



FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday, August 19, 2020
3:20pm – 4:50pm
[Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

Minutes

Attendees: Allert, Avery, Bagwell, Balogh, Barcelo, Battson, Bernhardt, Black, Bolton, Bouwmeester, Braunschmidt, Buckley, Canges, Carnes, Castle, Cho, Clark, Colton, Conroy, Davie, DeCino, Decker, Dickerson, Drake, Duber-Smith, EchoHawk, Erickson, Evans, Fayman, Ferrell, Fleck Dillen, Flores, Flynn, Foote, Frisbee, Fry, Goodnick, Griffin, Hernandez, Hill, Huang, Huber, Hughes, Jacobs, Jeffers, Jia, Katz, Kendall, Kiss, Klimek, Kolb, Kolts, Komodore, Konuk, Krentz, Krizman, Krueger, Lechuga, London, Macy, Maldonado, Martin, McGuire, Meloche, Merrill, Mollenhauer, Monsour, Mota, Murphy, Musimbi, Niemeyer, O'Hara, Ortiz, Padilla, Pantos, Predki, Ribble, Richard, Ritter, Russell, Russo Garrido, Sandoval, Schaeffer Fry, Schatz, Schepers, Schmidt, Schuenemann, Seedorf, Sell, Spitler, Svonkin, Thompson, Trentin, Trujillo, Wanberg, Weiden, Welch, Wright, Simmonds, Williams

Guests: EBuckland, NCachanosky, GDenn, CHardigree, EHinde, ANieto, EParmelee, CPhare, KPoelman, PPrestridge, SSchafer

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:20 p.m.

Faculty Senate President Katia Campbell welcomed Senators back and shared standard operating procedures for using Microsoft Teams. A moment of silence was held to acknowledge recently deceased members of the MSU Denver community, including Amy Eckert (Political Science), Wilton Flemon (retired, Chemistry), Joan M.C. Foster (retired, former CLAS Dean and Interim Provost) and Donald Wall (retired, History).

II. Guests of the Senate:

A.) **Dr. Janine Davidson**, President, acknowledged MSU Denver's three priorities or students, students, students and championed the necessity of having inclusive model with shared governance, celebrating the work MSU Denver did in leading COVID-19 response. She thanked President Campbell and the Faculty Senate for being involved in decisions regarding compensation, pay cuts, and furloughs. She acknowledged the impact of the pandemic, economic

crisis, racial strife and political polarization, and shared her belief that MSU Denver, with its student-centric model, will come out of this stronger.

Senator Krizman (Journalism and Media Production) asked Davidson how shared governance is addressed in this kind of situation. She shared the objective of taking as much input as possible in order to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. President Campbell added that it is about constant collaboration and knowing that though groups won't always agree, a solution can be found. Larry Sampler, Vice President for Administration/COO, added that at each level, they tried to be as inclusive as possible by including representation from all cohorts.

Senator Klimek (History) asked about preparation for the spring semester. Davidson acknowledged the desire to have a bigger footprint, safely, on campus in the spring by optimizing space. Faculty and students need to know what to expect, so decisions need to be made early.

Senator Klimek also asked about how faculty can best support Dr. Davidson in advocating for funding from the state. Though there likely won't be a lot of money, the best thing faculty can do is sing MSU Denver's praises of excellence: we do a lot with a little, imagine what we could do with more. The university is working on an economic impact study and the [MSU Denver Champions program](#) is a great recourse for more information.

B.) **Dr. Bill Henry**, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, took the floor to address additional questions.

Senator Katz (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) asked about class sizes. Henry acknowledged that this conversation started before COVID, as the current class-size model is not financially sustainable. Moving forward, there will be an increase in class size, relying on departments to make pedagogical decisions. Classrooms are being looked at for remodeling, both to increase physical space and update technology. Sampler added that it's not a push for larger classes, but about having the ability to offer larger classes. Jonathan McCann, Director of Planning, Design, and Construction, and Alex Staneski, Space Planner, have been tasked with working with faculty, chairs and deans to identify which spaces could be modified.

Senator Mollenhauer (Art) asked for more information regarding the decision to postpone sabbaticals. Henry acknowledged that it was an incredibly hard decision but that there wasn't budget to support sabbaticals this year, also noting the risks associated with travel right now. The intention is to return to full funding for sabbaticals as soon as possible. President Campbell asked about faculty who had been approved for sabbatical this year; Henry assured that faculty who were approved will not have to go through another application process.

Senator Spitler (Secondary, K-12 and Educational Technology) asked about CUPA. George Middlemist, Associate Vice President for Administration/CFO, shared that a project would be launched this year to look at CUPA for faculty. Peer-institution data is not as rich as it used to be, which limits MSU Denver's

ability to be competitive and set fair salaries. A consulting firm has been hired to work with leaders in Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs to craft a better compensation system for faculty with the hopes of rolling out a structure by the end of the year. The next step will be to identify funding if MSU Denver is below market. President Campbell asked about faculty going up for promotion and tenure this year. Middlemist acknowledged that by making the decision not to match CUPA, faculty who received their salary increase for promotion would be paid less than other faculty at the same rank, so a decision was made to bring recently promoted faculty up to the CUPA average of their peers from last year. This will continue to be a conversation with Senior Leadership and Academic Affairs as we look ahead to next year.

Senator Williams (Modern Languages) asked about faculty going through review this year and how they will be evaluated on disruptions caused by COVID. Henry noted that probationary faculty still have the option for to pause their tenure clock with respect to the 2019-2020 year, which would add an additional year to the tenure calendar. Faculty interested in taking advantage of this need to inform their Chair, Dean and the Provost's Office by Friday. Faculty who are going through review should document the impact of COVID in their course annotations and narrative. Henry assured that as Interim Provost, he would not penalize a faculty member who was accepted to present at a conference but was unable to due to a cancellation. Faculty should show documentation of the acceptance and acknowledge that they completed the research and peer-review. Henry also noted that a working group is looking at identifying long-term impacts on faculty and has been tasked with developing recommendations for how to address these disruptions moving forward.

Senator Duber-Smith (Marketing) asked about multi-year contracts for Category II faculty. Henry shared that the decision not to award multi-year contracts this year was based on the uncertainty around funding, and that they would be implemented again as soon as possible, based on budget.

- C.) **Dr. George Middlemist**, Associate Vice President for Administration/CFO shared information regarding the [university budget](#), specifically that the university is down 7% in resident enrollment and 20% in out of state enrollment. In addition to enrollment decline, cuts to state funding, only partially filled by the CARES act, and increased technology and Health Center costs due to the COVID crisis have led to a \$14 million reduction in revenue. Calculating in additional needs, including faculty promotions and PTR raises, considered contractual obligations, and budget reductions (both permanent and temporary) the university is looking at a total shortfall of \$3.8 million. Middlemist shared an overview of the operating budget, highlighting that faculty compensation makes up 40% of the budget. This year, it was reduced by 5.2% by eliminating fifteen vacant positions, one layoff, and implementing furloughs. The current recommendation is to use \$3 million from the E&G and auxiliary reserves to help balance the shortfall. Middlemist outlined how additional funding from the federal government and state has been split

between fiscal year 2020 and 2021, with majority going directly to supporting students.

Senator Svonkin (English) asked about which department was shut down. Interim Provost Henry clarified that it was the Recreation Profession Program, which includes Recreation Management and Therapeutic Recreation concentrations, and that closing the program was approved by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and Board of Trustees last spring. Senator Svonkin advocated against the shutdown of additional departments, that the entire university budget be shared, and that leadership look at other cuts before faculty salaries. Middlemist shared his support that budget records be available and accessible.

President Campbell received several questions regarding who was laid off, and why that information wasn't shared publicly. Middlemist acknowledged that in looking at budget cuts, departments and branches identified where they could restructure. Being laid off is deeply personal, which is why names weren't shared publicly.

Vice President Goodnick asked about the \$9 million in "permanent cuts" and whether those cuts could come back once the university is in a better financial position. Middlemist shared his anticipation of future state budget cuts, as well as his hope that there will be additional federal aid and increased enrollment/revenue. Interim Provost Henry clarified that the program that was discontinued was not shut down as a cost savings measure; the decision was driven by a prolonged pattern of low enrollment. Middlemist also shared that he is not advocating for cutting programs, specifically identifying that there is no desire to cut liberal arts.

Senator Katz asked about revenue and how it relates to class size and therefore faculty workload. Middlemist shared that he wouldn't want dollars to drive these decisions, but what is best for students, faculty and staff.

President Campbell reminded Senators that she, Vice President Goodnick and Budget Committee Chair Susan Schelble represent Faculty Senate on the Budget Recommendation Committee.

III. The [May 6, 2020 minutes](#) were approved by a majority vote.

IV. **Announcements and Update from Faculty Senate President Katia Campbell**

President Campbell shared that a [small group of Faculty Senate Executive Committee members](#) met over the summer to represent the faculty voice in decision-making conversations with Senior Leadership. Work included the recommendation of implementing voluntary furloughs before mandatory furloughs and advocating for furlough to give faculty the opportunity to engage their chairs and deans in conversations about taking time off or lessening workload. Other conversations included advising that faculty have the option not to include Spring 2020 SRIs in their review portfolio. Future work will include a deeper look at the use of SRIs.

Senator Williams (Modern Languages) took the floor to share that it was crucial that faculty be aware that they need to opt out of having their SRIs included in their

portfolio. An instructional email was sent from the Provost's Office last week and [Meredith Flynn](#), Associate Director of Teaching and Learning, can be contacted for more information.

Senator Spitler (Secondary, K-12 and Educational Technology) and Senator Krueger (Music) asked for clarification regarding pausing the tenure clock. Interim Provost Henry stated that any probationary faculty member, at any point in their tenure path, can elect not to count the 2019-2020 year towards their tenure clock, which adds an additional year to their tenure path. Senator Ortiz (Journalism and Media Production) asked about Post-Tenure Review (PTR). Ms. Thulson, Faculty Affairs, clarified that any faculty member due for PTR in 2020-2021 can postpone to 2021-2022. Dean Hardigree (School of Hospitality) noted that the August 21 deadline to notify of a pause in the tenure clock aligns with Year 3 deadline. Henry confirmed that the deadlines are the same, and offered to send additional clarification to faculty, clearly stating that the pause applies to all tenure-track faculty.

Senator Balogh (Engineering and Engineering Technology) asked about Summer SRIs. Currently, there is not an option to opt out of having Summer SRIs included in the portfolio.

V. [Resolution: Ensuring a Diverse Faculty at MSU Denver](#), first reading, Senator Lechuga

In the wake of the financial constraints, elimination of Cat II and III positions, and calls for equity and social justice in higher education, the resolution assesses the disparities in the representation of diverse communities and among faculty of color. It advocates for the support of departments such as the Gender Institute for Teaching and Advocacy, Africana Studies, and Chicana/Chicano Studies, who historically recruit faculty with anti-oppression values and who are often from, and engage in scholarship with, marginalized communities. Dr. Davidson has shared the importance of supporting university-wide systemic change through diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, and it is crucial for Faculty Senate to engaged in this work. It also asks the administration to track faculty diversity and broaden what is being tracked. President Campbell stressed the importance of the resolution and addressing these issues. Please email Senator [Lechuga](#) and Vice President [Goodnick](#) with comments.

VI. **Faculty Senate and University Committee Vacancies**

Ms. Thulson will send a follow up email to Senators to solicit membership on Faculty Senate Committees and University Committees.

President Campbell urged Senators to give students and each other grace when dealing with these difficult times and advocated for faculty to get involved in efforts happening on campus.

VII. **The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.**