**Faculty Caucus Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 9, 2020**

**Approved**

***Call to Order***

Academic Senate Chairperson Senator Kalter called the meeting to order.

***Action items:***

***University Curriculum Committee faculty elections***

Allison Kroesch - 2020-2023

Motion by Senator Cline, seconded by Senator Mainieri, to elect Allison Kroesch to the University Curriculum Committee. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion by Senator Marx, seconded by Senator Pancrazio, to use Qualtrics ballots for competitive elections, while the roll call confirms that a Senator has voted or abstained. The motion was unanimously approved.

***Classified Research Review Committee (1 faculty member at large)***

Yayuan Ren, FIL

Michael Torry, KNR

Joshua Newport, MIL

Michael Torry was elected to serve on the Classified Research Review Committee.

***Honorary Degree Committee (1 faculty member at large AND 1 Faculty Caucus members)***

Aysen Bakir, MKT

Gary Wolbers, MQM

Tom Lamonica, COM

Evelyn Baca, TCH

Katrin Paehler, HIS

Nathania Rubin, ART

Dan Ozminkowski, TCH

Katrin Paehler was elected to serve on the Honorary Degree Committee.

Faculty Caucus volunteer needed

David Marx was elected to serve on the Honorary Degree Committee.

***Inclusive Community Response Team faculty member election (1 faculty member at large)***

Michaelene Cox, POL

Joseph Zompetti, COM

Tonya Pierce, ITK

Jim Jawahar, MQM

Abigail Stone, SOA

Allison Rand, MIL

Vitoria Faccin-Herman, ART

Li Zeng, THD

Jim Jawahar was elected to serve on the Inclusive Community Response Team.

***Intellectual Property Committee (1 Faculty Caucus member)***

Faculty Caucus volunteer needed

Dimitrios Nikolaou was elected to serve on the Intellectual Property Committee.

**08.31.20.01 COVID 19 Work Groups:**

***Spring Calendar working group (need 2 faculty from Academic Affairs Committee or the Caucus at large)***

Senator Cline and Senator Mainieri were elected to serve on the Spring Calendar working group.

***Classroom Logistics working group (need 2 faculty from Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee or the Caucus at large)***

Senator Murphy and Senator Nichols was elected to serve on the Classroom Logistics working group.

***Finance working group (need 2 faculty from Planning and Finance Committee or the Caucus at large)***

Senator Kalter

Up to 2 additional Faculty Caucus members needed

Senator Kalter, Senator Lucey, and Senator Torry were elected to serve on the Finance working group.

Motion by Senator Cline, seconded by Senator Nikolaou, to move the Intellectual Property member and these three COVID 19 Work Groups above as a slate. The motion was approved.

***Meetings, Gatherings, and Events working group (1 Faculty Caucus at large members)***

1 Faculty Caucus volunteers needed

Senator Nikolaou was elected to serve on the Meetings, Gatherings, and Events working group.

***University-Sponsored Travel working group (1 Faculty Caucus at large member)***

Faculty Caucus volunteer needed

Senator Cline was elected to serve on the University-Sponsored Travel working group.

Motion by Senator Meyers, seconded by Senator Pancrazio, to move these two COVID 19 Work Groups above as a slate. The motion was approved.

Senator Kalter: Okay, I think that's it for the voting. I'm going to say a couple things here. I'm not sure whether we want to have a full-on discussion, an ASPT discussion, since it's already 9:25 p.m., you can guide me on that. What I am going to say is great apologies to Dr. Elkins who's been here all night. But I think we're going to want to skip over the AIF issue for now.

***Discussion:***

***Second in a series of pandemic-related ASPT discussions and/or information items (see tentative schedule on the next page):***

***Pandemic-related ASPT discussion: Recommendations and/or action regarding the timing (status quo or postponement or suspension) of 2020 annual performance evaluation in the context of increased pandemic workloads and the unlikelihood of pay raises in the near future***

Senator Kalter: Let me say a couple things about the pandemic related ASPT discussion and we'll see whether we want to go forward with a longer or shorter discussion. What I was going to do was to say that there seemed to be two either/ors that we might need to talk about: either to postpone annual evaluations this year, or to keep them on schedule. Canceling them didn't really get significant support in the survey of faculty that we sent out. And then the other, either/or question would be, which, regardless of which one we do, keep on schedule or postpone, should we keep the usual format for the faculty productivity reports or something abbreviated or altered.

So, I was going to just structure the discussion in that way. First, talking about the postpone or keep, and then talking about the usual or altered/abbreviated. I will start with my recommendation. I did note because I saw the majority of responses that came across and sent them forward to the Provost Office, it looked to me like the majority of responses that came across my email were recommending postponing the annual timing, rather than suspending it. Fewer people seem to favor the status quo. Perhaps because (at least this is my view), it would entail piling a lot of work on top of very stressed out faculty in December, and very stressed out DFSC members in January. What I'm going to suggest is that we place an Action Item on the agenda for next time, regardless of how much we discuss it here, about postponing and then if it gets voted up, so be it. If it gets voted down, so be it. Right. To basically, to postpone it, and to postpone those to be due anytime between May and August during the summer.

This is obviously related to the question of the shift in the annual calendar, but I don't think we're going to have time to talk about that. So, let me ask, do we want to move forward with discussing that right now, and if so, we'll start by asking what your views are on keep it as is versus postpone. And then we'll talk about, whichever one we do, should we have it normal or abbreviated.

Senator Pancrazio: Yeah, I was in a departmental meeting earlier today and Rachel Shively, I believe is on the University Review Committee, I might have that wrong, but she was talking about they were in the process of presenting some recommendations. Do we… I think that's what I heard. So, my question is, what do we know about that and if they are in the process of something, they said they would have it out next week. And my question is, do we want to… I would kind of like to see what they have to say. It came up in our departmental meeting today, and we have the majority of faculty that already has tenure, so, there weren't a lot of… I don't think people were too bent out of shape about… too concerned. They weren't overly concerned right now. But what do we know about what else has been done? Anybody heard anything?

Senator Kalter: Yes, I can fill you in on that.

Senator Pancrazio: Please do.

Senator Kalter: Dr. Catanzaro may be able to as well. My understanding is that, first of all, Rachel Shively is the Vice Chair of URC. The chair of URC this year is Chad Buckley. And that discussion, as far as I understand it in URC, is only about the tenure and promotion stuff that we talked about two weeks ago. So, we gathered all of that feedback and that guidance memo that’s about to go out, is about tenure and promotion, not about the annual productivity report calendar, etc. And so, what we're doing here would be giving, you know, further… we actually would have to vote as a Caucus about this, because it is in policy that we always do December, January productivity reports. So, it's actually in the Caucus’s power, but we can also get, you know, input from the URC as well. But we've gotten input from the faculty, and tonight was supposed to be getting input from all of us.

Senator Horst: You said there's a survey. Do you have like details on what the faculty thought in that survey.

Senator Kalter: So, remember, it was not a Qualtrics type survey. It was sending out from each Senator to their constituents, all of those, I think, it was six questions. And so, what I'm talking about having remembered from sort of gathering most of those in and reading those, was my recollection of what the general feedback was from the campus.

Senator Cline: Thank you. So, I had one faculty colleague who, you know, really wants to blow up the whole process, and start all over, and do annual evaluations, sort of calendar year, rather than the academic year. But I'm not really sure how serious of a submission that was. I mean, if you're asking my opinion, you know, I understand that people are going to be busy in December, but people were already extremely frustrated about having so much of this summer taken from them in terms of the research time. I think you will get an even stronger objection from faculty, especially senior faculty, if you impose this kind of evaluation of, you know, the ASPT evaluation into the summer. So, you know, my personal opinion would be that we should keep it all on tick as it is now, but that we should change the manner of evaluation. That is, we shouldn't change the system, we should change the metrics in a sense of how we're evaluating people, which is, I think, what we've been talking about, essentially. It seems to be a really confusing process, especially for non-tenured faculty who need those evaluation steps along their tracks, right, to know how they're doing, and to kind of check in with their departments. So, it worries me a lot to start rolling it, because I don't know where this is going to end. I mean, you know, we don't have a definitive end date for the COVID shutdowns, and so I don't know when we could actually conceivably plan something that would feel solid. That’s my two cents.

Senator Kalter: I should add, by the way, to my recommendation that I think part of that would have to be that DFSCs meet with every pre-tenure faculty member in their department to coach them through the pandemic and to also give them that update. Let me clarify the one thing, Senator Cline, when you said your faculty member wanted to blow up the process and make it calendar year. That sounds like what we already do. So, how would… I'm not sure how that would blow up the process.

Senator Cline: She wanted it…well, sorry, I misspoke. It's late. She wanted it academic year. So, she wanted evaluations to happen at the end of May, right, and that the committee would have to meet in the summer to evaluate.

Senator Kalter: Yeah, so that was one of the other questions on that stuff that we sent out. Wonderful.

Senator Mainieri: Thank you. The constituents that I heard from, and my own personal opinion, I would agree with Senator Cline, in terms of keeping the timeline the same, but focusing our attention on recommendations for how to make the process reflect what's going on this past year. So, I would be in favor of keeping the timeline the same.

Senator Horst: This is bringing in the other stuff. I sent you an article I think was Inside Higher Ed of another program, where they were having faculty document their COVID experience, and how it relates to research. And so, it's in the record, so to speak. So, I think that's something we could pass along to the SFSCs, this idea that people could have a segment where they could reflect on how this is impacting their career trajectory, and then three or four years or five years down the road there it would all be documented.

Senator Blum: Yeah, I was just going to say there's advantages of postponing, but I think the biggest disadvantage, and I come from a department that there are a ton of pre-tenured faculty, is the feedback cycle would be thrown off. And I think that might not be such a good idea for, you know, for more senior faculty that's perhaps not… I think there are inherent challenges with departmental requirements and figuring out a way that makes it… although I thought Senator Horst’s idea was kind of interesting, that to sort of compelling a D/SFSC to, I would say, be more flexible in their requirements.

Provost Tarhule: Thank you, Susan. I think Sam is still on this call. I want to throw out a suggestion for your consideration and gain a perspective from the perspective from the Provost Office. Some issues that look relatively straightforward have implications that can be quite severe on some faculty and sometimes you really don't see that until you begin to dig into it and I'm sure Sam can provide some examples here. Consequently, sometimes surveys can end up being a little bit like popularity contest. If you send out a survey and you said 80% of the people responded to this and therefore, those are the options. Especially if those surveys have not been preceded by a very comprehensive discussion about the pros and cons and some of the nuances of some of the decisions that we make. I personally would have preferred a situation where on this type of issues, perhaps Academic Senate considers appointing a small committee that talks to all of the relevant stakeholders, outlines the pros and cons of the various options, and then brings the recommendations that we vote on. That type of discussion, to my mind, would reveal some hidden nuances and consequences for setting up groups in ways that may not be obvious if we just do a survey. Especially, as the COVID has evolved. Each time we think we've we found a solution or a way to deal with it, we have more complexities that arise. So, I don't know if, Sam, I don't want to put you on the spot, but this is one of those situations where personally I feel a little bit, I don't know if I'm comfortable is the word, but I don't know how much of the pros and cons faculty members know of the different options were voting on before they made their decisions solid. But maybe it was comprehensive enough, I stand to be corrected if that's the case. But I worry about the implications of this.

Senator Kalter: Let me just clarify one more time. There was no survey, there was a set of questions that were sent out by Senators to collect feedback. And the URC is actually the committee that you would be talking about. So, the Faculty Caucus would not need to form an extra committee, because the URC’s work is to do this kind of work with us. So, if, you know, it'd be best to wait for the URC to look at that second level of feedback, Sam, about both postponing the calendar for this year, and then the question about the calendar year versus academic year stuff, you know, that would be the appropriate thing if we want to wait on a vote for more feedback on that.

Dr. Catanzaro: Well, I’ll make clear that the URC has access to all the narrative responses to those qualitative questions. So, Provost Tarhule and I have received those via email, and URC has a Teams site and they’re all just posted up in the Teams site, and if they're just emails, I've saved them as PDFs and posted them in the Team site. So, they have all that. I’m kind of three quarters of the way through the first draft. We met last week to discuss the promotion and tenure issues that are most pressing. We meet again next week. Couldn't get a meeting this week, but I'm drafting the very first draft for them to have that by the time we meet next time, actually, I think I can circulate that well ahead of the meeting, and then they can react to it, and we can work on it and get that promulgated. And that will mostly be on the promotion and tenure. I will say with respect to the annual evaluation process, you know, there are pros and cons each way. I have my opinion, but I'll hold off on that unless folks want to hear it, at this point, because I think it's important for me to hear all of this. I do think that sort of along the lines of… There's another aspect to the rethinking how we look at the evaluation process, you know, to summarize that other piece that Senator Cline and others have brought up, and that is in those departments and schools that have set explicit benchmarks or quantitative goals for achieving minimally satisfactory evaluations. So, for example, you have to have at least one peer reviewed publication in a year to get satisfactory. Right. I think departments and schools need to start to look at those kinds of provisions to determine if they want to revise those before the end of the year. And if they do revise them, you know, that they can revise, vote, get CFSC approval by the end of this current semester, and those would be effective January 1. So, if the evaluation proceeded on schedule then that concern that, oh my gosh, everybody's going to get an unsatisfactory automatically, will be taken care of. So, I think paying attention to policy provisions, it's going to take some, again, some extra work and some careful reading of policies to make sure that those happen. But that that can be solved.

Senator Kalter: So strongly agree with that. And so glad I am in a department that does not set those kinds of annual standards but has more of an understanding of the flows and ebbs of our fields of publication. I will quote Dr. Burr, who has been the chair of our Library Committee for a couple of years, who said, there aren't enough swear words in the English language to express what he feels about having to turn in a faculty productivity report at the end of this year. So, there were several people who articulated really good arguments in favor of keeping it as is; does anybody else, besides me, want to say anything in terms of postponing? And I don't know if this is what you're about to say, Senator Peterson, but go ahead, and you have your hand up.

Senator Peterson: Yeah, I just wanted to ask, Sam. A question concerning the changes. Would a department need to specify whether these are short term or long term, or is that a change then that they make one year, and then change again a subsequent year?

Dr. Catanzaro: Frankly, I think you could do it either way. Personally, and this is based on my experience and this is not by any means a directive, it's my opinion, I think it's cleaner to just go ahead and change the policies, knowing that, first of all, we don't know how long these impacts will last. And that departments can go through that process again in any given year, and that there's something, you know, because this has been so disruptive, and we don't… even as it eases, right, we will be coming out of that having learned a lot of things. So, it's healthy to periodically review, right, and that is mandated. But there's no reason why a department or school couldn't review their policies on a more frequent schedule than the mandated schedule. So, that's one way you could go, you just say we're changing this and, you know, next September, if things look different, we'll revisit this. If they don’t, we’re good. Another option… and I haven't found any policies that would forbid using some sort of a sunset provision, now we're getting into the policy technicalities here, but I can imagine a department saying this provision will remain in effect until December 31 (I'm just picking a year) 2023, unless the majority of faculty vote to extend it. Right. You know, some kind of a sunset clause, where it's a specifically time levied provision that could be extended or could be left to expire. So, there are a couple options of how to do this. And that, you know, at the risk of just sort of piling on the interesting discussion topics for the department meetings, you know, I do think that departments can make that decision, also. I mean, I have some opinion about what I think makes the most sense, but I by no means think that that's the only opinion worth having, and I might be convinced otherwise by good arguments.

Senator Peterson: Thank you, Sam.

Senator Nikolaou: It's kind of a follow up to this question. But we would still have a direction from a higher level, for example. It's not that we would expect the departments to by themselves assume that all of this is something acceptable for us to just change our evaluation criteria. So, for example, the CFSC would have to say that, okay, this is something that we are recommending, the details are up to the department. So that, you know, individual departments know that, okay, this is more of the rule across the university, rather than the exception. So, in essence, if we take, as an example, my department, it's not that only the Department of Economics decided to change its evaluation criteria because of COVID, it is something that the university suggests as a potential solution, and now they say, okay, now, DFSC, figure out the details that are specific to your department.

Dr. Catanzaro: Yeah. For sure. I think the fact that this conversation is happening in this meeting I think you can…you know, the URC and the Provost will be sending out this guidance to suggest looking at policies. We've already had this discussion with deans, and I think deans are starting this discussion with chairs and directors, who then will take it up in the departments and schools. So, there's that piece in terms of sort of the guidance or the mandate, if you will, to proceed. And then there's also the technical piece that any department or school’s revision needs to be approved by the CFSC. And so, you know, we are going to provide some guidance on it on suggested target dates to leave time for the CFSC to, you know, review and give some feedback and, you know, if there’s a question like this section isn't quite clear can polish this up, you know, there'll still be time for a meeting or two to get them done and get them approved before the semester ends with final approval by the CFSC. So, there is that check and balance. So, there's guidance on the front end, and then check and balance on the back end.

Senator Kalter: Yeah, I was. I don't know if Martha is going to talk about this, but just to keep us on track, or are there any other comments about keep as is versus postpone? And then, we'll have a little bit of time for change things in the process, like abbreviating the faculty productivity reports.

Senator Horst: You know, I was just going to say if you change the timing, one thing I always found particularly cruel was, if people got a non-reappointment, they would get their annual evaluation letter, and then their non-reappointment would happen almost immediately. And so, it just seems more wise to, if the letters came out in May or June or some time like that. There could actually be a moment for those people to correct. And I always found that particularly cruel that people would get a letter saying you're doing all these things wrong, and now we're going to not reappoint you. So, that's one thing. It does sound like a lot of work, though from people like us.

Senator Kalter: Let's just also mark the particular cruelty of giving anybody a non-reappointment letter in the middle of a pandemic, and just think that through a little bit. It might be a little bit different if somebody is very, very close to a tenure denial, but I think we want to think about the wisdom of non-reappointment activities at this time. Obviously there are patterns, right, that people are watching in departments and sometimes those are very, you know, the writing is kind of on the wall, but we are in a fairly unusual situation, and we might want to give some of our pre-tenure faculty some grace for a little while, and again, some coaching. So, any other comments about the keep or postpone?

Senator Lucey: I'm wondering if, in terms of the changing of the time of evaluation if there could be perhaps a grace period in terms of that change? Where we tell people in advance that we would be changing the time with evaluation to allow them to adjust their schedules to fit the new environment.

Senator Kalter: Can you say a little bit more about that.

Senator Lucey: So, let's say we go to a fiscal year evaluation instead of a calendar year evaluation. We tell the faculty we're going to start this process in 2023, or something like that. So, it's not immediate, which means they have to adjust given this current environment, but it's something that they have to anticipate and prepare for when this environment subsides, and they have time to adjust their calendars to fit that.

Senator Kalter: Okay, great. So, that one's more on the other question of the academic year versus the calendar year evaluation, but it relates to this, in a sense, as well.

Senator Lucey: Yes.

Senator Kalter: All right. Other comments about any anything about this? We can also move now to talking about you know abbreviate versus keep as is in terms of the actual stuff that's handed in during the productivity report time. Any other comments about any of the topics for tonight?

Senator Meyers: I think that we should keep the calendar the same. I think there's enough, I guess, echoing Senator Lucey's comment, there's enough complexity right now that changing timelines seems more stressful to me than less. And I think that having an institution that is predictable and sticks with its existing policies and schedules as much as possible is reassuring, and it's what I would be in favor of.

Senator Mainieri: I think that, you know, moving on to the second question about the content of the annual review process, I think that as we've talked about all summer, I feel like words matter. Right. And framing matters. And I feel like framing the process as an annual reflection process, particularly this time around, of empowering each faculty member to see it as an opportunity to tell their story about how the pandemic has impacted their areas of productivity. Right. And so that, and I think it was Senator Horst that talked about it earlier, right, it becomes a record of here's where I am, and here's how this year has impacted what I would have seen as my productivity this year. And so, I feel that some guidance to DFSCs and SFSCs to think about the framing of the annual review process this year, I think, could be a way to approach it to say, yes, we recognize this as a lot of work right now, but it's also an opportunity to tell your story.

Senator Kalter: Thank you. Further comments about any of that. (Pause) All right, I see none, I'll just kind of echo what Senator Mainieri just said, I just want to describe the process in my department and why I think it's so arduous at this point. So, we have to, first, you know, redo our CV. We obviously are doing that often, more than just annually. So, that's the first step. You have to fill out a, like a multi-page formatted Word doc or Digital Measures thing about all of your teaching productivity, asking, I think, maybe seven or eight or nine different questions about that. Then do that for research. Then do that for service. Then we, in our department, we almost always are asked for a faculty essay. Then we're almost always turning in our syllabus and multiple materials, etc, etc. When I was a pre-tenure faculty member, this could take me up to a week, literally, and it was really a stunning amount of work. A couple years back, we had a, sort of a guest chair, so to speak, from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and he said he could bat it down in one day. And none of us could really understand that. So, I want to really sort of echo what Senator Mainieri is saying about somehow consolidating that work into a narrative, rather than multiple parts that are sort of the standard, right. So, what did you do this year? How are you evaluating yourself? What do you want us to know about your publications? About your work with graduate students? About your mentorship of undergraduate students? Your Honors work, etc? But not necessarily filling out forms and doing, you know, these kinds of standard processes. Because I would like to have our faculty not spending, you know, more than a day or two doing that self-reflection, because as Senator Meyers, I think, said, or it might have been somebody else, not wanting to interrupt our research time in the summer. There are a lot of people who take research time in Winter Break. And so, they may be looking forward to using that time during Winter Break and it is an interruption to them to have the productivity report stuff that has to be done as well. Same for our DFSC members. In my department, each DFSC member has to write about eight or nine letters, and they also have to spend all of MLK Day, not taking a holiday, but actually working, often attend a 10 to 12 hour meeting on that day, in order to finish all of the work that we have to do, for salary increases that probably will not come, at least for, you know, the foreseeable future. So, I would like our faculty to be spending their time in places where it actually counts, and that is, you know, their own research and serving our students as we prepare for Spring Break. So, whatever we can do to sort of consolidate everybody's time on this, that is my biggest concern. It may not be the way I had originally proposed at the beginning of this meeting, but, I really want to plead that we not have people spending their time reporting, so much as spending their time doing research, a creative activities, and doing teaching, and taking a real Winter Break because we all need it, and we're all going to need it by the end of the semester in order to get through this very painful year.

Senator Blum: Yeah, I just want to echo what you're saying. Our department’s exactly the same as yours. Right. And we have a data gathering form, and there's a lot of things… So, for example, we have to take that core survey data, and then re input it into the data gathering form, which is already there as an artifact for the DFSC. So, there's things like that. Now, I mean we've self-developed that form, and so some of that pain has been self-inflicted over the years but, I don't know, whatever guidance we can provide to push D or CFSC to streamline this. I don't know. I mean, you know, obviously, that there's autonomy, at some level on this. But I do relate to you that I know there are many departments and schools that, even within my own college, that don't torture themselves with a level of insanity.

Senator Pancrazio: Speaking of torture at a level of insanity. I'd like to move for adjournment is very late. I know everyone has… I know everyone feels very strongly about it, the transition to online has been pretty difficult. I'm in a position, I taught three classes this morning, met with students throughout the day, had a department meeting, and then three meetings in a row. So, I'm about out of gas. So, I would like to move for adjournment this evening.

Senator Kalter: Let me make sure before we move, before I get a second on that, because I saw Provost Tarhule raising his hand. Let me have him speak and then we can get to the second

Provost Tarhule: James, I completely agree with you. I feel exactly the same way. So, I’ll try and…

Senator Pancrazio: You're holding up better than I am.

Provost Tarhule: Susan, I just wanted to share with this group that at one of my previous institutions where we automated a great deal of the faculty, what we call the Faculty Activity Insight. Most of the data that are required to provide already exists in the institution. Depending on the setup, you can write a program including all of that data. And so, we did this at one of my previous institutions where every year, all of your teaching data, your publication data, your grant data, your teaching evaluations, number of enrollment in classes, all of that the system automatically pulled and populated into your faculty and review form. So, then the only thing you have to do yourself was maybe change committee membership that had expired or additional stuff that the system couldn't get. So, it is possible. It's a very major undertaking. I think it took us almost three years to implement this. But once we did it, the workload was completely cut down, like, by maybe 70% or 80%. So, it could be something that, at some point, way beyond today, we may be interested in having that conversation if there is some interest and capacity here to implement something like that.

Senator Kalter: Yes, we will have to have a conversation sometime about my position on Digital Measures, and how MS Word is superior to it, because Digital Measures tripled the workload, rather than cutting it back. So, we do need a better… we need to get Charley Edamala on the case, because he seems to solve problems really well.

Motion by Senator Pancrazio, seconded by Senator Horst, to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.