

Kilgore College Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Friday, May 5, 2023 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Location: Woodfin Center on Kilgore College Campus and Zoom

Meeting presided over by Faculty Senate President: Cori Holden-Williams

Senators in Attendance (in-person and on Zoom): Nick Simpson, Meredith May, Cori Holden-Williams, Carrie Poe, Danny Darden, Gin Germany, Debbie Williams, John Whitehead, Kenya Ray, Kristi Kleinig, Susan Yellot, Kim Ellgass, Kate Yglesias, Rhonda Heinsohn

Others on Zoom: Mary Shaw, Joe Kirchoff (list may not be all-inclusive)

Multi-Modal Committee Updates:

- Cori sent the proposal document (created by Nick Simpson and committee) to Dr. Skopek; have not heard her response as yet
- Can review recommendations by the committee in the minutes from Faculty Senate meeting from February 24, 2023

Campus Meeting Updates:

Institutional Effectiveness: (update by Meredith May)

- Dr. Plott would like to put together an adjunct sub-committee to deal with issues for adjuncts; housed within the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, containing members across campus; Dr. May is charged with recruiting members for this committee, and is looking for names of adjuncts you may think would like to be involved, or if any faculty members used to be adjuncts and would like to have input, let Dr. May know. The goal is to start with creating a good survey to send to adjuncts to get some good data.

Academic Affairs: (update by Nick Simpson)

- Most recent meeting was canceled due to lack of agenda items

Communications: (update by Cori Holden-Williams)

- Activities for Cinco de May celebration and Faculty Appreciation (happening today, May 5) were discussed
- All faculty need to finish any mandatory training modules on Blackboard by the end of May, ideally.
- Star Days upcoming for Summer; look for emails asking for volunteers.
- There are some mandatory Fridays that must be worked on campus for *staff*, per emails from Kara Sharman from HR.
- Concerns/discussion about Artificial Intelligence in education; Dean William Stowe has sent out emails with some training/video meetings available for faculty; Kate Yglesias has volunteered to attend those and report back (in the new school year).

Legislative Update: (from Kate Yglesias)

- Tx Legislature: No consensus yet on any proposed property-tax relief, which affects our funding as a community college.

- Tx Legislature: Budget must be passed by end of May. There is funding of half a billion dollars as a “legacy” payment for ERS Retirement plan.
- HB-8, which aligns CC funding with student outcomes, did pass, awaiting action in the Senate.
- HB-584, proposed bill for an arrangement between state department and community colleges for a state Information technology credentialing program.
- In Senate, SB222 a proposal for those who pay into ERS for 30 days paid leave for childbirth and adoption.
- Changes to SB 17 (the “DEI” bill): shifts responsibility from faculty to governing boards (no more “lists” of non-compliant faculty), still no state funding for any “DEI” programs, still no use of the terms “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion”.
- Federal Government: brought back proposal for “College Transparency Act” which lifts ban on collecting student-level data that is necessary for understanding student success at the postsecondary education level

Other Updates:

- Department Chair duties discussion (update by Cori Holden-Williams)
 - Previous discussions about department chair duties, and possibilities for advancement of faculty members to “move up” in their departments, were discussed in both February and March faculty senate meetings (refer to those meeting minutes).
 - Dr. Skopek (at executive committee meeting in February) brought up idea of rotation of department chairs, based on her experience at other institutions; some faculty senate members in attendance objected based on the vast disparity in work-load between departments, as well as lack of departmental support staff across different departments.
 - A need for assistant department chairs for some departments was also brought up, and has been or is being addressed.
 - Some strong concerns from current department chairs, regarding rotations and/or appointments of departments chairs, were received by a few members of faculty senate. Cori relayed these concerns (from Jase Graves, on behalf of department chairs):
 - KC uses an “appointed” department chair model, as do most of our local peer community college, and local small liberal art colleges.
 - If a department chair is performing poorly, those concerns should absolutely be reflected in the department chair evaluation done by faculty members, and the faculty should force the issue with the dean or Dr. Skopek, and even solicit the support of faculty senate if necessary.
 - Changing the entire model because of a few ineffective leaders is equivalent to changing the rules for an entire class due to one or two students causing problems.
 - No one is entitled to move up in an organization, forcing a leader is doing a good job to move aside; this conflicts the model of a meritocracy.
 - Some department chairs were hired from other institutions specifically to fill that administrative role, and at that pay rate. It is unfair to strip that person of that role, simply because someone else “wants a shot at it”.
 - There are others ways to “move up” at KC from a faculty member, including academic advising, registrar, institutional effectiveness/data, eLearning/IT, etc.

- Department chair can include various responsibilities, including managing rather large numbers of people, and requires many years of experience, knowledge, and training to become efficient. A constant rotation of chair every couple of years can undermine that.
 - An “election” model for department chair would lead to “Machiavellian” politics that plague many university departments, and ruin the camaraderie and objectivity within the faculty.
 - Cori proposes that the faculty senate table this issue, and leave any further action/discussion of department chair duties/roles to the deans.
 - Kate Yglesias motions to table, Nick Simpson seconds
 - This issue is above the purview of the faculty senate to regulate at this time.
- Updated/Current Senators list (by Carrie Poe):
 - Shared most recent document (from 2021-2022 year)
 - Several vacancies in some departments, and need updated senators
 - Cori will send emails to those departments with vacancies and let them know; there may be new hires that don’t know there is a need in their department.
 - Carrie will work on the updated list over the summer, and current senator “door signs” for next school year.
 - There are places reserved for two adjunct faculty members on the faculty senate (these would be “Other” category, not “At-Large”). Cori can send out an email to adjunct faculty and ask for anyone interested.
 - Some technical program faculty teach on Fridays, and cannot attend faculty senate meetings; we may want to address the need for a “staff proxy” member from these programs to be on the faculty senate (that may need to be a F.S. bylaws/handbook change).
 - We may need to revisit the size of some departments, and whether they need to have more than one faculty senator. This issue needs review according to F.S. bylaws/handbook.

New Business/Proposals for Ideas for Faculty Senate:

- New Committee needed to review and update Faculty Senate Bylaws and constitution (last update was 2018?)
 - Cori’s proposed timeline: meet often in Fall 2023, have revisions to give to senate to vote on early Spring 2024 (first meeting).
 - Need volunteers!
 - Ginger Dennis was F.S. President last time revisions were made; she would be a great resource.
 - Some tentative volunteers to be on committee, but NOT to chair: Nick Simpson, Meredith May, Kim Ellgass, Kristi Kleinig
 - Cori will create a Google Doc on the Senate Blackboard page for faculty to sign up to volunteer for this committee (Note: any faculty member at-large can be on the committee, but the chair of committee must be a senator).
- eLearning Course fees (brought up by Danny Darden):
 - Current fee structure for student use of Blackboard LMS is paid for (in course fee) by students enrolled in online (web) classes, or in a remote class, or in a multi-modal class; students enrolled in in-person classes do not pay this fee, even though they utilize Blackboard in their courses. Propose that faculty senate makes a recommendation to

change the fee structure so that all enrolled students share this eLearning/distance learning fee.

- Does this fee include using “Respondus” lock-down browser testing? Yes, according to Cori.
- According to Mary Shaw, total eLearning cost is \$20 per credit hour.
- Should this recommendation come from faculty senate, or from the Academics Affairs committee?
- Academic Affairs committee is aware of this.
- This really needs to go through AA committee. Matt Mosely is the faculty representative for the Arts and Sciences division, Ginger Dennis is the faculty representative for Business and Information Technology division. Address concerns/thoughts to them early in the fall semester (by September).
- Kim Ellgass made a motion that all Zoom recordings from Faculty Senate meetings remain available on the Faculty Senate Blackboard page for that school year.
 - Danny Darden proposed an amendment to the motion that all recordings remain available from the previous year, and the current year.
 - Motion is seconded as amended by multiple senators.
- Just as an FYI: Meredith May suggests (coming from Institutional Effectiveness office) that there will be a lot of interest in rethinking dual-credit classes for the fall, and the order in which these students take classes, to maximize the number of certificates that students can receive.
- Kate Yglesias suggests that faculty requirements for student retention (such as advising at various events, or calling students for registration/advising) be more clearly defined, and that the criteria for designation of those duties be more clearly defined.
 - for example, if you work in-person at an advising/campus event (or multiple events), will you not be asked to phone students? Or vice-versa?
 - Is it based on time at the college? Is overload schedule of the faculty member taken into account? Is it on a rotating schedule? Or is it randomly assigned by deans/department chairs?
 - Should first-year faculty (or even “older” faculty) be asked to do these events/call students with little to no advisor training, or without clear expectations that those duties are part of your job duties?
 - Many faculty members state that this is an “expected” part of our job duties, and is necessary to boost enrollment and “keep our jobs”, but agree that there are NOT any clear guidelines or pattern to “who gets tasked to do what, when”.
 - There is agreement that being tasked with calling a significant number of students (the number given by K. Yglesias was 60) during the last weeks of the semester would be mitigated if the call lists were given earlier in the semester, and/or assigned “retention tasks” were delineated earlier in the semester, so that faculty could plan accordingly.
 - The faculty senate can make some suggestions, and hopefully effect change, to these deliberately vague requirements that are listed as duties in the faculty handbook.
- Per Rhonda Heinsohn (Academic Advisor faculty senate member): There are changes to the current “advising model” happening in real time.
 - New students get a 1-hour time block with advisors, for a more holistic advising approach, along with a “walk-through” of courses for their intended degree plan.
 - Advisors are going to teach them to look at their degree plan, and how to register themselves for needed classes (especially important for those University Transfer students!)

- It is unclear how this new advising model will affect the way faculty advisors (especially those who only advise in a limited capacity, i.e. Star Days, phone calls, or late registration). More instruction/information is sure to come!
- A last note from outgoing senator Gin Germany: most phone numbers of students you are assigned to call will not be answered, or the voicemail boxes will be full, or the number will have been disconnected. So you can work through a list of students to call more quickly than you may think!

Meeting closed by Cori Holden-Williams

Meeting notes recorded by Carrie Poe