

# Minutes from the December Meeting of the Faculty Senate

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, December 10, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in the Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building.

## Attendance

**Present:** Tyler Babb, Vishwas Bedekar, Kathryn Blankenship, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Larry Burriss, Nancy Caukin, Laura Cochrane, Trevor de Clercq, Mimit Deme, Andrew Dix, Jackie Eller, Tricia Farwell, Rebecca Fischer, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Pippa Holloway, Paul Kline, Rachel Leander, Darren Levin, Melissa Lobegeier, Alfred Lutz, Preston MacDougall, Pamela Morris, John Mullane, John Pennington, Joshua Phillips, Ariana Postlethwait, Deana Raffo, Joan Raines, Michael Rice, Patrick Richey, James Robertson, Susan Myers-Shirk, Rajesh Srivastava, Sherri Stevens, Moses Tesi, Elizabeth Wright

**Excused:** Rick Cottle, Angela DeBoer, Joey Gray, Mary Ellen Sloane

**Absent:** James Chaney, Shannon Harmon, Marcus Knight, Stephen Salter, Nat Smith, Donald Snead

The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

## Reports

- Rachel Leander reported on the Senate's budget. As of December 7, 2018, the Senate had at its disposal \$464.39 for the purpose of travel and \$3,532 for other expenses. At the start of this academic year \$1,600 and \$5,380 were budgeted for travel and other expenses, respectively.
- Laura Cochrane reported that the Academic Affairs, Student Life and Athletics Committee is studying how the research/teaching balance varies across departments. The Committee is also studying how reassigned time is being allotted under the new workload guidelines.
- Susan Myers-Shirk reported that The University is planning to redesign the general education curriculum. During the spring semester, focus groups including faculty, students, and alumni will answer the question "What should a student know, be able to do, and have experience with upon completing the general education requirements." Answers to this question will also be solicited via surveys and accepted via email. Responses will be collected and analyzed by a dedicated general education committee in the coming academic year. Information on the redesign process is included in the appendix.
- John Pennington reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee is researching how compensation is distributed across employee classifications (e.g. administrative employees versus faculty). The Committee will specifically analyze trends in this distribution over time.

- Tricia Farwell reported that the Audit and Compliance Committee has decided not to pursue the implementation of an honor code. The Provost is not interested in implementing an honor code, and research suggests that honor codes are not effective at altering student conduct.
- Alan Boehm reported on behalf of the Executive and Governance Committee, which is studying the effectiveness of the University's committee structure. He said that response rates from committee chairs have been low.
- President Pippa Holloway reported.
  - She said that several Senate seats will soon be open for election.
  - She notified the Senate that there has been discussion of raising the rate of compensation for adjunct faculty to \$700 per credit hour. Senators indicated that we should discuss the cost of increasing adjunct pay rates with the Provost.
  - She reminded the Senate that final exams must be administered at the officially scheduled time.
  - She reported that the Chair's Council proposes to allow departments to schedule Monday/Wednesday classes in the morning. Currently morning meeting times on Monday and Wednesday are reserved for classes meeting Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Senators voiced concerns that nonuniform scheduling across departments could create conflicts for students. Michael Rice notified the Senate that a University committee previously studied this scheduling question and proposed a model in which classes would meet Monday/Wednesday, Tuesday/Thursday, or Friday.

## **Motions**

1. Tricia Farwell moved on behalf of the Audit and Compliance Committee that the Senate should not pursue the implementation of an honor code. The motion was adopted.
2. John Pennington moved to defer the discussion of the proposed change to class scheduling until the next Senate meeting, at which time Michael Ritz will report on the M/W, T/R, or F model his committee proposed previously. The motion was adopted.
3. Justin Gardner moved to approve the enrollment resolution with amendment. The motion was adopted. The amended document is included in the appendix.
4. Michael Rice moved to send the letter regarding nonemergency cancellation of classes back to committee. The motion was not adopted.
5. John Pennington moved to send the letter regarding nonemergency cancellation of classes to President McPhee. The motion was approved after amendment. The amended letter is included in the appendix.
6. Susan Myers-Shirk moved to send the resolution on salaries and market adjustments back to committee. The motion was adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 P.M.

Submitted by Rachel Leander, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.

## Appendix

### 1. Information on the general education redesign

#### CONTACT INFO

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#### Summary

The main goal for general education redesign this year was to initiate a university-wide conversation about general education redesign through a Faculty Learning Community devoted specifically to that purpose. FLC members met for reading and discussion during the fall semester and plan to lead a series of focus groups in spring 2019 asking faculty, students, administrators, staff, advisors, and alumni this question: What should students know, be able to do, and have experienced upon completing the general education curriculum?

In addition to the focus groups, the University General Education Committee will provide multiple opportunities for the university community to provide feedback, including establishing a website and social media presence specifically for general education redesign. Multiple options for anonymous feedback will also be available.

Feedback will be collected in a qualitative database (probably nVivo or Antconc) and made available to guide a general education redesign team when we get to the point of design. The intention is that redesign will fully reflect the values and priorities of the university community. At this point, no design decisions have been made and none will be made until we have gathered sufficient feedback.

Please see below for a more detailed explanation of this year's accomplishments and goals

#### Faculty Learning Communities:

To initiate a university-wide conversation about general education redesign, I established two Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs). The two FLCs are co-sponsored by the LT&ITC and the Provost's Office. The General Education Redesign FLCs were constituted in the same manner as all FLCs administered through the LT&ITC. They were advertised at the beginning of AY 2018-2019 through the LT&ITC. (For the advertisement see:

[https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/FLC/MTSU\\_General\\_Education\\_Redesign.php](https://www.mtsu.edu/ltanditc/FLC/MTSU_General_Education_Redesign.php)

Participation is voluntary. I did, however, seek to provide representation across all university colleges. (See attached list of participants and their college affiliation.) The FLCs have 8-10 members each. In addition, members the previous year's Future of General Education Workgroup also participate through the support of the MT Engage Office

#### GOALS: 2018-2019 General Education Redesign Faculty Learning Community:

##### **To initiate and take the lead in a university-wide conversation about the parameters of general education redesign**

- Understand the national context of general education redesign
- Design and conduct focus groups and surveys to understand the university community and the perception of general education and its redesign
- Clarify values and articulate priorities
- Provide information and guidance for the core design team

#### What we've accomplished in the fall semester:

**Session 1** For the first session, FLC participants read Paul Gaston's pamphlet, "General Education Transformed: How We Can: Why We Must," published by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AACU). In session one, participants were introduced to the historical context and major trends in general education redesign and discussed values and priorities in redesign.

**Session 2** One of the tools we plan to use to facilitate conversations is focus groups. In session 2 Tim Graeff, Director, MTSU Office of Consumer Research and professor in the Department of Marketing, gave a presentation on how to moderate focus groups and provided readings for the group from his book *Marketing Research for Managerial Decision Making*.

**Session 3** For session three, participants read and discussed another AAC&U pamphlet entitled "General Education Maps and Markers: Designing Meaningful Pathways to Student Achievement." At this session I also reported on my conversations with other general education directors at the LGIs and clarified the legislative boundaries of redesign: **41 lower division hours are required by law including 6 hours of American history**. With 41 hours we exceed the requirements for accreditation. SACSCOC requires a minimum of 30 hours to maintain accreditation.

#### FLC goals for spring:

The FLC participants will take the lead in conducting focus groups across campus. The central question will be: What should students know, be able to do, have experienced upon completing of the general education curriculum? These focus groups will be akin to brainstorming sessions and are not intended as complaint or gripe sessions. Focus groups will consist of 8-10 participants and sessions will last approximately 90 minutes. Everyone in the university will be invited to participate, including faculty, students, administrators, staff, advisors, and alumni. The sessions will be offered in a variety of formats including inter-college, intra-college,

department, and peer group. Sessions will be audio recorded or transcribed and the results collected in a qualitative database (probably nVivo or Antconc) and made available to guide the design team when we get to the point of design. We are currently in conversation about the necessity of IRB.

### What's new in general education redesign for spring 2019?

- In the spring 6 members of the FLCs will be attending the AAC&U conference on general education in February. The conference theme is "Creating a Twenty-first Century General Education." Volunteers to attend the conference were selected on a first-come, first-served basis from among FLC participants. Faculty attendings: Kate Pantelides, Meg Brooker, Keith Gamble, Soraya Noguiera, Katherine Brackett, & Susan Myers-Shirk
- Katherine Brackett will come on board as director of communications for general education redesign
- We'll launch a website and develop a social media presence specifically for general education redesign.
- We'll give the university community multiple ways to respond to general education redesign throughout the process, including multiple ways to contribute anonymously.
- We'll select a design team to send to the AACU Institute on General Education & Assessment in June of 2019.

### Where do we go from here? Timeline:

**June 2019:** Design team attends the AACU Summer Institute and develops an initial design based on the feedback from the MTSU university community.

**AY 2019-2020:** Year-long discussion of the proposed redesign through townhalls and workshops

course mapping; articulation of outcomes for the program and for the transfer path; design and approval of pilot courses

**\*AY 2020-2021:** creation of a Core Implementation Team; Course design and approval; Pilot first round of new courses; Implement any necessary changes in Banner; plan for roll out, including marketing at summer Freshman Customs

**AY 2021-2022:** first round of university core courses offered; teach out of current general education program

\*Year of record for SACSCOC Five-Year Review

### FLC Participants 2018-2019

Last	First	Department	College
Baran	Emily	History	CLA
Fenton	Kathryn	Music	CLA
Brooker	Meg	Theater & Dance	CLA
Witherow	Laurie	Undergraduate	Student Affairs

		Recruitment	
Page	Kim	University Studies	University College
Gamble	Keith	Economics & Finance	COB
Hemby	Virginia	Marketing	COB
Farwell	Tricia	Journalism	ME
Richey	Pat	Comm Studies	CLA
Khan	Zaf	Elementary and Special Education	COE
Johnston	Tony	Agriculture	CBAS
Melton	Tammy	Chemistry	CBAS
Cullen	Shaun	English	CLA
Evins	Mary	ADP	Honors
West	Kristen	User Services	Library
Boyer-Pennington	Michelle	Psychology	CBHS
de Clercq	Trevor	Recording Industry	ME
Aber	Jeremy	Geosciences	CBAS
Neely	Kari	WLLC	CLA
Noguiera	Soraya	WLLC	CLA

#### Future of General Education Workgroup, 2018-2019

<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>College</b>
Cochrane	Laura	Art & Design	CLA
Pantelides	Kate	English	CLA
Korstange	Ryan	University Studies	University College
Myatt	Julie	English	CLA
Grey	Joey	Health and Human Performance	CBHS
McCormack	Dawn	Associate Dean	CLA

## 2. Enrollment resolution

The MTSU Faculty Senate recognizes the challenges that MTSU is facing regarding enrollment in an increasingly competitive environment. While we applaud the tremendous efforts the University has made to improve retention, graduation and enrollment and recognize that these efforts have made MTSU a leader in this field, the fact remains that the number of students, as well as the number of full-time students, enrolled at the University has decreased by 13% over the past five years. The continued downward trend must be reversed. Though enrollment has also declined at many of our competing institutions, the negative trend at MTSU has been sharper than average.

Strategies and technologies for university enrollment have changed dramatically. In order to remain at the forefront, MTSU must systematically and objectively evaluate our enrollment, marketing, and outreach strategies. The Faculty Senate recommends that the University consider hiring an external enrollment management consultant to evaluate how MTSU utilizes its resources to recruit and enroll students in the most efficient and effective way possible.

### **3. Letter on the nonemergency cancellation of classes.**

Dear President McPhee,

On Tuesday, October 30 the MTSU community was informed that all classes meeting after 12:30 pm would be cancelled on Friday, November 2. Curtailing instruction on Friday would allow more people to attend the 2:30 Veterans Memorial service, a pre-game picnic for military veterans and current armed service members, a basketball scrimmage, and the 7 pm football game.

While we understand and respect the spirit behind this action – a commitment to supporting veterans and our sports teams – the process by which this cancellation was arrived at and communicated caused confusion among faculty and students and negatively impacted our academic mission.

An analysis of the university schedule by the Faculty Senate found that 139 classes and/or labs were meeting at or after 12:30 on November 2. Their combined enrollment was approximately 1,100 students. Faculty members teaching these classes had scheduled tests, visiting speakers, lab assignments, and more. The educational experience for all of these students was affected.

Based on our commitment to protecting the academic mission of the university through shared governance, the Faculty Senate makes the following recommendation for future cancellation of classes for non-emergency events.

Any nonemergency cancellation of classes should be left to the discretion of the instructor.

Sincerely,