

**Washburn University  
Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
May 1, 2017  
3:00 PM – Kansas Room, Memorial Union**

**PRESENT:**

**Ball, Barker, Garritano, Kapusta-Pofahl, Kwak, Mansfield, Mazachek, Memmer, Ockree, Petersen, Prasch, Schmidt, Schnoebelen, Scofield, Siemens, Smith, Stacey, Steinroetter, Stevens, Wasserstein, Weiner, Worsely, and Zwikstra**

**ABSENT:**

**Alexander, Erby, Farwell, Francis, Mastrosimone, Matthews, Modellmog, Sadikot, Sourgens, Treinen, Tutwiler, and Wohl**

**GUESTS:**

**Grospitch, Hine, Holthaus, and Smith**

- I. **President Schmidt called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.**
- II. **The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of April 17, 2017 were approved.**
- III. **President's Opening Remarks:**
  - **President Schmidt thanked the senators for their service this year.**
  - **He noted that the Executive Committee met last Monday. Schmidt said they were looking at ways to increase transparency with regard to agendas and how to use the committee more strategically in the future starting in FY 18.**
- IV. **Report from the Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents: NONE**
- V. **VPAA Update—Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek**
  - **With regard to the Executive Committee actions for next year, Dr. Mazachek said she's hoping to lift up the work of the committees in a more timely way to spread information as effectively as possible.**
  - **Dr. Mazachek said there is a detailed plan (working with the Frank agency) to update the website; funding was approved at April Board of Regents meeting. The work here will start in the next couple of weeks. The focus is on the main campus site (the Tech campus and the Law School will be updated in the future). The goal is to refresh (update and incorporate new branding) to reflect best practices for how students can use the site. Much of the work will be done by the time school resumes in the fall, though it will likely take the whole of FY 18 to complete the process.**
  - **Academic Performance Solutions was another item that was approved at the most recent Board of Regents meeting. An information analysis platform, it's designed to provide academic units with specific and useful data. Implementing this system will be a long process but Dr. Mazachek hoped that it would be available to an extent in January 2018 (she will provide an update in the fall).**

- Finally, Dr. Mazachek noted that the recently-ended, multiple year foundation campaign exceeded our expectations and will serve the campus for many years to come.

**VI. Faculty Senate Committee Reports: NONE**

**VII. University Committee Reports:**

- The Library Committee meeting minutes from April 12, 2017 were received.
- The International Education Committee meeting minutes from February 16, 2017 were received.

**VIII. Old Business:**

- 17-12 Feasibility Study-Plus and Minus Grades was presented by Tom Prasch (on behalf of College Faculty Council). Barker said he didn't think the majority of the CFC was in favor of it; he felt that a majority of CFC was in favor of asking the Senate to look into it, and noted that his department is about 50/50 on whether or not they want such a system, which indicates that perhaps a feasibility study should be done. He also wondered if there might be technical difficulties with Banner for implementing such a system. Smith indicated that he felt that the majority of CFC members were also in favor of it. He also noted that the +/- system didn't have to go throughout the grade system. Ball said that from her informal survey, the School of Business was divided but slightly against. Hine was surprised that Washburn didn't have such a system as all of the previous institutions at which he had worked did. He also noted that such a system could incentivize students to improve their efforts, and reminded everyone that the Washburn law school currently used such a system. Stevens said most of the School of Nursing wasn't in favor of it, but they already have an accelerated grading scale. Zwikstra indicated that the EN department (half of which responded to his request for feedback) was divided, though a slight majority in the Humanities division was in favor of it (though this was also a small sample). As far as the feasibility study itself, Zwikstra said no one he talked to seemed really in favor of the effort of such a study. Ockree decided that such a grading system might be problematic in the Accounting program and that it seemed arbitrary. Wasserstein said a feasibility study would take up faculty time, which is already lacking. He also wondered about perception if we did such a study (e.g. if we did the study, it seems like momentum could lead to the adoption of it). Smith wondered what it such a feasibility study might entail. Prasch indicated that approximately 60% of campuses have such a policy. Mazachek indicated that students have questions about such a grading system and, if a study went forward, they would like to be involved (Grospitch echoed this sentiment). Petersen asked about the benefit of doing such a study. Hine indicated that more quality or accurate grading fostered by the change would be beneficial. Petersen indicated he does that already under the current system, though said he could go in either direction in terms of the proposal. Schmidt noted that the study could be done as an ad hoc committee or by one of the standing committee. Barker said that if a feasibility study wasn't approved by the Senate, those in favor of it could certainly gather the data on their own and then propose it formally later, though Prasch noted that the goal was to get diverse faculty involved by bringing it before the Senate in the first place. Mansfield said it's hard to talk about this since it doesn't seem like anything is 'broken' with the current system, though also said that the School of Nursing would certainly like to be a part of such a study if it went forward. Steinroetter said all four new hires in the English Department this year wondered why we didn't have a +/- system; it could just be an issue caused by a lack of perspective (doing what we are used to). Schmidt wondered about the

rationale—"it seems like it may be better" doesn't seem to be a sufficient justification. The motion did not pass.

**IX. New Business: NONE**

**X. Special Orders:**

- The new senators introduced themselves and were welcomed by President Schmidt while the Senators whose terms were ending were thanked for their service.
- Elections of Faculty Senate Officers for 2016-2017 were conducted:
  - President—Schmidt was re-elected President.
  - Vice President—Moddelmog and Worsely were nominated; Worsely was elected.
  - Secretary—Schnoebelen was re-elected.
  - Parliamentarian—Barker was re-elected.
  - The following individuals will represent their various units on the Executive Committee for FY 18:
    - Scofield will represent the School of Business
    - Mansfield will represent the School of Nursing
    - No School of Law representative was selected, as no representatives were present.

**XI. Information Items: NONE**

**XII. Discussion Items: NONE**

**XIII. Announcements: NONE**

**XIV. The meeting was adjourned at 3:42pm.**