**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**Friday, November 6, 2015 – 1:30**

**Hamblin Auditorium**

1. **Call to order:** The Faculty Senate Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Dr. Ron Baker at 1:34 p.m.
2. **Review/approval of minutes:** Minutes from the Faculty Senate Meeting held October 2, 2015 were read. **Motion to accept the minutes was made (Alderman/Banks) and carried.**
3. **Approval of the agenda:** Note that changes were made to the agenda that was emailed to the faculty listserv earlier in the week. Reports from the President and the Provost were removed from the agenda as they were not in attendance. Additionally, Dr. Rich Ford was asked by the Graduate Studies Council to provide a report to Faculty Senate – that item was added to the agenda. **Motion to approve the amended agenda carried (Alderman/Clark).**
4. **Comments from Chair:** Chair Ruhnke was not in attendance. Vice Chair Baker noted that when the agenda was created, it was not known that Provost Jayasuriya would not be in attendance. With many questions, the agenda item “online education platform” will be discussed despite the absence of the Provost.
5. **Reports:**
	1. **BOG Report – Dr. Guetzloff:** A meeting of the Board of Governors was held on Thursday, October 29, 2015. The Athletic Department is replacing excess funding received over previous years. General discussion was made of negative financial implications of the loss of the Community and Technical College (CTC) from campus. It was noted that the CTC is still involved in the refinance of the Student Union. Dr. Guetzloff reported on the review of President Hemphill. Fifty evaluations were returned and feedback was generally positive. Some faculty reported being nervous about the anonymity of the process and that may have factored into the low response rate. Discussion moved to remedial courses. Dr. Guetzloff noted that while best practices should be used with remediation that the board often discusses whether or not we have the finances to support such a program. Dr. Zaman noted that the Math Department is interested in the success of remedial programs. Is the University collecting such data on remedial students? Is this handled by university research? Finally, Dr. Guetzloff noted the possibility of another significant budget cut in February.
	2. **ACF Report – Dr. Ford:** The initiative on course transferability across universities in West Virginia is moving slowly. Dr. Ford reminded the group of the public hearing regarding PEIA’s planned $120 million in cuts next year. The meeting will be held at the Civic Center Little Theater on November 10, 2015. To speak, sign-ups start at 5:00 and the meeting will begin at 6:00. Historically, ACF held meetings in the summer to develop an agenda of issues for the upcoming year. This year, the group will ask Faculty Senate Groups to suggest issues to ACF. Again, issues of funding cuts were discussed.
	3. **Graduate Studies Council – Dr. Ford:** The Graduate Studies Council would like one centralized location on campus for graduate admissions. This location would serve only clerical functions as deadlines, admission criteria, admission decisions, etc. would be made at the program level. General discussion was made about the history of graduate paperwork and the admission of international students. The point was made that good services help with retention. Dr. Baker asked if we have institutional policies regarding Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and Dr. Ford reported yes. Questions or issues for the Graduate Studies Council should be emailed to Dr. Ford or to the program representatives. Dr. Ray would like the group to address services for international students.
	4. **Honors Program – Dr. Sklute:** Please see document Honors Program Annual Report, submitted by Dr. Sklute. She reviewed the Honors Program to include the mission statement and enrollment (a 20% increase over previous year to a current enrollment of 39 students). Dr. Sklute noted that she is working with colleagues to try and increase the number of enrolled students especially in colleges/departments with low numbers. Further, she reported the students enrolled in the program include 23 females and 16 males. Dr. Sklute also reviewed the Honors Program Curriculum and requirements for graduation (3.3 GPA, 15 GE honors hours, Honors 301, and 2 community service activities). The report included numerous successes of our honors graduates. Future goals include the desire to increase enrollment, to increase scholarships, and to develop a strategic plan. Additionally, the program would like to initiate steps for a National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) review. This year, the program also plans to host the first Undergraduate Research Day and support the university’s fundraising project for the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life. West Virginia State University’s Relay for life event will be held Saturday, April 16, 2016. General discussion was made about the research students complete via the honors program. Dr. Sklute reported that she works with each department in an effort to ensure that honors research complements or supplements what is already in place. Additional discussion occurred about changes in the General Education curriculum, what departments can offer honors classes (any, they go through approval process), and the effect of the program on recruitment. Dr. Sklute reported that she has seen an increase in the number of students who seek her with questions about the program. Additionally, she encouraged faculty to reach out to eligible students and encourage them to complete the program. **Motion to accept the Honors Program Annual Report was made and motion carried (Alderman/Clark).**
	5. **EPC – Dr. Fultz:** Please see handout of minutes from the October 23, 2015 EPC meeting. Dr. Fultz reported there had been considerable discussion as to how to handle the new General Education curriculum changes. EPC developed a streamlined approach in order to handle all of the paperwork pertaining to the changes. Dr. Fultz noted that the 3-hour Freshman Experience course was approved for the Spring semester of 2016. Additional changes are noted in the minutes to include a new course in Chemistry, changes in remedial requirements in Math, and changes to History Classes. **Motion to accept the EPC report was made and motion carried (Alderman/Ray).**
6. **New Business:**
	1. **Online Education Platform:** The university is exploring Learning House for use as the new online platform. Dr. Guetzloff reported that a contingent of faculty will visit the company headquarters of Learning House. No contract has been signed. Dr. Zaman reported that from discussions in the deans’ meeting, most comments regarding Learning House seemed to be positive. It was noted that in addition to us accepting Learning House, they have to accept us, too. The new platform would go into effect in the fall semester of 2016. The several options being explored include the following: 1. Learning House only works with our complete online programs; 2. Learning House works with the online programs and provides support; and 3. Combine options 1 and 2 and add current online courses.
	2. **Policies concerning online-only programs:** Discussion was had regarding admissions – do online students share open admissions status of our other students? We are not creating new programs, just a different delivery method for current programs. The only difference will be a special designation in Banner to separate the two. Will Learning House have access to Banner? What are the implications? Policies regarding academic programs fall to faulty and faculty senate should advise on such policies. Considerable discussion was had on the Sociology program. Dr. Ray reported her program was instructed to create online program courses and she questioned the stability of small programs if they do not move to online delivery. The point was made that the move to online programs does not guarantee enrollment and the path is unclear and seemingly unsupported. Dr. Mitiku noted that usually such changes are done in order of planning, resources, development, then implementation and this seems to be occurring in backwards order. Dr. Ray noted that small programs must increase enrollment or face elimination. The only seeming alternative is to go online. Dr. Baker noted the HEPC requirement for minimum numbers in programs and moving online may or may not increase enrollment. Does the company have any proof that they can recruit in our demographic? Do we have enough information? Dr. Guetzloff reported that Learning House can turn around classes in 8 weeks as they have numerous staff members to help develop online components. Who does the content belong to? Dr. Zaman noted that faculty is in charge of the course content and Learning House will just help put it online. Comments were made that the platform is open source and will have a local office (on campus). Dean Bejou suggested an informational meeting with the faculty and the Provost might answer questions as there may be more questions than actual concerns.
	3. **Use of email on shared computers:** Dr. Baker reminded everyone to close the browser when using email on shared computers. It has been alarmingly common to find open emails on share computers. Don’t forget to log off!

**Motion was made and carried (Alderman/Ray) to adjourn the meeting.**

Dr. Emily Waugh, Secretary