

Faculty Senate

October 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved at the 11/7/2023 Regular Senate Meeting

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

3:30 – 5:00 pm

Curris Center Barkley Room

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

Senators in attendance: Oliver Beckers, Michael Bordieri, Abbie Morris proxy for 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, Braun Oldenkamp, Heidi Ortega, Michelle Panchuk, Barbie Papajeski, 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, Jenilee Williams, Andrea Willson, and Abdul Yarali.

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

I. Call to Order at 3:35 pm

II. Approval of Minutes

III. Welcome and Sign-in

IV. Agenda Discussion --- Faculty Senate President, David Roach

- Senate president Roach presented graduation cords to senators who did not already have them and he presented the Secretary stole to Secretary Bordieri.
- President Roach discussed why FSH 23-23-1 was not place on the agenda for a 2nd reading and vote. He explained that the handbook revisions have already been approved by senate, provost, president, and the board of regents; thus, they don't need to be voted on again. He reported that the new faculty handbook needs to be published, but that doing so does not require a new vote. President Roach provided a history of the events that led to the publication delay, and noted a commitment to publish the new handbook as soon as possible. He reported that the handbook revisions that have been approved are:
 - FSH 19-20-2: Requiring a 1st Reading --- Approved BOR, 2/28/20
 - FSH 20-21-2: Electronic Intellectual Property --- Approved BOR, 9/3/21
 - FSH 20-21-6: Representation in Budgeting --- Approved BOR, 12/3/21
 - FSCA 22-23-3: Instructor At-Large Senate Seat --- Approved by the Faculty, 3/7/23
 - FSCA 22-23-4: Faculty Senate Officer Elections, Officer Seats, and Two-Year Term - Approved by the Faculty, 3/7/23
 - Department of military science was removed (university structural change).
- President Roach made a unanimous consent motion to proceed with handbook publication after consultation with the Provost and President. Motion was approved by unanimous consent. Senator Powell asked how updates will handled in the future. President Roach indicated that an annual updated would likely be best moving forward.
- President Roach presented a concern regarding the definition of faculty in the faculty handbook (Section 2.1; Faculty Definitions). He noted some inconsistencies in how regular faculty are defined, and requested that the handbook and personnel subcommittee of the senate look into this concern. Several senators asked questions regarding the nature of the challenge and possible plans to improve clarity. President Roach offered a draft of a

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possible revision to the definitions that would include instructor and senior instructor in the definition of ranked faculty. Senators discussed some additional challenges with the possible revision.

V.Senator Spotlight

- President Roach explained that each month the senate will spotlight a senator. Dr. Faris Sahawneh introduced himself to the senate. He noted that he graduated from Murray State in 2003 and joined as a faculty member in 2019. He shared a brief overview of his cybersecurity and network management program and his research area. He also highlighted his involvement in the Road Scholars program.

VI.Distinguished Guests

- President Roach reported that Murray State University President Jackson could not be here today, and noted that faculty senate leaders had a positive meeting with him recently. He also noted that there are several positive trends regarding enrollment and funding at Murray State. President Roach also noted that Provost Todd could not be here today, and reported that our SACSCOC self-study has been submitted.
- Faculty Regent-Dr. Melony Shemberger
 - Regent Shemberger directed senators to her detailed email update sent yesterday. She also provided a clarification that the SJR98 report is preliminary and not binding on the legislature. She noted that the final report will be submitted by December 1st and that the legislature may or may not take action based on the report. Senator Foote asked about funding for the nursing building. Regent Shemberger noted that the capital requests are separate from our operating budget.

VII.Reports --- Faculty Senate Standing Committees

- Academic Policies – Senator Abdul Yarali
 - Senator Yarali updated the senate regarding their work on pathways for instructors with terminal degrees to transitions to the tenure track. He reported that the committee is also still exploring possible promotion pathways for instructors. Senator Yarali also reported that the committee discussed policies regarding consistency in research productivity for promotion to full professor and possible approaches to post-tenure review. Senator Porter asked if post-tenure review is needed if we already have an annual review process. President Roach noted that SACSCOC has given notice that they will require it and agreed to share the requirement with the Senate. Senator Panchuk asked about a possible research consistency requirement and how it would be implemented. President Roach stated that all tenured faculty would be subject to post tenure review. Senate Panchuk clarified that she was asking about the consistency requirement. Senator Reeves asked about whether COVID would be taken into account with such a policy. Secretary Bordieri noted that post-tenure review and a research consistency are two separate topics of discussion. He further clarified that there were no motions pending and these items were currently only being discussed by the committee.
- Finance – Senator Jan Super
 - Senator Super reported that their committee was revisiting sections of the faculty handbook regarding salary. She noted that the committee is also exploring the possibility of a faculty support fund and that they are also preparing to deploy the faculty engagement survey.
- Governmental Affairs – Secretary of Senate, Michael Bordieri
 - Secretary Bordieri called for the orders of the day and requested approval of the 9/5/23 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Senator Pizzo and seconded by Senator Foote. The motion to approve the minutes passed 29 yay, 0 nay, 1 abstain. He also requested that faculty senator identify themselves by name and department when addressing the senate. Secretary Bordieri provided an overview of the committees plans to track the upcoming legislative session, and noted that the committee plans to offer both a detailed bill tracker and also a more accessible presentation of high priority bills.
- Handbook and Personnel – Senator Ben Post

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- Senator Post noted that most of their business was previously discussed during President Roach's introductory remarks. He noted that the committee is discussing how frequently they would like to update the handbook, and that annual updates seems like a good target.
- Rules, Elections and Bylaws – Faculty Senate Vice President, Heidi Ortega
 - Vice President Ortega shared that the committee is planning for a busy spring election season.
- Executive – Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - No business

VIII. Other University Committee

- Insurance and Benefits
 - Senator David Pizzo updated the senate regarding the recent decision to increase benefit premiums. Senator Pizzo stated that exploring tiered premium is a priority for him, as the approved increases will disproportionately burden lower paid faculty and staff. Senator Pizzo also noted that he believes that this health care cost increase should be a priority when discussing possible cost of living adjustments in next year's budget. Senator Pizzo explained the rationale for choosing the premium rate increase option (A), noting that option (B) would have only been a partial solution, would have disproportionately impacted employees with dependents, and would have possibly created a disincentive to seeking care (which could increase cost in the long term). Senator Beckers asked about the wellness pledge and raised concerns regarding how the program is designed. Senator Pizzo indicated that the committee will explore these concerns.

IX. Old Business

- Senator Reeves noted that the handbook still states that when the university is closed for inclement weather classes are cancelled. She indicated that there is a discrepancy between that wording and current policy and that the senate should address it. President Roach noted that the current policy was designed to give faculty flexibility in how to operate during weather closures. Senator Post noted that section 2.6 of the handbook (University Closure) is of relevance to this discussion. Senator Reeves expressed that she believes that the faculty should be able to choose.

X. New Business

- President Roach proposed that the faculty should socialize more. He proposed that we should organize a social engagement that we announce to all faculty on behalf of the faculty senate. He noted that the activities should be simple and inexpensive. Senator Henry noted that he has laser tag sets that he would be willing to loan for this purpose. President Roach noted that the activity should be accessible to all and proposed the following ideas: coffee hour, walk a mile, a bike ride, a basketball game, volunteering at a food bank, knitting, and kayaking. Several senators offered several additional ideas.
- President Roach announced a faculty coffee hour on Tuesday, October 10th at 8:30 at the Waterfield Library covered porch. Bring your own cup of your favorite drink or pick something up from Einstein Bagel. The Senate approved this activity via unanimous consent.
- Senator Pizzo recommended that the senate join with staff congress to request a university Ombudsperson.

XI. Adjourn motion made at 5:01 by Senator Porter. Seconded by Senator Pizzo. The motion passed.