

Faculty Senate Minutes Aug. 17, 2022

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 by President Alexander, beginning with the passing of the gavel from the outgoing president, Peter Adam.

Approval of the Agenda

After a friendly amendment to add Human Resources Director Krista Barcus to the schedule, the agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the June 20 meeting, along with Peter Adam's presidential search updates from May 18, June 19 and Aug. 4, were approved unanimously.

Reports

University President Report: Clarence Green

- Dr. Green gave an update on the state capital improvement matching program. The university is seeking funding for renovating Martindale Hall. The renovation will require raising \$7.5 million to receive a match from the state. He noted it will be a tight timeline, with only two years to raise these matching funds, which will be especially challenging coming off \$50 million capital campaign and the controversy over Jasinski's departure. The university had originally proposed a Brown Hall renovation and addition, but the approximately \$35 million total cost would have required raising over \$17 million, likely an unattainable goal in the short timeframe.
- International enrollment is booming, led by computer science. Preliminary figures will be released soon (the formal census date will be in September)
- The university will be working on creating a three-year financial plan.
- Dining plan: The dining contract will be up for renewal this year. At one time there were 2,800 students on campus and enrolled in a dining plan, then 2,200, and now about 1,500 students on campus. As a result of those lower numbers, the dining bid will be less attractive to potential vendors as a result. As part of the bid, the university may try to attract an Applebee's-type restaurant, perhaps with alcohol being a part of that restaurant.
- Rightsizing the residence halls: With declining freshman on-campus enrollment, the residence hall capacity will need to be adjusted to maximize resources. The university will be looking into reducing about 800 spaces from the current 2,800-bed capacity, achieved likely through the demolition of Phillips and North Complex and perhaps another dorm. The cost for demolishing a residence hall is roughly \$1 million each, but there would naturally be a cost savings in terms of utilities and maintenance. Custodial positions would be lost, but because of attrition and current unfilled positions, there would not be layoffs.

In response to a question about tearing down the water tower, Green noted that the original study recommending its demolition was flawed, and that the water tower is needed to provide water pressure beyond the third floor of some buildings. The water tower will be refurbished.

Provost's Report: Jamie Hooyman

Hooyman applauded the efforts of those who worked on the HLC accreditation report. As noted in the opening meeting, the university turned in five-chapter report three months early. There will be no

scheduled on-campus visit from HLC following this report. Last time issues raised by HLC included outcomes/data, IRB process communication and assessment, all of which she said have been addressed strongly in the report.

She also noted she will be coming to Faculty Senate to ask for task force volunteers for the academic plan.

In response to questions, she noted

- While there are pros and cons of the multiple graduation ceremonies and the fact that the ceremonies are not school specific, she noted that students have noted they like the ability to choose and be flexible.
- The Ad Astra new scheduling software is being implemented. The university bought additional module and the program will connect with Banner and save time, but IT is naturally having some implementation issues. The hope is to go completely live in the spring
- Enrollment: The freshman cohort will be larger than last year.
- COVID: This is the first semester starting in two years without masks. Faculty should continue to show grace to students who self-report to faculty that they have COVID and need to isolate (the point was made that faculty should be given similar grace by students given the challenges the last two years).
- Hooyman noted that the Financial aid office is down three people, so patience is urged as they work with students on financial awards.
- Gallaher made an observation about the university hiring consultants, pointing out that Northwest has experts on campus that we might want to be considering using.
- Salary matrix: The university has tried to offer competitive salaries, but there are some key issues, including funding for increasing salaries, salary compression/inversion. The university is trying to get everyone up to 92% of the 2017/2018 salary CUPA barometer, but that would cost \$3 million. Alexander asked about one-time bonuses/stipends; Hooyman said there would be legal issues that would need to be looked at. Other compensation-related issues raised included questioning if Northwest could join a consortium of other universities with health insurance and the problem of salary/promotion increases being negated by being in a higher pay-in bracket for health insurance.

Human Resources: Krista Barcus

Barcus reporter that there has been an RFP for *total compensation* and the office is looking at three vendors. The successful bidder will analyze current pay and process, the salary matrix, benefits, overload/adjunct pay/etc., to make sure the university is market competitive and to see if the university needs to make wholesale changes in how things are done.

Separately, she also reported that there is a new vendor for working with health and other benefit providers: USI. Will analyze our benefits and make recommendations, especially with the family plan for health insurance, which was brought up by many people as a concern in the last employee satisfaction survey. Some recommendations from them may be able to be implemented this year, but many make not be able to be implemented until next year.

She also discussed an employee engagement action tracker and the addition of a full time person focused on faculty/staff/ well being and as a resource for UPD. Services will be confidential. She concluded with a note about an employee appreciation event at a football game in September or October.

COVID: Amanda Cullin

Chief Cullin reported that KN95 masks are still available. There is info on Wellness homepage for students regarding what to do if they test positive. Currently there are approximately 50 cases, with two hospitalizations. Vaccinations are available for faculty and staff. Tests available in Wellness.

Senate President's Report: Kristi Alexander

Alexander reminded unit senators to a) be sure to pass along information from Senate to their units and b) to remember that their job is to represent those units and vote with the unit's best interest in mind—and thus seek feedback on key issues from their faculty prior to casting votes.

She also noted that feedback is especially critical for the presidential search process, and strongly encouraged faculty to attend the two sessions to be held in the Jones Student Union Boardroom with the Anthem search firm to communicate characteristics/experiences faculty want in the new president:
Monday, Aug. 22: 2:45 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 23, 8:30 a.m.

Alexander informed the Senate about the Huron firm hired to help increase enrollment. The group has made presentations on campus. Senators expressed interest in hearing/seeing a presentation.

Other announcements and upcoming activities:

- Alexander received an email from Jodie O'Brien, the new wellbeing coordinator, who is on a one-year grant to help the Northwest wellbeing initiative

- Matt Symonds is representing faculty on the Total Compensation Package committee, which has yet to meet.

- Long-standing dual credit teachers will have their credentials extended until 2025.

Upcoming events on campus (inform Alexander of any activities you would like to have promoted and included in her future reports):

--Aug. 24: Office of Diversity and Inclusion speaker Robin Diangelo "White Fragility" 7:00 p.m. Charles Johnson

--Sept. 22: Wellbeing Summit with keynote speaker Sislina Ledbetter "Moving from Self Care to Community Care"

--Oct. 7-9: Missouri Hope – multidisciplinary mass casualty exercise. There is a need for volunteers (students, faculty, staff).

Committee Reports

- Academic Appeals (Ajay Bandi) –The committee met Aug. 11 and heard one case
- Curriculum and Degree Requirements (Trevor Meyer). Meyer noted that Oct. 15 is the official cutoff to get new programs approved. While that deadline has been violated in the past, in order to help staff, we should try to stick to that date, and especially if major changes are being made, faculty should try to get them in soon.
- Designated Curricular Matters (Bill Richardson). No report.
- Assessment (Rob Voss). No report.
- Faculty Welfare, Budget, and Finance (John Gallaher) –noting the committees have been combined. Noted BOR is the final say on the matrix. Haddock puts it together and presents it to

BOR, who has to some degree largely ignored the matrix. Important to note CIP codes for programs, which can have an influence on the matrix/pay schedules.

- Teaching and Learning (Sue Myllykangas). They are in the process of forming a committee
- Legislative Committee (Brett Chloupek) No report.
- Academic Integrity Panel (Dan Gordon & Ahmed Malkawi). No report.
- Academic Petitions (Michael Miller) –met in summer, last week and meeting tomorrow, appealing suspensions

Old Business: None.

New Business

- Introductions. As this was the first meeting of the semester, all Senators introduced themselves

- New Information Security Policy Proposal Policy

Prior to the meeting, Senators were sent a copy of the current and proposed information security policies. Concerns were raised by several senators about the proposed policy, in both its tone and substance. One major issue is a difference between the current policy, which allows for the administration to investigate faculty/staff/student use if they are “suspected of abusing this Policy,” while the new policy requires no such prior cause/suspicion for an investigation.

Cholopek made a motion to table further discussion on the proposal until a future meeting, when someone from IT (likely Brennan Lehman) can attend and answer faculty questions about the proposed policy.

Items from the Floor

Gallaher recommended name placards to help with learning names/identification of Senators, especially now that we have transitioned from Zoom, which had identification built in.

Adjournment

Alexander adjourned the meeting at 5:07 p.m. The next meeting will be Sept. 7.