**Minutes from the WVSU Faculty Meeting on Friday, October 1, 2021**

**In-Person and Video Conference Call using Zoom at 1:30 pm**

*The following meeting was conducted by video conference call using Zoom and in person in Hamblin Hall, due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.*

*Attendance: L. Davidson, P. Carney, K. Steele, L. Lambert, J. Barnes-Pietruszynski, J. Pietruszynski, T. Ruhnke, R. Ford, M. Bhuiyan, D. Wells, K. Toledo, M. Seyedmonir, J. Martin, N. Zaman, A. Bejou, E. Waugh, T. Park, M. Fultz, B. Ladner, M. Casey, L. Good, Z. Fitchner, F. Vaughan, E. Cage*

The meeting was called to order by J. Barnes-Pietruszynski at 1:41 pm

**REVISIONS/SUGGESTIONS TO THE AGENDA AND MINUTES**

B. Ladner moved and K. Steele seconded the approval of the agenda. Senate voted unanimously.

T. Ruhnke moved and M. Seyedmonir seconded the minutes with changes to L. Davidson. Senate voted unanimously.

**REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**INTERIM PROVOST DEAN CARNEY**

Dr. Carney announced they have formed college advisory boards. The deans and some faculty have been working to create a list as well as outside individuals to provide guidance, collaboration and working with the community. She also announced that Interim President Cage said we can un-pause and revisit the strategic plan. P. Carney also said we now have paid internship grants for students through career services, students will have the opportunity to get paid internships. Students should work with Eric Milan and he will assist in placing them somewhere that will be beneficial to their degree.

Congratulations to the Health Science Bachelors’ Degree for 8th Best Online Program and the Social Work Department received a Rural Health Disparities Grant for $306,000

Dr. Carney also announced that Dr. Parsley from HEPC came to campus for a visit. Dr. Carney indicated she is focusing on health sciences and behavioral health and met with L. Good, A. Settle, M. Sizemore, S. Kelly, K. Steele. Dr. Carney also stated that Dr. Parsley had been speaking to universities to ensure they were keeping the students in a job. Dr. Carney said Dr. Parsley also followed up with K. Toledo about behavioral health issues and visited the nursing labs.

Dr. Carney announced that the CAEP virtual visit will be in November 7-9 and some departments may be contacted since they are liaisons for the education department.

Dr. Carney discussed the modified homecoming schedule. Friday (10/15/21) and Saturday (10/16/21) Parade will begin at 3:00 pm; football game will be at 6:00 pm to reveal the lights.

Dr. Carney said that the1890 scholarships disseminated 27 scholarships and thanked everyone who has been helping 16 Biology; 4 Chemistry; 5 Business/Admin; and 2 Economics.

Dr. Carney also announced that students were dropped for nonpayment, but have been going to cashier’s office to be reinstated.

Dr. Carney said the new Missions/Values posters from the strategic plan have been prepared, so please take some and hang them around your building or offices.

T. Ruhnke asked Dr. Carney about kids being dropped due to bureaucratic issues. Dr. Carney said they threshold was $3,000 and students were given opportunity to make a payment, so they can be reinstated. She indicated it started at 99, but is down to 79 due to a collaborative effort from multiple departments. T. Ruhnke said removing students from classes through no fault of their own puts them at a deficit. He further stated that if students just have not paid, that is a learning experience for them, but we need to do better on assisting these students if there are issues. Dr. Carney said there has been a lot of turnover in those departments and they are trying to determine a better policy.

M. Seyedmonir asked what is the purpose of dropping students for nonpayment because these same departments are instructing students to work with professors until they are reinstated. Dr. Carney said that is a good question and further stated that Business & Finance took the lead on this matter. M. Seyedmonir said they are making decisions on academics. T. Ruhnke said we need to talk to someone from that department. K. Toledo said she has personally made some outreach for students and Mikey in the cashiers’ office said there is a new vendor, so students had to enroll before a certain date in order to meet the vendor’s requirements. K. Steele said students will get grades if they do the work because WVSU was sued by a student who did not receive a grade for a class not paid for, so that is why there is a drop date. Dr. Carney said she will find out more about the process. K. Steele also stated there is a new financial aid director coming soon, so we should invite them to the next faculty senate.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said a lot of this is regulated by the federal government.

M. Bhuiyan said he thinks a lot of this is due to Ferrell Hall offices not helping students. Dr. Carney said the offices are trying to be more customer service friendly. R. Ford said we are not complaining; we are just concerned for the students. T. Ruhnke said academic affairs has always worked with students in some way, but it is further down the hall in Ferrell where there are issues.

**BOG**

J. Pietruszynski said the first BOG meeting was held on Thursday, September 23 and the next one is November 11.

The BOG officially named Erick Cage the Interim President and everyone seems to have confidence that he is doing a great job. The BOG also ratified Dr. Ami Smith’s position.

J. Pietruszynski said they BOG also approved to reengage AGB to help with the presidential search. He indicated they are trying to be the best stewards of money, since this one is free. J. Pietruszynski indicated that since we have not received good candidates in the past, it will be easier to fail a search we did not pay for.

J. Pietruszynski also stated the BOG passed a compensation change for the Interim Provost, Interim Associate Provost, and Chief Operating Office.

J. Pietruszynski also announced was elected as the chair of the University Affairs Committee, which also puts him on the executive committee. J. Pietruszynski indicated being on this committee allows faculty a voice there as well. Eric Jackson and Erick Cage checked the BOG by-laws to make sure faculty can serve and there were no issues.

J. Pietruszynski said there was a list presented to the BOG that certain programs were getting national recognition and a list was also shared about what the students had been doing, which is a good reflection on what faculty is doing on campus. J. Pietruszynski read the list of student accomplishments.

J. Pietruszynski announced that the Fall 2021 incoming freshman was the largest enrollment in four years (Fall 2017).

J. Pietruszynski also stated that in addition to the lights, they are getting a new football field.

J. Pietruszynski also said that the BOG Business Committee said we ended the last fiscal year in the black.

J. Pietruszynski discussed the COVID numbers given on 9/23, but stated they may have changed. Eric Jackson is working on getting updated numbers. J. Pietruszynski said currently reported vaccination number were faculty 38%; staff 66%; students 30%. J. Pietruszynski said some of the issues is people not reporting their vaccinations. He indicated faculty should have received an email, if you have not, please go and resubmit your vaccination records. J. Pietruszynski said he told Chair Jones that the numbers were low or underreported. M. Bhuiyan said the original link was not working. F. Vaughan said we could look at who has responded. J. Pietruszynski said the ones who had responded were vaccinated. T. Ruhnke asked if the chair could request their faculty to upload their vaccination record or ask who is vaccinated. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said you can ask them to disclose that to HR, but chairs should not ask for the records. N. Zaman said he has seen the list, so there are several adjuncts who are not teaching or teaching online, so these individuals should not be included in the numbers. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked who is in charge of the list. Dr. Carney said she just received the list and it does include faculty that are no longer working on campus. B. Ladner said there are probably several lists, so they need to archive old lists and create a new one. Dr. Carney said she will send that information to J. Barnes-Pietruszynski. M. Seyedmonir asked who was collecting the negative results. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said the information should be going to HR.

B. Ladner moved to accept the BOG report, T. Ruhnke seconded the motion. Senate voted unanimously.

**INTERIM PRESIDENT CAGE**

President Cage thanked the faculty for everything they do. He said is very appreciative for the support the faculty is doing to assist the leadership teams. He stated that as a newcomer to this institution, he said he can sleep better knowing that Dr. Carney and Dr. Wallace and several others are in those positions.

President Cage said overall he is pleased with the COVID taskforce, but they are continuing to learn. He indicated ass issues are identified, please bring them forward and they will continue to work on them. He said we are committed to get it right.

T. Ruhnke asked about a vaccine mandate for students. President Cage said the numbers are changing each day, but we need to do a better job at collecting numbers. He said there is a policy in place and right now they are trying to enforce the current policy. President Cage continued to say we are trying to find the middle ground and enforce reporting of the vaccinations and negative results. He said if campus starts to see significant numbers on campus increase, the policy may be modified.

B. Ladner said the faculty senate at Marshall voted for a resolution to support a vaccine mandate if the president decided to pass one. President Cage said he will leave that to the discretion of the faculty senate.

T. Ruhnke said the only way people are going to get vaccinated now is if we tell them, you cannot be here unless you are vaccinated. President Cage said the challenge is that most younger individuals have mild symptoms, so others are not concerned in getting the vaccines. T. Ruhnke asked if the federal government we still paying for testing. President Cage said he was not sure, but the state is no longer paying for those tests. T. Ruhnke suggested that if someone is not vaccinated, we could say, either get vaccinated or pay for weekly testing.

M. Seyedmonir asked who is responsible for creating an implementation on vaccines or negative testing. President Cage said as an institution we need to be prepared to tell students if they are not vaccinated, they will have to leave, but we are not there yet. He further stated that if the numbers continue to trend upward, the senior leadership team will come together and make a strong recommendation about moving forward. M. Seyedmonir asked if there was a lack of data. President Cage said we have data, but we want to do a better job on increasing our knowledge of the landscape of the data. President Cage said J. Davenport is in charge of collecting the data.

M. Bhuiyan said students are not interested in getting vaccinated and he is concerned that creating a vaccine mandate will make students leave.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said there are already vaccine mandates on this campus in order for students to attend this university.

President Cage said these issues we have been discussing will be on the cabinet’s agenda.

R. Ford suggested we provide more incentives for getting vaccines. B. Ladner said it may be good to say every student who submits a vaccine record will receive something, maybe $10.00 off their parking pass.

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked about areas like FACET that were started under the last administration and what the status of those would be. President Cage said there are some things that are inherent to the faculty and the university should continue moving those forward. President Cage indicated there is a policy approval process which is managed by A. Faucett, so that existing and new policies are current and up to date. President Cage encourages faculty to work with Dr. Carney about issues.

M. Fultz asked President Cage about positive COVID cases. President Cage said there is work to be done but he applauded J Davenport and E. Jackson on their work on keeping things updated. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said as of 9/26 there was 27 total cases with 4 active positive cases. President Cage said they are trying to use the data currently to make more decisions and improve the process.

F. Vaughan said those are good numbers for a community of our size, so we do not want to overreact and alienate students.

**ACF**

B. Ladner said this report is based on the ACF priorities that were selected.

1. Ensure that higher education is funded to develop the educated workforce needed to grow the state economy.
2. Support an initiative to recruit and retain global talent in West Virginia.
3. Ensure that the changing employee healthcare needs are effectively and continually met.
4. Ensure transparent and fair employment practices by strengthening due process protections, enhancing shared governance, and preserving tenure and academic freedom.
5. Support the improvement of the state's broadband coverage.
6. Ensure institutions of higher education are able to regulate the safety and security of their campuses

B. Ladner stated that these are stated in broad terms, so if needed, they can pivot. She also asked that if faculty have any other recommendations on priority areas to please email her.

T. Ruhnke moved to endorse these priorities for ACF, J. Martin seconded the motion. Senate voted unanimously.

**EPC**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski indicated that no proposals were submitted to EPC, but they elected Upali as the Chair.

T. Ruhnke moved to accept the EPC report, L. Davidson seconded the motion. Senate voted unanimously.

**HONORS**

T. Ruhnke shared the honors report which included member of the honors committee, honors faculty, honors courses, and activities. He indicated due to COVID these activities are a little light, so the students investigated some of the COVID restrictions. He said they did have a couple honors meetings and talked about student recruitment.

T. Ruhnke said a few new courses were going to be added to the list. T. Ruhnke discussed some student presentations. He indicated it has not been a good year to recruit students, but they do have a few new students in the program, one from Arts & Humanities and there are also a few students from the College of Professional Studies. T. Ruhnke said faculty may find a student who should be in the program, so they should refer them to speak with him. He indicated that if they could double the numbers, it would be a vibrant program and have more faculty participation. He indicated faculty and students are going to be creating a template for projects in other departments.

M. Fultz said he was not sure when he could teach CHEM 100H. T. Ruhnke said to work with him and they can figure out who can teach that course. M. Fultz said there are several names on the committee list that are no longer with the university. T. Ruhnke said that was last year’s list, but it has been updated.

T. Ruhnke updated the senate on the program committee process and asked whether this had passed the senate. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said it did have a second reading, so it was passed by faculty senate

B. Ladner moved to accept the Honors Committee report. K. Steele seconded. Senate passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**COVID UPDATES**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we have updated numbers from last week and J. Pietruszynski said he would send another email reminding everyone to upload their vaccination records.

T. Ruhnke said we could have the four college deans email the faculty and encourage them to upload those vaccination records and if there are issues, contact HR.

**FACULTY SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE**

R. Ford said there have been a few new names provided since last month, but he has not heard back from the Student Government Association. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we need to know who the chair is for each committee, so everyone needs to meet and elect a chair.

**INSTRUCTIONAL & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked for an update. M. Seyedmonir said he left a message for M. Lewis, who is the chair, but has not heard back. He indicated he may send an invitation to other members to have a meeting. M. Seyedmonir said they discussed making directions and creating a Google form for faculty to respond. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said that may be a good call because we need to collect the data. M. Seyedmonir said in the past, a lot of people did not know when they received their computer.

D. Wells asked if the committee would create the form, so that it would include the exact information needed.

**SENATE ACTIONS**

Second reading:

For the purposes of division/college representation, the librarians and counselors shall be considered as a division. Each division/college shall elect its Senators. Every division/college shall be represented by three Senators.

Second Reading:

Faculty members, excluding members of the Senate, shall not serve on more than three standing committees except where membership is automatic by virtue of a Faculty member’s rank or position. Members of the Senate shall not serve on more than two Faculty Committee other than the Executive, except that a Senate member may hold membership on a particular committee as designated elsewhere in the Bylaws, e.g., the Cultural Activities and Educational Assemblies Committee.

K. Steele moved to make the change as the second reading, M. Fultz seconded the motion. Senate passed unanimously.

K. Toledo asked for clarification about the number of representatives. She asked if Library/Counseling could only have two since there is limited staff in those areas. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said you do not have to use all three each year, but they would be there if the staffing changes.

M. Fultz asked if we know how many faculty members are not serving on any committees. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said there is no list. M. Fultz asked why are we having a problem getting people involved, why are people not serving. J. Pietruszynski said he keeps a list of faculty serving on committees as their chair. R. Ford said it would be helpful to have a complete list of faculty because we could use that list to determine who was/was not serving. K. Steele said it would be helpful so that the ListServe could be updated.

N. Zaman suggested we should also revisit how we do nominations. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said the executive committee has been working on how to run the elections, possibly taking nominations before the meeting, and the executive committee appointing someone as the original convener. K. Steele suggested that N. Zaman concerns with the elections could also be addressed in the Constitutional Summit.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSTITUTIONAL SUMMIT**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said the faculty senate would like to plan for a Friday maybe in late January, early Friday, to break into groups with specific instructions to update those sections. She announced that if anyone would like to help, let her know.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said they would be restarting ad-hoc committees that began prior to COVID.

Faculty Evaluation

Term Faculty

Academic Integrity

Dependent Tuition

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said President Cage said these are things that originated with faculty, so they should stay with faculty. She indicated that some of the changes must go through A. Faucett since it will be a policy change and the university does not get sued.

M. Seyedmonir asked what the faculty evaluation committee was reviewing. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski clarified that is was the instrument used to evaluate faculty, the self-report, not the student evaluations. She also indicated the committee would be looking specifically at multiple tools.

M. Fultz asked that within BOG policy 25, Section 2.6 it says, with a reasonable opportunity to a tuition waiver, do these apply to dependents of faculty/staff, how many go to out of state students? M. Fultz asked if the BOG ever looked at fee waivers or how they are awarded? F. Vaughan said they received reports from the administration, but nothing was reviewed. J. Pietruszynski said he is writing that down and as the Chair of the University Affairs Committee, he will make sure to get an answer.

**LIBRARY SERVICES**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski asked about library services. D. Wells said the inter-library loan process was being learned by E. Lomax, but everything should be fine now. D. Wells also said there are two librarians and one staff member maintaining the public service desk five days a week and on the weekends. D. Wells said that someone has to be in the lobby area at all times and the other person is usually helping a student. She indicated the library has three student workers but they have limited hours and cannot work weekends. She did say that a lot more students are using the library, so they need to hire two more staff positions and one librarian.

K. Steele said you will get the highest response to hire based on data because the administration will want to see the number of students serviced per day. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said if we want to expand graduate programs, we need library services. K. Steele asked if we could ask academic affairs to request the data. D. Wells said they asked the director for a budget and was told she was not sure what it was, so they are going to ask faculty what they would like in the library, even if they do not have the staff or the money. J. Pietruszynski said you need data to see how many students are accessing the journals, library, etc. in order to determine where to put additional resources.

**VACCINE MANDATE**

J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we should get more data on these numbers and talk more in November. J. Barnes-Pietruszynski said we could also bring some research on what other universities are doing.

M. Fultz moved to adjourn and K. Steele seconded the motion at 3:55 pm.