FACULTY SENATE MEETING
February 22, 2021


Members absent: Jitana Benton-Lee, Tracy Bonner, Jacqueline Emerine, Rich Gilson, Ken Katkin, JC Kim, Jennifer Kinsley, Robert Salyer, Brittany Sorrell, Andrea Lambert South, Laura Sullivan, Andrea Watkins

Guests: Ande Durojaiye (Interim Provost), Ashish Vaidya (President), Michael Baranowski (Faculty Regent), Kimberly Weir (General Education Chair), Brian Hackett (Graduate Council), Grace Hiles (Faculty Senate Office), Mia Derks (SGA Representative), Alex Brandt, Amy Danzo, Emily Detmer-Goebel, Suk-hee Kim, Madhura Kulkarni, Amanda Laskowski, R. McDade, Diana McGill, Amal Said, Erin Strome, James Walden

Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda

The meeting was called to order by Senate President John Farrar at 3:03 pm with a quorum present. There was a change to the agenda. UCC voting item #3 is the removal of two courses from General Education. It was determined that the item does not need Faculty Senate vote because it is an informational item from the UCC; hence, this voting item was removed from the agenda.

The agenda was adopted as corrected.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 25, 2021 election meeting and Senate meeting were approved as distributed.

Guest Reports:

- President (Ashish Vaidya):
  - The president, Bonita Brown, Vice president and Chief Strategy Officer, Interim Provost Durojaiye, and Eddie Howard, Vice President for Student Affairs, met with the Chairs Council about fall semester planning. Discussions with various groups included what they have learned about student needs and expectations and faculty and staff needs for support. He encouraged the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to help guide the group’s thinking. At the University Council meeting, some shared that students find e-advising to be extremely convenient.
  - Soon Bonita Brown, Vice president and Chief Strategy Officer, will be sending an update to the campus community on next steps in Success by Design. The update will emphasize the tremendous amount of work accomplished during the pandemic and major progress that has been made. This was not only with projects funded through the Innovation Challenge but also through other projects that have been undertaken throughout campus. The update will also include the conversation on rolling out the institutional metrics that will be used to measure progress made across the three
pillars: access, completion, and career and community engagement. On some metrics, she will need additional input and feedback, and some meetings will happen across campus to refine and revise a couple of those metrics. They will be putting forward targets and goals, such as retention, graduation, persistence, and pipeline targets. As stated in Success by Design, they want to achieve aspirational targets, especially around the work of equity and closing gaps. Bonita Brown, Vice president and Chief Strategy Officer, will also be talking about the input they have received about the institutional-wide initiatives to pursue.

- **With Mike Hales, Interim Vice President Administration & Finance/CFO, they are engaging in the second year of six-month budget assessments.** They have been meeting with Academic Affairs, colleges and units, and other divisions. They want to be sure that everyone is mindful of revenues and expenses. Also, as they look to budget development for the next year, they want to identify issues and priorities. The Budget Executive Committee will be involved in some of those conversations. Mike Hales, Interim Vice president Administration & Finance/CFO, will give updates on FY22. This budget development will be somewhat challenging. There are so many unknowns. They do not know the extent to which auxiliary services will be back or whether housing will be 80%, 90%, or less.

- **The General Assembly in Frankfort will be back this week.** Of course, they are paying attention to not only the budget bill but also to other bills that will have implications for us. Carmen Hickerson is our new Assistant Vice President Economic Engagement & Government Relations. She will be keeping us updated.

- **The president asked everybody to stay safe and encouraged everyone to follow our health protocols even though there is some light at the end of the tunnel.** He hopes everyone is trying their best to take care of themselves.

- **Interim Provost (Ande Durojaiye):**
  - To provide a bigger picture, 10% of 72,000 individuals’ vaccinations in Kentucky have taken place within the Northern Kentucky region. Of those, 60% had the first dose while 10% have had both doses. Supply continues to be the big issue. Kroger and Walgreens have opened vaccination sites. Within Northern Kentucky, 40% of individuals who are eligible for 1A and 1B have been vaccinated. Based on the information he has received, 1C will open on March 1st. The vast majority of individuals employed at NKU will be included in 1C. Because the supply is so low, they are not sure if they will be able to get everyone on campus vaccinated. Valerie Hardcastle, St. Elizabeth Healthcare Executive Director of Institute for Health Innovation and Vice President for Health Innovation, has been very involved in conversations at the State level and within the Northern Kentucky region. She has informed him that St. Elizabeth Healthcare is going to set up a vaccination site on the NKU campus, so we will have a vaccination site here. The university has an order for vaccines; however, they have not received any vaccines thus far. He hopes to have a vaccination site when they receive the vaccines. According to Valerie Hardcastle, we will have enough vaccines to vaccinate everyone at NKU who wants to be vaccinated by mid-April.
  - They have met with chairs and other individuals regarding fall semester. They discussed how the situation with vaccinations will influence what can be done. The goal is to be where we were in fall 2019 regarding class schedules. They realize that there will be differences because they have learned a lot from the pandemic. We will likely still have more online offerings. They recognize that flexibility matters because we are still not
out of the pandemic. As there is still uncertainty, he hopes that everyone will understand and be flexible.

**In response to questions from senators:**

- The Governor has said that individuals must be Kentucky residents to receive the vaccine in Kentucky. Many Ohio residents are employed at NKU. Regarding residency requirements to receive the vaccine, he clarified that President Vaidya and President Bob Jackson of Murray State University are having conversations with individuals from the Governor’s office because Murray State University has the same situation due to being close to the Tennessee border. However, right now, the Governor’s position is that the vaccine is for Kentucky residents. He will keep everyone posted if things change around that issue.
- Regarding when the call will be made about what fall semester will look like, he indicated that the call will be made relatively soon. The goal is to go back to the fall 2019 schedule because they expect faculty and staff to be vaccinated by then. Even with vaccinations, he expects to see masking, etc., on campus. It is unlikely that all of our students will be vaccinated by fall; hence, they will take this into consideration. He believes that if they can prioritize getting faculty and staff vaccinated, they will be able to predict the numbers among students.
- He encouraged Senator Chris Curran in her advocacy of vaccinations for Ohio residents working at NKU and asked her to document that individuals have crossed state borders to be vaccinated. He wants to make sure that we can get as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible.
- He indicated that the Covid Response Team has discussed the new strains. Dr. Alan Cohen, who is the resident expert on the team, has shared information about the new strains and the effectiveness of the vaccines against these new strains. So, they are definitely thinking about it as they plan for the fall semester.

**Faculty Regent** (Michael Baranowski):
- The next Regents meeting is on March 10th. He will have a report at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

**SGA Representative** (Mia Derks)
- Victor Talks will be on Zoom on Tuesday, March 9th at 6 p.m. It is going to feature several female faculty, staff, and students across campus who will talk about their experiences in higher education among other related topics.
- At the end of March, they will hold a town hall where they will discuss a policy on free speech. She thinks that they will have great speakers for this event, too.
- She and Lauren Goodwin, SGA President, met with some members of the Staff Congress about her report to Staff Congress. A suggestion was made to seek feedback from both the Staff Congress and Faculty Senate about reports and whether or not SGA should be doing something. She would love to hear from faculty. Her email is derksm1@nku.edu.
- In response to questions from senators:
  - She will definitely bring up co-signing the resolution about vaccination with the Executive Board. Senate President John Farrar clarified that it would be a resolution from the Faculty Senate. SGA and Staff Congress can include co-statements.
  - She responded that SGA has indeed made a statement about the racist graffiti found on campus recently.
Richard Fox, UCC Chair, pointed out that many students are disengaged due to the pandemic and Zoom burnout. Regarding suggestions to faculty on how they can re-engage these students, she will bring it up with the Executive Board. They have discussed this in meetings. They will compile a list of suggestions which she will email before the next Faculty Senate meeting. It was suggested that the list should be sent to Senate President John Farrar for dissemination to faculty.

She thanked everyone for providing feedback.

Officer Reports:

- **Senate President** (John Farrar):
  - Nominations for Faculty Regent are open until February 26th. According to the statute, KRS, the nominee must be an assistant professor or above to serve as Faculty Regent.
  - He is also working on getting the administrator evaluations out soon. Faculty should soon receive an email about it.
  - Faculty should have received the budget survey which is open through March 1st. He encouraged faculty to take the survey and give feedback to the Budget Committee because the committee will be looking at the responses in providing feedback on budget priorities for the upcoming year.
  - Faculty should have received an email about diversity, equity, and inclusion training. This training is different from Title IX training. The Title IX training that faculty received previously was more focused on Title IX compliance. This training is a shorter training compared to Title IX training. He encouraged faculty to complete the training.
  - Faculty Senate Student Award nominations are due on Friday.
  - There are a number of Faculty Fellowships that are available for next year: Provost Leadership Fellow, Center for Teaching and Learning Teaching Fellow, and Honors College Fellow. Applications are due in mid-March. He encouraged faculty to apply.

- **Vice President** (Kalyani Ankem):
  - The majority of us probably are in 1C for vaccinations which are expected to start on March 1st. If faculty want to check when their family members are eligible for vaccination in Kentucky, they might be able to find information at [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov). The site does not provide a date, but it will show the category in which an individual falls for vaccination. They also have a Covid 19 vaccine hotline for answers to general questions.

- **Faculty Advocate** (Phil McCartney):
  - He received several comments from faculty about a final exams policy that was circulated. Faculty are concerned about whether it was devaluing the idea of having a comprehensive final exam or a cumulating project in a class. The policy is being reworked to focus more on timing of final exams and to not make a statement about their prevalence or value, etc.
  - As Senate President John Farrar mentioned, on January 29th, everyone should have received a message about online training on diversity, equity, and inclusion. He received a number of comments from faculty wondering whether this training is the same as Title IX training. It is different, but it is run by the same group, EVERFI training. Among the questions he received from faculty were whether the training is mandatory and how much it is costing the university in this time of budget constraints. He sent a message inquiring about these questions; however, he has not received a response. A number of faculty were concerned that these trainings are not necessarily the best way to go about
it and that we could be doing something better towards accomplishing the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- He had asked various candidates for the provost position about the value of shared governance and use of data and metrics in a holistic way, especially the use of DFW rates as a litmus test for teaching effectiveness. He hopes that Matt Cecil, who comes from his home state of Minnesota, will function tremendously well. Hopefully, he hasn't seen the amount of snow that we got recently. Matt Cecil will be anticipating a warmer weather when he gets here.

- **Graduate Council** (Brian Hackett):
  - Three separate subcommittees have been formed: Recruitment and Retention Committee, Marketing Committee, and Community Engagement Committee. These subcommittees have been busy meeting. The subcommittees hope to have concrete reports by the next Graduate Council meeting which will be the second Thursday in March. He hopes to have a full report at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

- **University Curriculum Committee** (Richard Fox):
  - UCC has two meetings (the first and fourth Thursday in March) left to approve items to get into the fall catalog. He believes the Graduate Council is meeting on the third Thursday in March. In collaboration with Connie Kiskaden, Curriculum Programs and Course Evaluation Coordinator, they have modified two of the Curriculog forms to combine the form for new General Education courses with the form for new courses into a single consolidated form. This request came from the General Education Committee.
  - As Senate President John Farrar noted, two courses are being removed from General Education. The General Education Committee approved this item. Then, UCC approved this item last week. The courses are PSC 101 and PHY 101. These are non-voting items shared as informational items with the Faculty Senate.
  - UCC has voting items later in the meeting: two changes to the General Education program and two new programs.

- **Budget** (Janel Bloch):
  - As Senate President John Farrar mentioned, the faculty budget priorities survey was sent to faculty right before this meeting. They already have about 70 responses. She thanked those who filled out the survey. She asked faculty to take time to do it if they have not yet. It is pretty short and relatively painless. One ranking question has about six items to rank and there are a few short-answer questions that have to do with identifying ideas for strategic investments with a box to type items.
  - One of the charges of the Budget Committee is to solicit and provide input on budget priorities for NKU. According to Mike Hales, Interim Vice President Administration & Finance/CFO, they are mainly looking for input on where to strategically invest and divest.

- **Benefits** (Charlisa Daniels):
  - The committee met on February 3rd.
    - They are working on getting Faculty Senate scholarships ready to be uploaded at the end of this month, so they can go up in March for our students.
• They discussed parental leave, an item that is coming up later in the agenda for Senate discussion.
• They also discussed conversations they have been having with the benefits team in Human Resources about changes to our benefits such as TIAA contributions.

• **Professional Concerns** (Kathleen Fuegen):
  o PCC discussed issues at their meeting last week.
    ▪ The first issue concerned avenues for redirecting student complaints. Some faculty are concerned that students have been bypassing their instructors and expressing their complaints about courses directly to the university president or provost. Then, those complaints go down to a Dean, who forwards them to a department chair, who then forwards them to the faculty member. The PCC has been discussing ways to encourage students to contact the instructor first. One way is to express concerns to the president and provost and recommend that students need to learn how to navigate the challenges of communication by working directly with the source of what they perceive to be the problem. They will request the president and provost to ask the student fielding the complaint if they have contacted the instructor regarding the matter as a first step. They recognize that some complaints such as those about discrimination or harassment must be dealt with by upper-level administrators. They believe that the vast majority of student complaints can be efficiently dealt with by course instructors. Also, language can be included in the instructor’s syllabus that would direct students to contact their instructor first before contacting others with concerns about courses.

  ▪ The second matter that PCC addressed is changes to Section 6 of the Faculty Handbook. Section 6 deals with the procedure and timeline regarding tenure decisions. 1) They are considering whether faculty who go up for tenure in a non-mandatory year need to demonstrate extraordinary merit. Consensus was that the extraordinary merit criterion is vague and open to interpretation. It would be better to say that faculty going up for tenure in a non-mandatory year need to meet the very same criteria that faculty going up for tenure in a mandatory year must meet. 2) They are working on clarifying language regarding extension of the probationary period and the timing of reappointment. It applies to a faculty member who requests and is granted an extension of the probationary period, for instance, birth or adoption of a child or difficulty with the research trajectory due to the pandemic. If an extension is granted, any reduction in productivity during that period of time should not prejudice a subsequent decision regarding a request for a subsequent extension. They also want to clarify that faculty who have an extended time do not have to go up for reappointment during the time of extension. 3) They are working to clarify the evaluation process for faculty who have extended the probationary period. They are working on language that would make it clear that a faculty member who has extended the probationary period for a year should not be expected to have produced an extra year’s worth of publications or creative activity during the year of that extension. PCC hopes to bring revised language for Section 6 of the Faculty handbook to the Faculty Senate next month.

• **TEEC** (Chris Lawrence):
Tomorrow, he is meeting with people from Anthology about possible new course evaluation software that they have been looking at this semester.

They have created the description for the Center for Teaching and Learning Teaching Fellow and are proceeding with that process, so more information on that will be coming out shortly.

He appreciates everyone reviewing the VF grade item which will be coming up later in the agenda for voting.

In response to questions from senators:
- Regarding the revision of the types of questions we ask on course evaluation, he explained that if the new evaluation software system comes through, it will be an entirely different process. He acknowledged that there have been some questions from faculty about whether all of the questions that appear currently need to apply to everyone; however, at the moment, we do not really have a way to turn them on and off.

General Education Committee (Kimberly Weir):
- The General Education Committee voted last meeting to streamline the new course submission process through Curriculog. They will be accepting new courses again in the fall semester. That call will be coming. There will be a new course form. To add a pre-existing course as a General Education course, it must go through a course-change form. The streamlining of the process is intended to be simple and less redundant. It was clarified that questions on filling Curriculog forms should be directed to Richard Fox, UCC Chair.
- General Education proposals for innovation were due on February 15th. They have formed a subcommittee. The subcommittee will be reviewing the submissions and meeting in March. Those recommendations will go to the General Education Committee to make decisions before full proposals will be invited for the fall semester.
- For this year’s assessment, the categories of Culture and Creativity as well as Written and Oral Communication were assessed. They had 149 faculty to give artifacts. Everyone, except 10, submitted artifacts. There were 283 sections of courses that were evaluated. The scoring of these artifacts will be on May 18th. There will be a call coming out for the scoring.
- She thanked everyone who participated in the assessment which is important because it goes towards accreditation as well as program evaluation.

New Business

- VOTING item: UCC recommendation for change to General Education SLO D1: Students demonstrate the ability to use the appropriate (i.e., scientific, quantitative, computational, technological) methods/procedures and/or reasoning to draw an appropriate conclusion or solve a problem. (Curriculog link: https://nku.curriculog.com/proposal:4355/form)
- This was something that came out of the original round of assessment. They believed that information technology was not adequately being represented in terms of the SLOs. Emily Detmer-Goebel, liaison administrator for General Education assessment, and Abdou Ndoye, Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment, formed a think tank with faculty who are most affected by this change to reword D1, so it would be inclusive to them as well.
APPROVED.

- VOTING item: UCC recommendation for General Education courses can no longer fit into Global Viewpoints and second category. (Curriculog link: https://nku.curriculog.com/proposal:4411/form)
  - This item passed as part of the policy that was put forward to the Faculty senate in January. This item had to go through UCC; however, Faculty Senate will be approving something that it had already approved in January. General Education courses fitting into two categories was not in the spirit of what the original Foundation of Knowledge was about. The categories were meant to be exclusive. Two departments were affected. The departments were contacted. One of those departments initiated this change.
  - There was discussion about whether this item requires voting. Emily Detmer-Goebel, liaison administrator for General Education assessment, pointed out that certain aspects of the item presented today were not included in the policy that passed in the Faculty Senate in January. It was decided that the Faculty Senate will vote on this item.

APPROVED.

  - This new BA program is for students who are interested in pursuing a degree in education but not a formal teaching certificate. It is also for students in the education program who decide that teaching is not for them. It allows them to move over into this program and graduate and still be able to utilize their teaching background in a different career.

APPROVED.

- VOTING item: MS in Cybersecurity. (Curriculog link: https://nku.curriculog.com/proposal:4311/form)
  - The new master’s in cybersecurity program is an accelerated online program that the Computer Science department is creating with Academic Partnerships. The department is suspending its other pre-existing graduate programs. The new program consists of 30 credit hours of all new courses. There is a required core and two electives taken from a set of five courses. It is designed to provide career changers a way to get into cybersecurity even though they have a bachelor’s degree from outside the field. There is huge demand right now for cybersecurity.
  - Four of the five elective courses have been approved through the process. They hope to get the remaining elective course approved by next month for the fall catalog. The status of this course does not impact the program.

APPROVED.

- VOTING item: TEEC recommendation for revision of grading scale to add VF (vanished/failing) grade (see file ‘VF Grade Recommendation.docx’).
  - Initially, this came out as a response to concerns about DFW rates in courses. They have found that in the Commonwealth and greater Cincinnati region, it is fairly common to
have a grade to differentiate between a student who fails a course for not satisfying the course requirements and a student who basically just sort of disappears. This disappearance may happen past the withdrawal date. Allen Cole, University Registrar, spoke with other universities in Kentucky. Faculty would need to include a last date of attendance for reporting purposes in determining financial aid. It could prove useful for students when they want to appeal and are looking for a retroactive withdraw. A final date of participation recorded by faculty would be helpful to the student’s case. The VF grade would be optional for faculty to use. The potential benefits and drawbacks of entering the VF grade have been listed in the attachment.

- This item will be presented to the Graduate Council at their next meeting.
- In response to questions from senators:
  - Regarding the reason for actual withdrawal vs. unofficial withdrawal, he explained that the VF grade does count as a failure because the student would get 0 quality points. In the case of an official withdrawal, there would not be anything that appears. When the VF is given, the student would get a 0, but it does not come back as something that would be used against faculty in terms of DFW rates. Hence, it is more like an F than a withdrawal.
  - Senator Kebede Gemene pointed out that some students show up only for exams. Regarding the impact of F vs VF on students, he explained that if all of the classes in a single semester are VF, Financial Aid will want to know to determine if the aid needs to be returned. If a student just shows up for exams, the faculty member will have the discretion to decide whether to give a VF. There would be no need for a VF grade if participation is not required in the course.
  - Regarding a cutoff date in recording participation for the VF grade, he believes that they would have to set a specific time limit. It would have to be after the final withdrawal date and a date in the semester not too far to complicate matters.
  - Richard Fox, UCC Chair, pointed out that a student may not drop a course and purposefully fail the course to maintain a full-time load and keep financial aid. Regarding the impact on a student who receives several VFs and one F, he explained that Financial Aid would have to determine whether to ask the student for a refund. He believes that Financial Aid will likely overlook the one F.

APPROVED.

- DISCUSSION item: Benefits Committee recommendation for parental leave policy proposal (see 4 files ‘NKUFacultyHandbookExcerpt.docx’ ‘Paid Parental Leave at NKU_v3.docx’ ‘VF Grade Recommendation.docx’ ‘Parental Leave Proposal - Salary and Benefit Cost.xlsx’)
- Last year, she started working with Amy Danzo, staff member, toward a 16-week parental leave for faculty and staff. It would be up to the faculty member to decide when to initiate the leave. Individuals who temporarily replace faculty and staff who are on parental leave will get a small stipend. She has been hearing personal stories from faculty as well as staff, which indicate that parental leave may not be uniform across campus. After discussions with Chandra Brown, Budget Director, and Natalie Gabbard, Benefits Analyst, they came up with numbers for a five-year period, 2015-2019. The attachment provides the number of employees on parental leave, average
faculty salary, and average staff salary. The attachment also shows the stipend that the individual covering for the faculty or staff member on parental leave would be paid. It is 10% of the faculty or staff salary for 16 weeks. This is the commitment the Benefits Committee would be seeking from the university. On the high end, if 52 individuals are on leave, the cost would be around $150,000. On the low end, if 25 individuals are on leave, the cost would be around $75,000. The committee realizes that more people will probably take advantage of the leave if this policy is approved.

- In response to questions from senators:
  - Regarding whether something can be done to extend the shorter 12-week leave for temporary illness for faculty who have not been at NKU for a long period, she noted that the Benefits Committee has only focused on parental leave. She can certainly take the issue to the Benefits Committee. She believes these would be two separate and different policies. The language has been changed from maternal leave to parental leave.
  - Under FMLA, a faculty member must work for a year to be eligible for leave. Regarding whether faculty would be eligible for parental leave in their first year, she explained that if the policy is passed without changes, it will not require a waiting period for faculty to be eligible for parental leave. If it needs to be aligned with FMLA, the Benefits Committee can include a waiting period for eligibility. The Benefits Committee has not included such a waiting period thus far because new faculty who are often younger become parents.
  - Regarding whether leave for faculty to care for elderly parents, which was initially discussed in the Faculty Senate, has been considered, she indicated that the committee wanted to start with the parental leave and then use it as a foundation for expanding to aging parents at a later date.
  - Faculty members who became parents while working at NKU shared their experiences and thanked her for drafting the parental leave policy.

• Senate President John Farrar shared a resolution regarding vaccination sent to him from Senator Chris Curran. She stressed the importance of everyone working at NKU, including those who live in Ohio, being vaccinated to be able to better serve our students. She will try to reach out to other universities to do something similar. She appreciates SGA Vice President Mia Derks’ willingness to consider the SGA for co-signing the resolution. Senate President John Farrar shared that the Coalition of Faculty Senate Leadership in the State has discussed the issue. Richard Fox, UCC Chair, suggested revisions to the draft. Senator Susannah Coaston suggested to include employees who live in Indiana because we are in the tri-state area. The Faculty Senate approved the referral of the resolution to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for revision and adoption on its behalf before forwarding it to the administration and appropriate channels to communicate this to the government. Senate President John Farrar will reach out to SGA and Staff Congress President Sara Conwel to see if they want to join us.

• Senate President John Farrar asked faculty to contact him if they are interested in serving on the selection committee for the Faculty Senate Student Award.

• Senate President John Farrar thanked everyone for the good discussion in support of some important items this month. He asked everyone to enjoy the warm weather and adjourned the meeting.
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kalyani Ankem
Vice President