

Faculty Senate

September 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved by the Senate at the 10/3/2023 Regular Senate Meeting

Tuesday, September 5, 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, 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, Brian Oldenkamp, Heidi Ortega, Barbie Papajeski, Jeremy Phillips, David Pizzo, Ted Porter, Ben Post, Thomas Powell, 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: President Bob Jackson, Provost Tim Todd, Faculty Regent Melony Shemberger, Associate Provost Renee Fister, and Assistant Provost Ashley Ireland.

- I. Call to Order at 3:33pm.
- II. Approval of Minutes. Senator Pizzo moved to approve. Senator Foote seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.
- III. Welcome and Sign-in
- IV. Appointments, Rules, and Agenda --- Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - President Roach opened the meeting by encouraging Senators to attend in person if possible and to notify the faculty senate secretary (msu.facultysenate@murraystate.edu) in advance if they plan to attend via Zoom.
 - President Roach announced the following appointments:
 - A. Melissia Chapman appointed senator at large
 - B. Justin Taylor appointed senator at large
 - C. Selise Ridolfi appointed instructor at large
 - D. Brenda Reeves appointed as faculty senate liaison to the ADVANCE grant
 - President Roach presented graduation cords to new senators and returning senators who have not previously received them.
 - President Roach provided an overview of the purpose and structure of faculty senate. He emphasized that all our meetings are open to the public and that our purpose is to advise the president on all policies regarding the educational functions of the university. President Roach stated that one of our major strengths is communicating, and that we have power when we can all come together and approve ideas in writing. President Roach then presented a brief overview of where faculty senate fits within the organizational chart of the university. He concluded his remark by describing the basic premise of Robert's Rules of Order and the four named business processes of the senate: motions, special resolutions, resolutions, and handbook revisions.
 - President Roach briefly presented the agenda for the year that was developed with the executive committee. Each committee is charged with one or two major tasks that are described in greater depth in the committee reports below.

Faculty Senate

V. Distinguished Guests

- President of the University-Dr. Bob Jackson
 - President Jackson welcomed faculty to the new academic year. He reported that we have a record freshmen enrollment of 1,662 (up 22%). President Jackson invited faculty to participate in the Road Scholars program and emphasized the importance and value of recruitment, especially when faculty engage with prospective students. He noted that the current headcount is 9,801 and thanked faculty for their flexibility in accommodating the large number of students. He reported that the Evergreen compensation study is progressing and \$100,000 in the current budget has been placed in the first phase of a pool to address salary compression. President Jackson also announced that we had a record fundraising year with \$16.7 million raised. He noted that the design on the new nursing and health professions building is in progress and that a groundbreaking for the facility will likely occur by the end of this semester. The building will be located on 16th street across from Alexander Hall. President Jackson reported that there are numerous asset preservation projects in progress on campus and encouraged faculty to be patient as these important campus improvements are made. He updated the faculty on the recently announced taskforce to explore the feasibility of a veterinary school at Murray State. President Jackson described the three primary components of the report mandated by SJR 98: 1) education and workforce needs of the commonwealth, 2) the feasibility of transferring KTCTS academic programs to the comprehensive public universities, and 3) the possibility of a new four-year public institution in Southeastern Kentucky. President Jackson announced that discussions regarding changes to the legislature's performance funding model are ongoing. He also noted that the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Council of Presidents is looking at an inflationary adjustment request to base funding from the legislature. Additional funding priorities for Murray State include ongoing requests for asset preservation funds and phase II of the nursing and health professions building. With regard to employee sponsored health insurance, President Jackson noted that currently 12.6% of health care costs are paid by employees with a generally accepted target contribution of 20%. He indicated that discussion regarding changes to healthcare cost and cost shares are ongoing.
 - Senator Foote asked whether the state revenue forecast might influence the prospects of a new public university in the state. President Jackson noted that the conversation is ongoing. He further noted that they anticipate that there will be a significant pool of surplus funding available for one-time costs during this budget cycle.
- Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost-Dr. Tim Todd
 - Provost Todd welcomed senators and acknowledged the strong communication between senate officers and his office. He updated the senate on the SACSCOC reaffirmation process and noted that our self-study will be completed by the end of this week. He stated that the next step of the process is off-site review of the report later this fall followed by the on-site visit on April 1-4, 2024. Provost Todd noted that the majority of accreditation is backwards looking. He then highlighted our

Faculty Senate

forward-looking quality enhancement plan, which is centered on improving student mental health and wellbeing.

- Faculty Regent-Dr. Melony Shemberger
 - Regent Shemberger welcomed Senators attending in-person and on zoom. She briefly highlighted her history of involvement with the Senate and described her current involvement with the senate as faculty regent. Regent Shemberger noted that she updates the faculty by email monthly, after each board of regents meeting, and as needed. She noted that the upcoming meeting of the insurance and benefits committee will likely be of importance to faculty and that she plans to update the faculty on developments in that committee.

VI. Reports --- Faculty Senate Standing Committees

A. Academic Policies – Senator Brian Bourke

- a. Senator Bourke reported that the committee is continuing to explore non-tenure track classification. He also reported that the committee is charged with developing a post-tenure review policy with the goal of a June adoption by the Board of Regents. Senator Bourke provided a brief historical overview of post-tenure review and noted that accreditation bodies are currently placing an increased emphasis on this issue. He noted that we should aspire to develop a proactive, people-centered policy, and shared that many of our peer institutions have implemented models that might guide the development of our policy.

B. Finance – Senator Jan Super

- a. Senator Super provided an overview of the finance committee and noted that the current focus of the committee is centered on compensation. She provided a summary of last year's Faculty Engagement Survey (41% response rate) and requested feedback from senators regarding conducting another engagement survey this year. President Roach introduced a verbal motion to open discussion and receive feedback from senators regarding the survey. Senator Wilbanks asked why we would want to do another survey and cautioned against repeated surveys without links to action. Senator Super noted the importance of repeated measurements to establish a benchmark and to allow for the identification of trends. President Roach added that we would like to identify areas of concern and that the survey provides a valuable tool to do so. Senator Super also noted that open-ended questions will allow for the identification of trends and recommendations for specific changes. Senator Wilbanks asked about the possibility of using an external survey/benchmark. Senator Super noted that those options are possibilities but they often involve considerable expense. Senator Pizzo commented that Senator Bourke has volunteered to assist with the qualitative analysis of open-ended questions. Provost Todd noted that his office would be willing to offer a small monetary incentive to encourage increased faculty participation in the survey.

C. Governmental Affairs – Secretary of Senate, Michael Bordieri

- a. Senator Bordieri described the charge of the governmental affairs committee and noted that the priorities for the committee are the upcoming legislative sessions, SJR 98, and returning the oversight of annual administrative evaluations to the Senate. Senator Bordieri addressed a question from Senator Foote regarding the

Faculty Senate

instrument used for administrative evaluations. He clarified that the committee plans to start with the same instrument used in the past with the option of exploring the process and instrument in greater depth in future years. Senator Bordieri addressed a question from Senator Henry regarding SJR 98. He noted that the timeframe for the evaluation and report is extremely short (i.e., due to the legislature on December 1st) and that this timeframe raises concern regarding transparency. Senator Bordieri also addressed a question from Senator Horton regarding challenges to freedom, tenure protection, diversity initiatives, and funding observed in other states. Senator Bordieri stated that bills prefilled for the 2024 regular session in the coming months will provide an early indicator of possible challenges and opportunities in Kentucky.

- D. Handbook and Personnel – Senator Ben Post
 - a. Senator Post reported that the handbook is current through 2019. He introduced FSH 23-24-1 as the vehicle for updating the handbook with changes made by the Senate during recent sessions. He also reported that additional priorities for the committee include an open access research policy and a formatting change to the handbook. He also reported that section 1.7 of the handbook describes the process for how revisions to the handbook should be made.
 - b. Draft: FSH 23-24-1 --- Faculty Handbook 2023 Update
 - i. First reading.
- E. Rules, Elections and Bylaws – Faculty Senate Vice President, Heidi Ortega
 - a. Vice President Ortega noted that her primary goal was to increase faculty participation in shared governance elections. She reported the current status of senator assignments to senate subcommittee and requested that senators who missed committee assignments during the May organizational meeting should contact her to be assigned to a committee.
- F. Executive – Faculty Senate President, David Roach
 - a. President Roach clarified that today was the first reading of FSH 23-24-1 and the Senators should send comments, concerns, and amendments to the handbook committee in advance of next month’s meeting.
- VII. Other University Committee
 - A. Insurance and Benefits
 - a. Senator Pizzo reported that the data from our consulting company regarding health care cost was delayed and the committee is on a short deadline to make significant decisions regarding next year’s healthcare plans. Senator Pizzo reported that an increase is likely, and the committee’s goal is to spread adjustments to employee’s contributions over as long a time period as possible. He indicated that there is a meeting later this week and that more details will be shared when available. Senator Powell asked when increases might go into effect. Senator Pizzo clarified that potential increases would start in January 2024.
 - B. Faculty and Staff Compensation Review Committee
 - A. President Roach noted that himself and Senator Super are on this committee and that they are waiting on the report from the consultants (expected by end of September).
- VIII. Old Business

Faculty Senate

- None
- IX. New Business
 - None
- X. Adjourn
 - Motion to adjourn made by Senator Pizzo and seconded by Senator Bourke. The senate adjourned at 4:55pm.