**Minutes from the WVSU General Faculty Meeting**

**on Wednesday, December 8, 2021**

*The following meeting was conducted in person and by Zoom in Wallace Hall 122.*

*Attendance: M. Wilson; R. Ford; D. Johnson; C. Susman, N. Zaman; S. Armstrong; M. Pennington; M. Blackwell; L. Davidson; K. Steele; D. Wells; R. Mutepa; B. Ladner; J. Barnes-Pietruszynski; R. Harris; J. Pietruszynski; S. Gilliland; K. Cobb; T. Park; B. Liedl; J. Martin; L. Lambert; T. Ruhnke; M. Fultz; C. Walker; L. Good; A. Schedl; M. Anderson; M. Erlandson; G. Palubinskas; Z. Fitchner, A. Bejou, R. Ovrebo,*

The meeting was called to order by J. Barnes-Pietruszynski at 2:07 pm

Revisions/Suggestions to the Agenda

S. Armstrong moved and M. Blackwell seconded the approval of the agenda with additions. Faculty voted unanimously.

Revisions/Suggestions to the Minutes sent to L. Davidson. Minutes stand with corrections. Faculty voted unanimously.

**REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BOG – PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH**

J. Pietruszynski said the committee met a few times, the last time they met they discussed the advertisement. The suggestion was to use the previous one, but J. Pietruszynski suggested it be revised with suggestions. He stated the ad would go out by the end of this week, which stays with the timeline submitted to HEPC. Candidates on campus by the end of next semester and vetted properly. He also suggested to get CVs to faculty at least a week before they will be on campus. He indicated there is only one voice on the committee, but it is progressing according to schedule.

He also recommended to review the rubric and make recommendations based on feedback from last time.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said that at the faculty senate meeting last week, we moved a motion that the faculty should vote on a resolution to send to the BOG to include more faculty representations on the presidential search committee. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski read the resolution, which is attached to the minutes.

B. Ladner moved to endorse the resolution and K. Steele seconded. Faculty voted unanimously.

A. Schedl asked how many members were on the committee, J. Pietruszynski said 18 with alumni representing the majority

**ACF**

B. Ladner said that HEPC is not having a legislative day at the capitol. She also announced the Chair of ACF was killed in a car accident Friday night, so an election is going to be held within 30 days to elect a new Chair.

**GRADUATION AND HONORARY DEGREE**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski announced that faculty should come and participate in commencement.

She also stated that Amy Goodwin, Mayor of Charleston, will be the speaker and honored with an Honorary Doctorate. She stated that President Cage came to Faculty Senate and asked how faculty felt, which was great since nobody can think of another president asking faculty their thoughts before.

S. Armstrong asked about a committee. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said M. Fultz suggested that we form a committee, so there will be one formed before next time.

**COVID UPDATES/ACCOMMDATIONS**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said there are several students in quarantine during finals and there was no plan in place on how to handle this situation. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said there is a proctoring system T. Kiddie uses online which is available to give finals while students are in quarantine. She asked faculty for recommendations.

K. Steele said there are a few options we could offer the students. She stated, we could give the student an “I” and give them the final next semester; a professor is emailing the final to a student and setting up a time for them to take the exam on camera, so she is proctoring the student themselves; or give them an equivalent paper or something to submit.

M. Blackwell said he hopes consideration is given if they are sick.

T. Ruhnke said if students are unvaccinated they should be required to get weekly testing. M. Erlandson asked how that would be enforced. T. Ruhnke said if students want to come to campus they should be vaccinated or tested weekly. K. Steele said she supports the idea, but not the structure in place to track. B. Ladner said faculty would not be able to know about the medical information. A. Schedl said students have to submit their childhood vaccinations, so there should be something that can be done. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said a one-time submission is different than a weekly one. L. Lambert said that individuals can still get breakthrough COVID even if vaccinated.

K. Steele said E. Jackson could come to the opening meeting to discuss since he is the chair of the COVID task force.

M. Pennington said that the university administration has had ample time to require vaccination. The question is should we pass a resolution for them to consider that since they have not yet. K. Steele said no public university has passed a mandated vaccine. B. Ladner said if you are not vaccinated, you should have to get tested weekly. J. Pietruszynski said that was one area of the no confidence against Gee at WVU, but that was voted down.

D. Johnson said unless we have the vaccine mandate, we are going to continue picking up little pieces.

G. Palubinskas said there is new information out about COVID that we should educate students about this disease, so if we are asking them to get tested or provide vaccination records, we need to educate them, so they have all of the information. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said that is a good point.

M. Blackwell said we may not be able to solve the issue during finals week, but we could come up with something before we return. M. Blackwell said Glenville did not return to campus after Thanksgiving. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we brought that up in Faculty Senate about modifying the schedule. B. Ladner said it would be easier for students to get holiday jobs. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked if faculty liked that setup, several faculty members said yes, several faculty members said no.

A. Schedl said if we started in July, a lot of faculty working on research would have no vacation

K. Steele said we have a lot of parents who could not come earlier because their kids are not back in school. She also stated, that as far as, faculty working after graduation, it is not necessarily being in the office, just being available as grades go up or students have questions.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked for faculty to think about these issues and bring back suggestions in January.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESSES**

**CONSTITUTIONAL SUMMIT**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said they have set aside some time and would like to invite faculty to break into groups and update the constitution. She indicated this would just be updates. She said this is important, a lot of programs need the faculty handbook updated, but the constitution needs updated before the handbook can be updated.

K. Steele said it will also be a professional development opportunity. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said snacks would be provided.

R. Harris said he read the constitution in 2014 and it was forwarded to faculty senate and the administration. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked him to resend.

R. Ford said can you stress that this is bringing up to date, not making changes. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said yes, but also make notes on things that need changed and take the necessary steps to get those approved.

D. Johnson asked about a date. K. Steele said she is not sure about the date yet, but it will be during opening week.

**FACULTY TECHNOLOGY INVENTORY**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said they are collecting data to setup a rotation schedule. The faculty senate executive committee is going to work on a schedule and provide some ideas on updating technology for faculty computers.

**FACULTY MORALE SURVEY – TASK FORCE FORMATION**

J. Pietruszynski said the data from the survey came from Rutgers and adapted it to WVSU. There were 54 responses, but 2 faculty members misread the survey and switched the scale.

J. Pietruszynski presented the survey responses to the faculty. Overall the faculty morale does not seem to be positive. The Department, Administration and President areas were all hovering in the middle. BOG was very low.

The Good Areas – Chair of the Departments and the University Being Important

The Bad Areas – Salary, Board of Governors, University Support, Appreciation, and Personal Attitudes

J. Pietruszynski said he will publish the breakdown online.

B. Ladner said a faculty member asked her to inquire about travel funding. N. Zaman said they have inquired and E. Jackson stated that the university is not supporting any travel unless it is essential because of COVID. A. Schedl said a lot of the conferences are going back to in person and his 2nd question is what is the total number of faculty. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said she was not sure of the exact number of faculty members.

G. Palubinskas asked if N. Zaman can get an update on travel for faculty attending and participating in conferences. J. Pietruszynski said he emphasized to the BOG that not attending conferences is not a money saving effort for the university. A. Schedl said that a lot of grantors are at the conferences so questions can be asked about upcoming grants. G. Palubinskas brought up about attending conferences being advertisements for the university. B. Ladner said unless BOG is going to stop evaluating faculty on research, then they need to pay for these conferences.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked the faculty about creating a task force to use the data collected and if you want to join the task force, send her an email. A. Schedl said to bring this up in January at the general faculty meeting.

M. Blackwell said recommendations for self-care should be on the list as well. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we have the page L. Good put together that showed places that take our insurance and resources.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES**

R. Ford said he sent an email of the ballots and there are paper ballots up front to vote on the changes. The ballot needs to be submitted by December 31, 2021.

**FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

S. Armstrong said this is her last official attendance at faculty meetings and she has represented this university on three continents. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said she called her from China to suggest something for faculty senate. She stated that she sees a lack of awareness which could attribute to poor faculty morale. She said the university needs to focus on the activity not the person. The BOG is unaware about what faculty do for the university. She said there used to be sessions during Founders Day Week where faculty and honor societies were honored. Faculty has a responsibility and needs to use their voice. She thanked everyone.

Motion from the General Faculty of West Virginia State University to the West Virginia State University Board of Governors and Presidential Search Committee Co-Chairs

WHEREAS the hiring of a University President is one of the most important positional hires in higher education as he/she/they represent the person in charge of the mission and vision for the university, and;

WHEREAS one of the most directly impacted stakeholders in day to day operations of the university mission, specifically education, is the faculty, and;

WHEREAS WVSU faculty members, through the university’s shared governance model must have a close working connection with the president in order to help ensure successful navigation of any future vision / direction of the university, and;

WHEREAS identified best practices in a presidential search, such as in a study by the American Association of University Professors, emphasize a primary role of university faculty in the search for a president due to conditions listed above as well as the institutional knowledge they can provide to the committee, and the expertise in higher education that they bring. This same sentiment can be found in several other research on presidential searches, a sample of which are listed in this motion under REFERENCES, and;

WHEREAS other institutions generally have a faculty representation of at least 45% of the membership in recent presidential searches (i.e. Marshall University (5/11), SUNY (6/12), University of Iowa (10/22), etc.). however, our current representation consists only of one (1) faculty member on the WVSU Presidential Search Committee, and;

WHEREAS past administrative failings may have been avoided or lessened with more faculty buy-in, and;

WHEREAS successful faculty buy-in is incumbent on representation, and;

WHEREAS the sole voice of the committee is ALSO a member of the BOG, creating a possible conflict of interest between the will of the general faculty and his duties as a member of the board. This possible conflict could also cause mistrust and animosity between the Faculty and the BOG, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED that the West Virginia State University Faculty in a formal vote taken during the 12/8 General Faculty Meeting request to Co-Chairs Governor Mark Davis, and Dr. Lateef Saffore as well as the general Board of Governors of West Virginia State University, two additional members of the faculty be added to the Presidential Search Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty would recommend the following two members: Dr. Naveed Zaman (Dean Mathematics and Natural Sciences) and Dr. Barbara Leidel.

Signed,

Jessica Barnes-Pietruszynski, Ph.D. Date

Chair, WVSU Faculty Senate

on behalf of the WVSU General Faculty.

REFERENCES

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