws Committee has been tasked with addressing this issue.

- V. Senator Spotlight – Dr. Andrea Willson. Senator Willson is an assistant professor of early childhood and elementary education. Senator Willson noted that she grew up in New York State and that she has been in education for over 20 years (much of that teaching in grades 3-6). Senator Willson reported that her research focuses on teacher education, math education, and teaching technology.
- VI. Distinguished Guests
 - a. Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost-Dr. Tim Todd
 - i. Provost Todd thanked the faculty for all that they contribute to the university through their research, teaching, and service. He noted that his team is coming back from the SCASCOC annual conference and that Senior Associate Provost Pervine is a member of the Kentucky delegation to the SCASCOC board. Provost Todd shared that the ribbon cutting for the new School of Nursing and Health Professions building will take place at 10:45 am on Friday (12/8). He also encouraged faculty to participate in commencement and noted that 735 students are graduating in December with 450 students expected to participate in the ceremony. Senator Bourke asked for an update regarding our SCACS reaffirmation. Provost Todd noted that the site visit is planned for April 1-4 and that the official reaffirmation vote will occur in December 2024. Senator Powell asked about what the site visit would consist of. Provost Todd indicated that the site visit will not interfere with classes and will consist of various meetings with faculty, students, and other stakeholders.
 - b. Faculty Regent-Dr. Melony Shemberger
 - i. Regent Shemberger reported that the Board of Regents will meet this Friday (12/8) and invited all faculty to attend commencement on Saturday. She informed the senate of a correction in her December 2 email: Senator Pizzo is going on a sabbatical next semester and is not teaching abroad.
- VII. Special Guest
 - a. Director of Facilities Management --- Jason Youngblood
 - i. Director Youngblood addressed the senate regarding recent building temperature concerns experienced when returning from Thanksgiving break. He noted that several upgrades to the heating system have been made in recent years. Director Youngblood noted that the start of the heating season has been pushed back in recent years due to higher temperatures in October and November. He also stated that facilities management staff were off over Thanksgiving break and that the process to start the steam heating system was not started until the Monday after break. Director Youngblood noted that the team experienced some challenges starting the boilers and that these concerns resulted in delays. He also noted that a residence hall boiler issue also resulted in some additional delays in academic building heat startup. Senator Willbanks noted that it is a very difficult job and shared that the lower level of the IT

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building is currently too hot. Senator Panchuk also noted that faculty hall is also currently too hot. Senator Willbanks noted that fire code prevents safe options for cooling overly hot classrooms and asked for guidance regarding possible solutions. Senator Bourke commented on temperatures in Alexander Hall and asked about contingency plans to staff heating operations over a holiday with holiday pay when necessary. Director Youngblood briefly addressed technical details regarding two versus four-pipe heating systems, noting that all pipes of a four-pipe system are not always in operation due to operating constraints. He also noted that facilities management is looking at different solutions for the new nursing building that could allow for more operational flexibility. Director Youngblood noted that his unit has to self-fund overtime and that resources are limited. He also noted that steam startup is a staffing-intensive operation that is not easy to staff outside of normal operating hours. Senator Panchuk asked Director Youngblood if he had enough resources to operate facilities. Director Youngblood noted that aging equipment and limited resources are challenges. Provost Todd noted that efforts are being made to provide greater temperature control at the building level.

VIII. Reports --- Faculty Senate Standing Committees

- a. Academic Policies – Senator Brian Bourke
 - i. Senator Bourke reported that the committee had a productive meeting and is currently working on a post-tenure review policy with a draft anticipated in February. He also noted that the committee is continuing to explore a senior instructor promotion policy.
- b. Finance – Senator Jan Super
 - i. Senator Super reported that the committee did not meet last month but did administer a faculty engagement survey in early November. She reported that 210 faculty participated in the survey and that there was good representation across rank and academic colleges. Senator Super noted that a full report of the data will be available in the spring and shared that a large number of faculty provided qualitative comments. President Roach stated that he distributed gift cards to faculty who won gift cards funded by the Provost’s office as a survey incentive. Senator Foote asked for a summary of the findings. Senator Super indicated that analysis is ongoing, but that the preliminary analysis of COLA preferences is largely consistent with the previous year’s results.
- c. Governmental Affairs – Secretary of Senate, Michael Bordieri
 - i. Senator Bordieri reported that the committee met in November to discuss the advocacy priorities for the upcoming legislative session. He noted that the full report called for by Senate Joint Resolution 98 is anticipated soon, and he briefly summarized recent recommendations made by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education regarding SJR 98. See the draft executive summary [here](#). Senator Bordieri reported that there was little public information available regarding the upcoming legislative session and that the subcommittee is prepared to share more information, including a digital bill tracker, when the session begins in January.
- d. Handbook and Personnel – Senator Ben Post
 - i. Senator Post noted that the committee is looking towards future updates to the handbook, including revisions to outdated sections and incorrect information. He

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reported that the committee has also been discussing faculty safety in the classroom, but noted that no policy revisions were being considered at this time. Senator Reeves asked if the committee is exploring revisions to the inclement weather policy to include increased flexibility for faculty. President Roach stated that he plans to discuss this policy with the Provost, and noted this could be an opportunity for the Senate to work proactively to propose a new policy.

- e. Rules, Elections, and Bylaws – Faculty Senate Vice President, Heidi Ortega
 - i. Vice President Ortega reported that the committee will be exploring department senator representation as discussed by President Roach earlier in the meeting. She noted that the committee is starting to work on the Board of Regents Teaching Award process with election preparation to follow.
- f. Executive – Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - i. No report.

IX. Other University Committee

- a. Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee
 - i. Senator Pizzo reported that open enrollment went well with only two employees not completing the process. He reported that the standing subcommittees are work/life balance, childcare, and wellness. Senator Pizzo reported that outcome data from the recent Hinge health initiative is promising and that a new consultant is being selected to advise the university on wellness benefits moving forward. Senator Powell asked about the recent trend of more employees selecting the premium saver plan. Regent Shemberger noted that we are not sure what this shift means, and cost savings between plans are difficult to calculate because employees self-select plans. Senator Pizzo reminded the senate that premiums are the same for all employees, and that premium increases disproportionately impact lower-paid employees. Senator Horton asked about the flexible work plan. Senator Pizzo replied that the staff flexible work plan is going to the Board of Regents for approval on Friday. Senator Porter noted that he believes the expected cost is similar between healthcare plans, but that the variance in the saver plan is likely significantly higher.
- b. Compensation Review Advisory Committee
 - i. President Roach reported that he, Regent Shemberger, and Senator Super are members of this committee. He noted that they are in phase 4 of the process, which involves sharing the findings and beginning implementation. President Roach indicated that he is optimistic that this process will move forward and shared that “years in position” will be a major metric in determining salary ranges and potential adjustments. Senator Bourke asked what other factors are used to determine salary ranges. President Roach clarified that [CIP codes](#) will also be a factor and that any adjustments will likely be a multi-year process. President Roach noted that the administration is committed to sharing information from this study with faculty and staff. Regent Shemberger also noted that this will be a multi-year process and that the target should ideally be to get all faculty to mid-point or greater with regard to salary range. President Roach noted that there is no plan to lower salaries based on this process.

X. Old Business

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- a. Senator Porter requested that the Senate invite someone from IT to discuss concerns regarding authentication and multiple requests to log in. Senator Powell noted that there is a need for increased communication and transparency. Senator Reeves discussed possible additional technical adjustments that could be made to improve building temperature control. Senator Bourke noted that he believes that new temperature control options have been installed but not used effectively. Senator Reeves and Senator Bourke shared some additional concerns and technical possibilities regarding heating and cooling systems. Senator Busby stated that he is the building coordinator for Blackburn and noted that it is challenging to retrofit old buildings with HVAC infrastructure. He recommended that faculty reach out to their building coordinators to request increased communication and guidance. Senator Reeves and Senator Powell also noted concerns regarding electric outages without notice. Senator Busby shared his history of concerns regarding facilities management. Senate Panchuk stated that temperature concerns are a serious problem and are more than just discomfort. She noted that it is an access issue, especially for faculty and students with health concerns. Senator Busby noted that this is also a concern for recruitment, especially for international students. Senator Super noted that students in the business building started a petition a few years ago due to unbearable temperature conditions in their building. President Roach stated that the faculty senator officers will raise these concerns at their next meeting with President Jackson.
- XII. Adjourned at 5:17 by unanimous consent, as evidenced by senators collectively leaving.