

**Ohio University Faculty Senate**  
**Meeting Minutes Monday, May 3, 2021**

**Virtual Meeting Via MS Teams**

**7:10 – 9:00 p.m.**

- I President M. Duane Nellis and Executive Vice-President & Provost Elizabeth Sayrs
- II Roll Call and Approval of the April 5, 2021
- III Chair’s Report – Robin Muhammad
  - a. Updates & Announcements
  - b. Upcoming Senate Meeting: September 13, 2021 (Location: TBA)
- IV Executive Committee
  - A. Resolution to Form a Committee Charged with Reviewing and Changing the Scheduling Process for Regional Campus Course Offerings – First Reading
- V Promotion & Tenure Committee – Jackie Wolf
- VI Educational Policy & Student Affairs Committee – Andrew Pueschel
- VII Professional Relations – Char Miller
- VIII Finance & Facilities – Doug Clowe
  - A. Resolution to Seek Parity in Budgetary Cuts to Expenses of Administrative and Academic Units – First Reading
- IX New Business
- X Adjournment

In attendance:

Andzulis, Bates, Braun, Brown, Casebolt, Chen, Cirolì, Clowe, Crawford, Dowell, Duvert, Dyer, Eisworth, Gurien, Haile, Hallman-Thrasher, Healy, Hendrickson, Hess, Hiler, Holcomb, House, Hurley, Johnson L., Johnson M., Karney, Klein, Kuruppallil, Llamas, Marchenkov, Marinski, Matlack, McDiarmid, McMills, Miller, Muhammad, Munhall, Murray, Nguyen, O’Keefe, Owens, Palmer, Parsons, Phillips, Pritchard, Pueschel, Raney, Reader, Ridpath, Riefler, Rosado Feger, Sandal, Sarver, Shao-Lucas, Sprunger, Steele, Stork, Webb, Welser, White A., Wilson, Wolf, Wyatt, You, Young

Meeting called to order at 7:10

President Duane Nellis

Thanked all for the opportunity to be here, and everything faculty does for students, the university and the communities we serve.

Proud of university community and their accomplishments this year.

- #1 Best Value in Ohio, #33 nationally.
- #1 Online College in Ohio
- #1 in the World, Master of Sports Administration
- Record number of students in OHIO Honors Program
- Introduced OHIO Guarantee+
- HEED Diversity award
- 3 Goldwater Scholars (most in any Ohio university)
- Fullbright announcements coming up
- Opened Heritage Hall
- Completing new Chemistry building
- Implemented OneOHIO
- Realigned University Communications and Marketing
- New brand: Forever OHIO
- General Education reform
- Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan
- OHIO Giving Day: \$443k raised in one day
- Dr. Ice and Dr. Johnson: COVID protocols and vaccine clinics.
- In-person commencement ceremonies.
- University Distinguished Professor: Dr. Srdjan Nesic (Engineering)
- Outstanding Graduate Faculty: Dr. Brandon Kendhammer
- Planning an in-person commencement ceremony for 2020 graduates on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Enrollment for Fall 2021:

- Strong showing near the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Tracking higher than last year, and approaching 2019 levels. Growth in both OH resident and non-resident confirmations, significant growth in under-represented students.
- Strong confirmations in HTC and international students.
- Thank you to the entire university community for their work in both recruiting and retention.
- Graduate and online enrollments holding as well.

Budget:

- Share faculty desire to protect the academic quality and delivering excellent student experience. Budget decisions must be about the students we serve.
- Planning for a “much more normal” Fall.

Provost Sayers:

Thank you for all who participated in the commencement ceremonies.

Welcome to Sara Helfrich as Interim Dean of the Patton College of Education.

Fall Planning:

- COVID absence policy (treats COVID-related absences as official University excused absences) in effect as long as these procedures might be necessary.
- Fall schedule:
  - Classroom capacities have increased (3-ft student spacing, 6-ft instructor spacing).
  - Courses moved to in-person modality.
  - Courses under review for Fall to maximize in-person opportunities.
  - Large 1<sup>st</sup>-yr enrollment, traditionally challenging courses, courses that really benefit from face to face delivery were prioritized.
  - Should have enough classroom capacity for classes with <40 students (unless courses normally scheduled online, or where instructors have an exemption).
  - Barring new public health guidance, we do not anticipate any more university-wide changes to course offerings, although individual classroom assignments will continue to be made/changed through the summer. CAVEAT: colleges often have some changes they submit through the summer.
  - Priorities: pedagogical needs, accessibility and accommodation needs taken into consideration. Some faculty may be assigned to teach courses they don't typically teach.
  - Classrooms will be set up through the summer in preparation for Fall student arrival.
  - Thanks to the Registrar's team, Deb Benton and Bob Bulow, Curriculum Planning Group, Space Planning, Facilities, Chairs and Directors, and Dr. Ice and her team for their quick and intense work under very tight deadlines.
- Probationary faculty survey:
  - Tenure clock extended, but faculty may need different COVID-related assistance. The survey results will inform what we implement for our probationary faculty.

Academic Planning:

- International Opportunities Think Tank and Academic Planning and Strategy groups have shared their recommendations. Synthesized report with next steps expected by mid-May.
- Will ask faculty members and Dean's council to form core groups to work on implementation from these processes.
  - Metrics task force
  - Horizontal Cluster pilot
  - Innovative program launch and support
  - Merging writing centers
- Also opportunities for other working groups to start in Fall for medium-term priorities.

Looking back on this year:

- THANK YOU to Faculty Senate for active work through summer and on regular, AdHoc, and strategic planning committees, and Andrew Pueschel, Ben Bates, and Robin Muhammad for their work with academic policies.
- THANK YOU to Doug Clowe for his work as Finance and Facilities chair and insightful questions on budget planning and participation in Board of Trustees meetings along with Ben Bates.
- THANK YOU to Char Miller and Jackie Wolf for engaging in really important discussions around Promotion and Tenure and OneOHIO issues, conversation that are needed and helpful and looking forward to continuing.
- THANK YOU to the many faculty who've participated on planning committees this year:
  - International Opportunities Think Tank
  - Academic Planning and Strategy Group and Sub-Groups
  - Open forums, lunch sessions, invited conversations, feedback.
- There is still much uncertainty about the future, but we are energized by the ideas, brilliance, care and thoughtfulness regarding the future of Ohio University. You have worked extraordinarily hard for the past 14 months: teaching, serving, researching. But also, connecting with our students. Hopes the summer will provide an opportunity to rejuvenate and refresh as we look forward to being with our colleagues, our friends, our students, and on our campuses in the fall.

#### QUESTIONS:

Senator Crawford: We have a resolution tonight that I hope will receive support, which refers to a previous resolution signed by the Provost in 2017 concerning balance between academic and administrative budget cuts. Since that resolution was ignored, what power do these resolutions have? How can we be assured that this resolution will not be ignored?

Provost Sayers: a lot depends on how it is written, and would argue that the previous resolution was not ignored. We are looking at how the result of decisions about cuts occur over time. Would also argue that there are different ways to look at proportionality and how to measure whether areas are properly resourced but would definitely agree that we need to prioritize academic areas.

President Nellis: I agree with the Provost's comments but we continue to very aggressively and actively explore adjustments to expenses and all administrative areas, not only to achieve the right balance but also to seek adjustments that have the least impact as far the student experience. We want to keep the student experience, the academic dimension out in front but also recognize that what happens in the classroom is part of it but the support around the student is important as well.

Senator O'Keefe: Can you explain the lack of integration of Regional faculty lines into the Athens budget?

Provost: When OneOHIO started there was a 3-yr timeline for budget integration, and there are parts of the budget that we never intended to be integrated, for example, budgets for operations on each campus. As we started to get into scheduling, what we saw was some Athens departments asking to use teaching capacity from the regionals to meet Athens student needs, rather than regional student needs, because the cost line was not on the Athens campus. Consulted with John Day about this issue, and discovered that there are financial reporting issues and HLC guidelines and NCES reporting that have to do with the distinction between a "location" vs a "campus." We expect more clarity on this in June, but

it looks like there were challenges with that kind of simple centralization. We are looking at how do we integrate budgets and align incentives so there's visibility at the college/department level (where funding is held) and colleges and departments are serving both regional and Athens campuses. Moving faculty lines might not be the best way to integrate the budget, but we do need more visibility and some kind of alignment to realign the incentives.

Senator White: Although it looks like Athens faculty will be returning to the classroom, RHE has been packing more students into Zoom/Teams courses, thus many of us are being forced to teach online even when we think this is drastically inferior to in-person teaching. What can be done about this?

Provost Sayers: One of the things that has been important is to make sure that classes are reasonable sizes. A challenge as regional campuses become smaller, the very small class sizes are not sustainable, and it is important for those campuses to be sustainable. We have a lot of new research emerging about student preferences indicating that even traditional-age students where it is not a massive majority prefer in-person classes. Decisions about modality need to be about meeting student needs in a sustainable way. If there are any specific examples you want to bring to my attention, please do. But fundamentally we need to meet student needs in a sustainable way.

Senator White: it's not so much about caps, but about how we teach and the challenges that our students have with technology and access and other. I want to be in the classroom with my students and I am not able to do that.

Provost Sayers: Not comfortable talking to an individual preference vs department/campus needs but the broader consideration is to meet student needs.

Chair Muhammad: We do have an upcoming resolution on RHE scheduling but would also encourage faculty to send their individual examples and we can collate and present.

Senator White: this is not merely about preference, I believe this creates an inferior experience for our students.

Provost Sayers: I would say the research is not that conclusive about that.

Senator Phillips: Provost, you mentioned that the writing centers are going to be merged, this is news to me as the Director of the grad writing center. Could you expand upon this please?

Provost: a recommendation from the International Opportunities Think Tank was to bring together the writing centers and cross-train staff. We have several writing centers, the recommendation is to merge those so students know where to go to get support and they get consistent support and advice.

Senator Phillips: has this been decided or what is the decision process?

Provost: this was a recommendation of the IOTT we are working through how this works. Will work with Joe Shields, Carey Bush, and Dean Plossman.

Senator Blau: is the data on student preference for online formats based on Ohio University/regional respondents?

Provost: No, this is national data.

Dr. Susan Burgess: Would like to ask about voluntary retirement. Is it on the floor for faculty members at the end of the fiscal year?

Provost Says: We are exploring that, it takes a while to do the modeling and the analysis.

Dr. Burgess: I ask the question because morale is in a bad place right now. Can you help us understand the discrepancies that exist between the way that senior administrators vs faculty are being treated in terms of compensation and resources"? For example, faculty cannot fund travel or equipment purchases even with funds earned via HTC tutorials or other individual efforts. How can we have these things available to us?

Provost Says: this sounds like a college-level issue, can you please send me details? This has been a very hard year but I believe we are turning the corner and we are doing the right things now to be in a good place in the next few years. I understand morale is a challenge but I also see people who are fully invested in the success of our students and our institution as the core of who we are that I have great faith that we will be in a better place.

Dr. Burgess: I agree that faculty want to be behind the institution but it's very difficult because we have colleagues elsewhere where faculty are being hired and rewarded. Other institutions are addressing these challenges differently.

President Nellis: I agree with Provost that we are turning the corner in a positive way and will see that reflected in enrollments in Fall. Through all your great work we are committed to looking seriously at administrative costs and rebalancing and focusing on the student experience. We are moving in a more positive direction. Appreciate the leadership of the Provost and all of you working together.

Provost Says: I see a lot of building in the academic strategy plans, and other initiatives. But please do send details about these specific issues (HTC funds etc)

Chair Muhammad: Chair's report will touch on some of these issues including early retirement.

Roll Call and Approval of Minutes

Munhall/Healy Minutes from April 5, 2021 meeting approved.

Chair's Report:

- Welcome to the continuing and new senators.
- Commencement: thousands of students participating this past weekend and more this week, thanks to all faculty and staff who helped. Special thanks to Dr. Susan Williams, former Senator, who gave an excellent address.
- Next steps, as we look at understanding, what do we do as we represent all faculty (all campuses), guardians of the curriculum, Faculty Senate represents all the ideas and interests. We provide a space for opinions to be expressed and to provide a place to discuss policy and implementation. Our job is to relay and to shape. Our work goes both ways, we bring from our faculty, but we also return information to our faculty. Shared governance has felt challenged in the last few years but we have also seen progress. We are exhausted, in part because we are working EVERYWHERE in many committees and task forces. Our challenges continue, we want

to be there for our students and our labs and the work we do across campus. Thank you to all of us who continue this work.

- It is really important that we understand the Faculty Handbook, I encourage you to read it. Areas need to be revisited and revised, it is a living document. At the very least read the first section on academic freedom.
- Committees are how we do the bulk of our work. All senators are expected to serve on one of four committees. At the end of this meeting you will get a survey to indicate your rank-order committee preferences. We take these into account as we make sure we have representation on each committee.
- Summer work looking at Faculty Handbook:
  - Dean's Evaluations process, for example, how to trigger a Comprehensive Evaluation outside of the regular 5-yr cycle.
  - Early retirement. We do not have a policy. Need to identify questions and issues to bring to the full senate.
- Other work
  - Reconstituting University/College Professional Ethics committees.

Dr. Gillian Ice:

1. How will faculty be protected in the classroom?

Students: 3-ft vs prior 6-ft distancing. Still continue to do primary, secondary, tertiary prevention. Vaccines are a significant new tool. We expect many students will be vaccinated but perhaps around 50%. Masks will continue to be important. We have learned a lot about classroom transmission, which we haven't had. We have adequate ventilation and filtration, which also helps. Even classroom where we have had close proximity, we have not had transmission. New testing pathways require everyone (faculty included) to test regularly, which we expect will keep rates low.

2. Can we require students to be vaccinated to attend in-person classes?

We can't and the assessment is that we shouldn't. Although other institutions are doing it, it is majority private institutions who are doing this. There is a bill currently proposed in the Ohio legislature that will prohibit requirement of vaccines and prohibit asking for evidence of vaccination. The pathway approach will hopefully incentivize vaccination. Even for required vaccinations, we have to allow exemptions. We think the continued testing will help us manage better. The cadence of the testing will be determined by the epidemiology, if we have an uptick in breakthrough infections, then we need to change the management.

3. Why are vaccinated people required to test monthly?

We require vaccinate people to test monthly because no vaccine is 100% effective, and also to do base surveillance against any variants emerging. We are letting the data drive the strategy...if our infection rates are low, we will reduce testing, but increase if they rise.

4. If all students and faculty in a classroom are vaccinated, can they relax the rules in the class?

The challenge is we cannot share vaccination status with faculty and faculty cannot ask students for their vaccination status. It is better if we can collectively work to 70/50 so we can all relax the precautions, vs individual classrooms dealing with privacy, stigma, and other issues.

4. Senator Hess: If we can't mandate vaccination, and must test, what happens if they are out of compliance? And will I be notified as an instructor?

Dr. Ice: We acknowledge that ensuring compliance is hard. We are advocating for measures that help, for example, keeping at least some key buildings require swipe access, and tie swipe access to compliance. This has been our most powerful tool for compliance. We monitor compliance weekly and contact students who fall out and shut off swipe access if they don't do their testing. Often they will go test after discovering they can't get into Ping. Further violations get sent to Community Standards. They had to hire a some people because their volume of referrals was pretty high for testing compliance problems. We're trying to take a case management approach, so if we notice a student is out of compliance we contact them and try to fix the problem, because we don't want to overwhelm Community Standards. That's how we approach lack of compliance. If a student is out of compliance or in isolation or quarantine a notification goes to the Associate Dean that says this person cannot attend class or come to campus and we will continue to do that. You will be notified that a student can't attend class but it might be compliance or it might be isolation/quarantine. We will continue to use these processes and tweak as needed along the way.

5. Senator Andzulis: What is the cost of all this testing?

Dr. Ice: It's not cheap, it's a fairly significant investment. Currently paid from CARES Act funds. The more people get vaccinated, the less we have to use funds for testing which would be lovely. The bottom line is we need to be as safe as possible.

Chair Muhammad: CARES Act also requires a lot of documentation for how it was used and where which takes time from your office and finance people.

6. Senator Steele: RHE does not use swipe access, what can we do?

Dr. Ice: Yes, this is a challenge. We have notified the college contacts on each campus when an individual cannot be on campus. Not as effective as swipe access. Will be having testing kits available on each campus instead of ordering online.

7. Senator Phillips: Will we move to a model where those not vaccinated get billed for testing?

Dr. Ice: That's not a question I can answer, we'd have to see how that helps vs hinders.

8. Will we have vaccine on campus?

Dr. Ice: We are looking at options, for example, a clinic for international students who might not have access at home. Or when the J&J pause ends, can we have it available at BSO? Students think Heritage Hall is not convenient, so can we have it elsewhere or campus? Likely, Campus Care will eventually have vaccine available. Ohio Health is trying to bring vaccines into regular care settings.

9. What plans are being discussed related to booster shots?



Dr. Ice: We don't know when or how we will need them, so no plans until this is clearer. Do want to give compliments to the people who did the clinic at Heritage Hall, it was well organized and well run.

#### Executive Committee:

- Resolution to Form a Committee Charged with Reviewing and Changing the Scheduling Process for Regional Campus Course Offerings – First Reading
  - Proposed by a group of regional faculty.
  - OneOHIO suggests centralized scheduling processes. This is not happening for faculty at regional campuses, and is leading to a variety of issues for faculty.
  - The current system has serious issues and faculty have no meaningful way to provide input.
  - Original process proposed for OneOHIO lacked important details.
  - This is first reading, and would be brought up again at the September meeting for second reading. However, planning will be well underway for spring semester by then.
  - Motion to suspend the rules and proceed to second reading
    - White/Reader MOTION PASSES, rules suspended.
  - Motion to approve: PASSES, Resolution approved.

#### P&T: Senator Wolf

- Purpose of the committee: hear appeals to P&T denial decisions, address all matters relating to promotion and tenure.
- Summary for this year:
  - Guidelines for departments updating P&T documents in light of OneOHIO
  - Submitted several updates to Handbook
- Statement on behalf of P&T Committee, re faculty workloads in the context of P&T guidelines:
  - See attached pdf
  - Statement of support from Senator White
  - Statement of support from Senator Webb
  -

#### EPSA: Senator Pueschel

- Purpose of the committee: consider all issues related to curriculum and educational policies, primary link between UCC and Faculty Senate.
- Summary for this year:
  - Catalog of entry
  - Ohio Transfer Module
  - Alternative Grading
  - Build on relationship with other Senates across campus

#### PRC: Senator Miller

- Purpose of the committee: handle all grievances not related to P&T, consider all policies that have to do with faculty (except any relating to P&T).

- Update for tonight, change submitted for the Faculty Handbook, changing the name of University Medical Associates to the new name: Ohio Health Physician Group.

F&F: Senator Clowe

- Purpose of the committee: to address issues of budget and facilities across all campuses.
- Resolution to Seek Parity in Budgetary Cuts to Expenses of Administrative and Academic Units – First Reading
  - Background: resolution passed in 2017 and signed by Provost Descutner requesting parity in spending cuts between academic and administrative units.
  - Over the time between then and now, academic cuts have been ~10.7%, vs ~3.7% in administrative units.
  - Question: would it be useful to pass this resolution before the June BoT meeting?
  - Answer: might be useful, as they are talking about how to balance next year's budget.
  - Chair Muhammad: I think this resolution seems to resonate with the current BoT.
  - Motion to suspend rules and proceed to vote: Pueschel/Crawford PASSES (one Nay)
  - Question: Why will the Provost not sign this? How will the numbers be challenged?
  - Sen. Clowe: we have reasonable hope she will sign it. The counterargument might be that they want to reserve the right to invest in "strategic priorities".
  - Question: mentioned percentages but not people...need to consider whether units were "right-sized" to begin with. We need to reach a budget where each unit has the right resources...not focus on percentage parity. Budgets should provide the necessary resources for each unit.
  - Vote on resolution: PASSES (one Nay, five Abstain)

New Business: None

Final comments: we will be looking at returning to a physical space but also looking at how we conduct and record votes. Appreciate everyone's work and patience while we have worked through unusual and challenging conditions.

Move to adjourn: White/Reader

Adjourned, 9:28 pm