

Faculty Senate

February 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved at the 3/5/2024 Regular Senate Meeting

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

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, Samer Khalil, Naveen Musunuru, Braun Oldenkamp, Heidi Ortega, Michelle Panchuk, Barbie Papajeski, Aaron Irvin proxy for David Pizzo, Ted Porter, Ben Post, Thomas Powell, Brenda Reeves, Selise Ridolfi, David Roach, Jenny Rogers, Faris Sahawneh, Cintia Segovia Figueroa, Jan Super, Ken Sutrick, Carol Terracina-Hartman, Gary Morris proxy for David Wilbanks, Jenilee Williams, Andrea Willson, and Abdul Yarali.

Guests in attendance: Faculty Regent Melony Shemberger and Associate Provost Renee Fister

- I. Call to Order. The official Senate gavel has been restored and the session was gaveled in at 3:34pm by President Roach.
- II. Approval of Minutes. A motion to approve the December 2023 minutes was made by Senator Sahawneh and seconded by Senate Porter. The motion passed by a unanimous show of hands.
- III. Welcome and Sign-in
- IV. Agenda Discussion --- Faculty Senate President, David Roach.
 - a. President Roach highlighted several pending action items, including a bylaws amendment to address the impact of structural changes in the School of Nursing and Health Professions on senator representation and a post-tenure review policy with a target voting date of April 2024. Senator Beckers asked about the status of post-tenure review at the state level. President Roach indicated that we need to develop the policy to meet SACS standards. President Roach noted additional action items might include weather-related closure policies and he discussed concerns related to the recent remote instruction and weather closure decisions. Senator Panchuk asked for the extent of faculty senate involvement in the weather closure decisions. President Roach indicated that the Senate was not consulted regarding the 2024 weather procedures document but was informed of weather closure decisions. Senator Panchuk asked for additional clarification regarding the nature of when the procedures were developed. Senator Irving (proxy for Senator Pizzo) also asked for additional clarification. Senator Reaves added additional context regarding the changes to weather procedures that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, including faculty who asked for the ability to teach remotely during weather closures. Vice President Ortega reported that faculty senate officers had been in frequent communication with the Provost's office regarding weather closures, but noted that the conversations have been informal. She expressed that the goal should be for faculty senate to proactively propose a new policy. Regent Shemberger addressed the difference between policy and procedures, and noted that the Senate should clarify what role it should play. Senator Beckers shared that less than 24 hours notice to pivot to remote instruction is not sufficient

Faculty Senate

notice. Vice President Ortega reported that remote instruction does not necessarily mandate Zoom instruction, and that faculty have discretion in what that instruction entails. Senator Porter also shared support for at least 24 hours notice of all weather closures and voiced agreement that a new policy needs to be developed. Senator Post stated that he believes that there was a lack of clarity in recent university communications regarding remote instruction, and that the message sent appeared to mandate synchronous remote instruction during class meeting times. Senator Post also stated that he believes that the Senate can act faster than waiting until next year to ask for changes. Senator Reeves asked if there could be a change in a procedural wording to remove the apparent mandate for synchronous remote instruction. Secretary Bordieri noted that the Senate could ask for a minor modification in current language to be more flexible in the definition of remote instruction. President Roach reported on the pending business of other committees, including handbook and personnel and finance.

- V. Senator Spotlight- Cintia Segovia Figueroa.
 - a. Senator Figueroa introduced themselves to the senate and shared that they are an assistant professor of Photography and New Media and a member of the governmental affairs subcommittee. Senator Figueroa shared some highlights of their recent research and creative activity with the Senate.
- VI. Distinguished Guests
 - a. Faculty Regent, Melony Shemberger. Regent Shemberger reported that she is closely monitoring bills in Frankfurt and will continue to share updates on these and other matters with faculty over email. She reported that we had a well-attended admitted student weekend and noted that the upcoming budget advisory meeting will be an important start to the budget process. Regent Shemberger indicated that there will not be specific budget details at the first advisory meeting. Senator Beckers asked if we will be able to see the results of the salary student from Evergreen consultants. Regent Shemberger stated that Evergreen's proprietary data will not be shared, but indicated that she believes that the recommendations will be shared as the process moves forward.
- VII. Reports --- Faculty Senate Standing Committees
 - a. Academic Policies – Chair, Brian Bourke
 - i. Senator Bourke indicated that the subcommittee is working on a post-tenure review policy to bring forward for next month's meeting. He reported that the policy will be faculty driven, and noted that HB 228 adds additional challenges that might need to be addressed. Senator Bourke noted that the SACS standards require ongoing evaluation, and that there is a need to have a consistent University policy in place. Senator Bourke stated that the policy is developmentally focused. Senator Bourke reported that the committee is also considering an instructor promotion policy. Senator Powell asked about whether the post-tenure review policy will mandate specific standards. Senator Bourke indicated that the policy will leave specifics to each academic department and/or college. Senator Foote added that the review process will include peer faculty evaluation as a primary component. Senator Foote also noted that the review length might change to conform with HB 228. Senator Bourke reported that other regional comprehensive institutions in the Commonwealth have post-tenure review policies in place. Senator Henry asked via Zoom whether existing annual reviews would suffice for post-tenure review. Vice-president Ortega stated that she believes the answer is yes.

Faculty Senate

Senator Bourke indicated that the policy they are considering will keep evaluation at the department level and that we are mostly already doing what SACS expects.

- b. Finance – Chair, Jan Super
 - i. Senator Super delivered the committee report. She stated that a faculty support fund is not feasible at this time and that the committee is no longer pursuing this idea. Senator Super noted that a report of the faculty engagement survey will be delivered next month. She also reported that the committee is reviewing the salary policy in the handbook. Senator Beckers asked when the survey results will be share and Senator Super clarified that a report will be delivered next month. Senator Reaves asked how the information will be presented to senior administration. Senator Super indicated that such a discussion is ongoing. President Roach clarified that the Senate executive committee provided a summary to President Jackson of last year’s survey results, and will likely do so again. Regent Shemberger reported that last year’s COLA survey was an important piece of information that President Jackson considered when making budgetary decisions. Senator Reaves noted that there is significant faculty dissatisfaction that needs to be addressed.
 - c. Governmental Affairs – Secretary of Senate, Michael Bordieri
 - i. Secretary Bordieri provided an overview of the legislation process, the charge of the subcommittee, and current bills of interest pending in the legislature.
 - ii. Secretary Bordieri gave specific updates regarding the budget process and current Murray State capital project priorities. Senator Horton informed the faculty about HB 228, a bill that introduces a performance and productivity evaluation process for all faculty. Secretary Bordieri briefly updated that Senate regarding Anti-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) legislation (SB 6 and HB 9), and Senator Powell provides an update on opportunities for a possible Murray State Veterinary Medicine Program in HB 400.
 - d. Handbook and Personnel – Chair, Ben Post
 - i. Senator Post presented two handbook resolutions on behalf of the committee and provided brief remarks in support of the resolutions. Senator Reaves asked about midterm grades for 300 and 400 level classes and Senator Post noted that the subcommittee will discuss this.
 - 1. Draft FSH-23-24-2: Affirmative Action Statement First Reading
 - 2. Draft FSH-23-24-3: Grade Reporting First Reading
 - e. Rules, Elections, and Bylaws – Faculty Senate Vice President, Heidi Ortega
 - i. Vice President Ortega reminded faculty the BoR Teaching Award nominations are due by 2/9 and that the Stephen B White Award nomination process is open.
 - f. Executive – Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - i. No report.
- VIII. Other University Committee
- a. Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee
 - i. Regent Shemberger reported that the committee has met and is working with a new consultant.
 - b. Faculty and Staff Leadership Advisory Committee
 - i. President Roach reported that heating and cooling concerns were shared with the administration. Secretary Bordieri noted that many of the asset preservation funding items in the budget request are dedicated to HVAC upgrades and repairs.



Faculty Senate

- IX. Old Business
 - a. None
- X. New Business
 - a. None
- XI. Adjourn – Gaveled out by unanimous consent at 5:10pm.