**West Virginia State University**

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**Friday, October 4, 2024**

**Called to Order at 1:30 pm, Hamblin Auditorium**

**In attendance:** Azam Bejou, Jamie Brunetti, Stephanie Burdette, Ericke Cage, LeighAnn Davidson, Eyas Mahmoud, Roy Simmons, Derek Taylor, Dr. Emily Waugh, Naveed Zaman, Alana Dorsey, Kellie Toledo, Barbara Ladner, Lena Lambert, Rob Harris, Debbie Williams, Michael Pennington, Kerri Steele, Lee Young, Tim Ruhnke, Tom Kiddie, Elisha Lewis, Eyas Mahmoud, Saman Bandara, Mark Wilson, Ed Lomax, Michael R. Anderson

1. Agenda approved, with motion by Lambert, seconded by Wilson
2. Minutes of September 27, 2024, meeting approved, with motion by Lambert, seconded by Wilson

**Reports and Announcements**

1. Administration/Academic Affairs

a. President Ericke Cage stressed importance of everyone taking care of themselves, deaths – student, Wendy Taylor, and Jyilek Harrington; he reminded everyone about the Employee Assistance Program, to help with self-care.  
\* He noted that homecoming is next week. Physical facilities is sprucing up campus with plantings, paint, and he urged everyone to come to the activities, as many as schedules will allow.   
\* Transformation process at the University – President Cage noted that every organization needs a refresh at some point. Campus communications will send out information on how to participate in Future State. The Qualtrix survey from the consultants (from NCUBO) is open from now through Oct. 18. The committee will need our feedback. The report will be presented to the President and then to the BOG. The consultants will be on campus Oct. 15 & 16. The listening sessions will not have upper administration present. He asked that everyone be as forthcoming and candid as possible.   
\* He said that the intent to plan on cybersecurity has moved forward and is important.   
\* He reported that $50 million was transferred by WV to WVSU’s treasury account for the new agriculture building. WVSU is working with the department of agriculture. This will be our first major capital construction since Keith Hall. The new building will be on front of campus, in front of Ferrell parking lot. The University is hoping for ceremonial ground-breaking in November, coordinated with governor’s office and others.   
\* The President is also working on the capital campaign and is frequently on the road meeting with potential donors. We have raised $10 million, and goal is $25 million.  
Runkhe asked how many people will be located in the new building. The president said that it will be a joint facility with other institutions in the state, but it will include our agriculture school, labs, classrooms, offices, and possibly auditorium. It will also have specific offices for the WV Department of Agriculture to assign. The State will still have its Guthrie (Sissonville) facility, but it will move some things from there. Steele asked about impact on the Ferrell parking lot. It should bring us some new employees and we hope new students. USDA/NRCS needs to hire immediately 4,000 new employees over the next few years in plant and soil science, so there’s a market for the degrees we are planning to offer. We are working on a student pipeline for that. If we play our cards right, we can be a key player. Lomax asked about getting copies of plans/building for archives. The President said that we may not be able to provide all, because some research is sensitive. He is hoping that the building will be aesthetically pleasing and functional.   
\* The President responded to five “Rumor/Myth or Real” questions   
 - Rumor/Myth/Question 1: “they already know what they are going to do.” – The President said that this is a myth, but there have been conversations already around athletics, because coaches need info for recruiting. NCUBO will report in January and recommendations will be after that.   
 - Rumor/Myth/Question 2: Some departments have been selected to become ‘service’ departments with no major program. The President noted that NCUBO and the Future State Committee do not have the info to make decisions about what will happen to majors, or making some programs service only. Also the committee has the flexibility to make recommendations separate from what NCUBO recommends.  
 Rumor/Myth/Question 3: A question about whether it’s really true that administrators won’t be in forums for different groups was answered that it is really true, and the President said there would be no ‘spies.’  
 Rumor/Myth/Question 4: A question was asked about how much we are paying the consultants. The President said that the cost for the consultants is about $73K. President Cage thinks it’s a bargain. He wants the information to be as objective as possible. The Future State committee is meeting with consultants every week. NCUBO will gather info, make recommendations, and the Future State committee will go from there.  
(The rest of the discussion was less organized around rumors/myths.)   
The President said that WVSU is trying to do this in a responsible way to put the University on a long-term path to financial sustainability. He noted that the administration has fiduciary responsibility. There are discussions about having a website where people can see information that forms basis for recommendations/decisions.  
Runkhe noted that faculty have a natural skepticism about consultants, stating that there is a perception that the higher ed reform that severed CTCs from 4-years used consultants that gave ‘them’ what they wanted to hear.  
Runkhe asked whether can we all agree that the state doesn’t appropriate enough money to cover higher ed needs on a daily basis? He wondered how the percent WV spends compares to other states? The President said that no matter how we compare, it needs to be better; we need to invest more. He says that we are grateful for what we get. The Chancellor (Sarah Tucker) is working to get new funding model (performance based) fully funded. President Cage will be at capitol working for state dollars and raising private money. Cybersecurity is because it’s a growth area. There are some bright spots and challenges on enrollment. Dual enrollment is an area of challenge, because we have competitors from other institutions. He is asking Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to look at how we can grow the dual enrollment pipeline and get into more schools.

b. Dr. Lee Young, VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs  
\* Chair Davidson raised the issue of students being added to sections very late. Is there a way to keep students in class, especially for online sections? Dr. Young said that financial aid, foundation, etc., are trying to save every student. Students who are dropped in first week have been warned several times. One problem is that ~15% of parents can’t qualify for parent-plus loans (usually because their credit is not good enough). He asked if there were faculty members where the faculty member did not give permission, so that they could look into it. He said that we could look into whether there is a way for online students to keep working. The only people who get dropped who haven’t given evidence that they can pay. Runkhe asked whether we could keep them all, but also remove students with serious problems before semester starts. Dr. Young said that if we dropped everyone with payment problems before semester starts, we’d have very low enrollment. That is why we give the benefit of doubt if students have money coming. He noted that we don’t have COVID money anymore. He will look into keeping online students if they are working with financial aid. Roy said that Banner drops (or adds) them from (to) Moodle 6 times a day. Pennington said that his faculty haven’t indicated that they were asked. Most faculty would like to say ‘no’ if it’s the 5th week. Ladner said that most faculty don’t think any students should be put into 8-week courses late. We need a policy about after not adding anyone after an agreed upon week and about making sure the faculty member is willing to work with student. Alana asked whether faculty can say ‘no,’ but she acknowledged that faculty members might feel obligated. A guideline would make it easier for faculty member to say ‘no’ when it’s a bad idea. Dr. Young said that they will follow whatever policies we come up with.   
\* Dr. Young provided a handout comparing enrollments for 2023 to 2024. We are up by about 101 for headcount, and we’re about even in credit production. There are different measures at different times in the semester. Early enrollment got students in early, but we lost 3 schools. Some institutions are offering to help faculty in courses to get masters degrees. We have to rethink early enrollment as revenue and as enrollment stream. We’ve been averaging 2,000-2,100 early enrollment students per semester, but only about 4% matriculate at WVSU. 23% don’t go to college (according to the National College Clearinghouse) the following semester. We should be trying to get them. We should bring them on campus, let them sit in on classes, establish co-branding with WVSU and early enrollment, and talk with them about attending here. We need to be more proactive. They represent a big percent of our headcount, but there are only two staff members for dual enrollment. He asked how we can develop a more welcoming interaction, perhaps start earlier. We lost St. Albans, S. Charleston, and Sissonville. We are #3 in the state in headcount, but that’s because of dual enrollment. If we take that out, we move to #7, but other schools don’t move if those numbers are taken out. We need to make sure we don’t give false impression about our real enrollment. Early enrollment should enhance our enrollment but not be such a major player. Wilson expressed concern about students taking more and more credits in high school, and he worries about quality. Dr. Young noted that most states now have incentives to get college credit for lower cost during high school. Here, we have not done a case study. At his previous institution, quality was about the same when examined in relation to courses, but there was no long-term study on students. Wilson expressed concern that the logic would suggest that we should be hiring high school teachers on campus. Ladner asked about offering first-year experience in dual enrollment, and Dorsey said that there have been some conversations about that.  
\* Dr.Young said that EMSA will be working on a long-term plan to address loss of students from 1st to 2nd year of college and between semesters. EMSA will have to present to NCUBO. Our population is also dropping from fall to spring more than a number of December grads. You need to keep spring enrollment to stay even for fall.

b. Provost Deborah Williams reported that ~120 students have applied for graduation, and about 50 students finished over the summer, who are eligible for December graduation. She said that ABET accreditation visit for civil engineering will be in a couple of weeks. The spring schedule will be ready next week. Dorsey is working with Zaman on a pilot allowing students to get an IBM badge. It could lead to internships or help in getting jobs. It would be free to our students (and ~20 other HBCUs). Provost Williams also thanked us for our hard work. It is also time for the President to appoint this year’s IRB members.

2. BOG – Jeff Pietruszynski will have a report after the BOG meeting in a few weeks. Report approved with a motion from E. Lewis and a second from Lambert.

3. ACF – Ladner will have a report after the ACF retreat. She will be on retreat for next senate meeting [correction: retreat is Nov. 8-9, so she will be here for November senate meeting]. Report approved, with motion from R. Harris, seconded by E. Lewis.

4. EPC – There was one proposal: Psychology changed prerequisites for a course. The proposal was approved by the committee unanimously. Report approved with motion from R. Harris, seconded by E. Lewis.

5. Honors – LeighAnn gave report, because Ruhnke had to leave. There are 9 honors students right now. One, Grace Craze, graduated last December. She gave a research presentation on tape worms. Honors students also participated in State Stride and had a chili cookoff. Some have received awards and internships. Ruhnke asks for suggestions for recruiting, noting that more research opportunities outside NSM would help broaden the pool. He also noted that we need to start looking for new leadership, since his retirement isn’t too far off. Report approved, with motion from Lomax, seconded by E. Lewis.

**Old Business**

1. Focus of the Senate – 2024-25

* + 1. Restructuring of Committees/Updates to Constitution & By-Laws
       1. Academic Appeals & Faculty Grievance will be discussed/drafted at the next executive committee meeting.
    2. IT – Directory; Computer; Class Schedule; etc.
       1. Instructional Classroom Technology List of needed repairs and equipment has been given to Fiscal Affairs and IT.
       2. The Relocation Directory is being compiled by Vonda Matthews.
    3. Ad-Hoc Committees – Chair Davidson has sent names of those interested in Faculty Grant Compensation; Academic Integrity/AI; Faculty Evaluation Instrument (Research Section) to Academic Affairs;
    4. Faculty Lecture Series 2024-25 – The schedule will be out soon.
    5. Facility Services – Updates are being made; Send any other issues to Chair Davidson; here is the Deferred Maintenance Website Link <https://sites.google.com/wvstateu.edu/wvsudeferredmaintenance/home>

1. Promotion & Tenure/Retention - Electronic Portfolios – portfolios, self-reports need to be to chairs by Monday
2. OER Grants – the deadline is September 20, 2024

**New Business**

1. Future State Committee has worked on athletics first because of recruiting for fall. No decisions have been made, but some recommendations have been discussed. The committee is now looking at institutional areas and how those are broken down, as well as what we call every little part of it. They’ve used categories they’ve used at other institutions, checking whether they should expect data on that. The committee is making sure they know all our areas. Ruth came from academia. Ken is the statistician. Davidson will re-send campus news on the schedule of when they are here that includes link to Qualtrix survey (open till Friday after campus visit, Oct. 18, so people can meet them, if needed, before completing it). The survey goes directly to Ruth, so it is completely anonymous. She will also send out the ‘pathway’ of what is being discussed and when as soon as it’s finalized. The survey has 3 open-ended questions – student success, financial, operations.
2. Christy Walker (chair of faculty scholarship) is putting together a link to make it easier to donate to scholarship fund.
3. Questions on calculations on student evaluation forms. M. Anderson reported that a faculty member had only two students, but the report showed three respondents.   
   Zaman said that it appears that a form was scanned twice. He doesn’t think it’s a big problem.
4. Alana reminded faculty that there are two emergency aid funds, in case students have issues. Contributions to these funds are considered faculty participation for the capital campaign. Funds already raised are going to many different places on campus. Davidson will let us know when information is released.
5. Davidson sent out a thing from Kellie about the Mountaineer Food Bank, which gives 24K pounds of produce away each month. There will be a collection on our campus on Oct. 17. About 26 volunteers/hour are needed, 12:30-6 pm. People can receive produce with no ID check or income level. They are just asked for their name and the number of people in household.

Motion to adjourn by E. Lewis, seconded by R. Harris. Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.