

# WCU FACULTY SENATE MEETING

**Date:** October 30, 2020

**Time:** 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom meeting

**Facilitator:** Bessie Lee Lawton, President

**Type of meeting:** Scheduled Meeting

**Note Taker:** Dan Forbes, Recording Secretary

**Misc.**

**Attendees:**

**Members Present: *designated by an X***

Benedict, Kristopher	x	Major, Marci	x
Bolton, David	x	Mandel, Deborah	x
Brenner, James	x	Mishra, Vipanchi	x
Chang, Janet	x	Mraz, Megan	x
Cherry, Dan	x	Panichelli, Meg	x
Gary Childs	x	Pierlott, Matthew	x
Cooke, Laquana	x	Raskauskas, Jenn	x
Daltry, Rachel	x	Riley, Kathleen	x
Forbes, Daniel	x	Saboe, Matt	x
Guerriero, Tara	x	Sanz-Sanchez, Israel	x
Hill, Erin		Schugar, Heather	x
Houser, Mary	x	Scythes, James	
Junius, Premalatha	x	Smidt, Esther	x
Karahan, Selcuk	x	Studien-Webb, Gretchen	x
Kolasinski, Kurt	x	Tennille, Julie	x
Konigsberg, Lisa		Wade, Michelle	x
Lawton, Bessie Lee	x	Wiest, Julie	x
Lightner, Sarah	x	Wilbur, Veronica	x

Adjunct Faculty Rep: Ann Hiloski-Fowler	x	Student Govt. Assoc. Rep: Michaela Karlesses	x
Adjunct Faculty Rep: William Sawyer		Graduate Student Assoc. Rep: Montana Leaks	
APSCUF Rep: Julie Wiest	x	ROTC rep: TBA	

*Guests in Attendance: Lia O'Brien, Melissa Whidden, Orkideh Mohajeri, Stacie Metz, Selen Razon, Jackie Hodes, Michelle Kaulback, Stevie Grassetti, Stephen Litten, Kim Doan, Tracey Robinson*

## AGENDA ITEMS

Topic	Discussion	Action
Welcome to Senators, Proxies, and Guests (B. Lawton)		
Dr. Tracey Robinson, <i>Chief Diversity &amp; Inclusion Officer</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tracey: It would be an understatement to say this is a busy time in diversity! We are institutional members for the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, and signed another contract for two years this fall. We do track faculty and doctoral students.</li> <li>2. We are following up from the racial climate survey. We committed to continuing to do that survey every three years. It gave us wonderful data compared with other universities.</li> <li>3. We had faculty involved with sexual misconduct taskforce, we are in year two of the three-year strategic plan for that.</li> <li>4. There is also a three-year strategic plan for the university, for which diversity is a goal. One goal was training, engagement and education. The Cultural Institute for Cultural Competence and Inclusive Excellence is a pilot program, a more intense way for people to think about diversity and inclusion. There are six workshops out of which participants select four. There's also a capstone project/presentation/proposal, different for faculty and staff and students. The aim is to have some concrete projects and outcomes so we can see the difference the Institute is making. The capstone can also be done as a group; the Honors College is working on one for example. All the workshops are on-demand or virtual this year. Participants can continue to work on projects during the summer.</li> <li>5. WCU won the national HEED award, which is an institutional achievement in best practices for diversity and inclusion. The application changes each year to ensure that the achievement is timely—for example, dealing with the pandemic. We are hoping to continue to make strides and stay a recipient. Millersville also received it (and has done this since 2012), and only ninety universities received it.</li> <li>6. We continue to grow the Frederick Douglass Institute teaching fellowship program. Usually these fellows are completing doctoral work. We had a competitive applicant pool from many universities; many of the scholars were interdisciplinary. One scholar's application was reviewed by three deans! Dr. Raymond Adams and Dr. Kirstie Grant are recent fellows. We just made an offer for a new scholar for the spring. We hope to have a cluster of scholars on campus in the future.</li> <li>7. We had a town hall on Title IX regulations. There are new changes that will be important. We are excited to have brought new individuals on as deputy Title IX coordinators.</li> <li>8. There have been a wealth of programs this semester, and we have posted recordings of some of them on our Change Begins Here website.</li> <li>9. We have close to a 94% completion rate for required Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Training for Supervisors.</li> <li>10. We have been working on improving access for students with disabilities, so we have a program relating to Universal Design for Learning.</li> <li>11. We had 2273 participants in training programs last year (and would have had more had on-campus activities not been cut short in the spring). So far this fall we've had over 760 participants in remote events. Majority participants in fall are students, and faculty in spring.</li> <li>12. The White House has issued an executive order. It was initially very ambiguous. At no point did WCU halt any training, as we were in compliance. It only applies to training and workshops for employees, not to students.</li> <li>13. PASSHE recently published a diversity dashboard, so that you can see our numbers for the last ten years. Students are more diverse, and they want to see that diversity reflected in the classroom, but our students are more diverse than our faculty. We need to increase faculty diversity, both in recruitment and retention. Currently our Frederick Douglass Institute fellowship is contributing to extending our network. We started requiring search training for any faculty search, and hope to reintegrate with HR to reintroduce rigorous social equity involvement. We are working on unconscious bias training. The Biology</li> </ol>	

	<p>department has made diversity statements as part of their search processes. We are talking with HR about how to get a diversity statement into NEOGOV. We are asking departments to have diversity search advocates who will receive training. We will become a member of the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium. We also need to strengthen the pipeline, to push students to consider masters and doctoral degrees because industry is competing for those individuals as well as academia.</p> <p>Q: Bessie: The provost has talked about a sample diversity statement as a model. Where is that process?</p> <p>A: Tracey: We already have that. We have one we send, along with plug-in parts for what is needed. We can work with NEOGOV to make that simpler.</p> <p>Q: Kathleen: What are we doing concerning retention?</p> <p>A: Tracey: I had a conversation about mentoring. We have a mentoring program, and so does NCFED. We have affinity groups: we are going to reignite the Multicultural Faculty Commission, and that group will help with attention to retention. I have some ideas about Frederick Douglass Society and the LGBTQIA+ Caucus; we want to get these on the HR website, and make sure they are supported in this work.</p> <p>Q: Bessie: The Women’s Commission is considering doing focus groups on retention of faculty of color. Do you have a list of these faculty?</p> <p>A: Yes, the MFC is this list. We should have an Advance program at WCU, for women and faculty of color. CAH is working on this, but we need to also have work with STEM programs. Nikki Bennett and I have had conversations about this, as TLAC reports to Nikki.</p> <p>Q: Jackie Hodes: There is a Black Graduate Caucus, and an International Graduate Student organization; they will want to affiliate with these groups.</p> <p>A: Tracey: We are in early discussions about doctoral programs getting involved and strategically coming together to work on this. We hope to have something ready for next academic year.</p> <p>Q: Selen Razon: We had an applicant who has seen what WCU has been doing for diversity; it made me proud to see it!</p> <p>A: Tracey: We have very diverse applicant pools in many cases! Minority applicants tend to be attracted to public universities and this region. We don’t have a recruitment problem, but we have a hiring problem! Some of our processes are archaic gatekeeper processes. If these processes reduce access, this needs to change! There is a problem with adjunct faculty hiring in this regard. We will need to have hard conversations about these processes.</p> <p>Q: Bessie: We had international candidates who had visa issues. Do you have an update on this? Is there a way for us to figure out if a candidate can be hired?</p> <p>A: Tracey: I’ll take that question to HR.</p>	
Senate business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approval of Faculty Senate meeting minutes for 9/25/2020.</li> <li>2. Updates on meetings with President Fiorentino and with EVP/Provost Laurie Bernotsky and VP for Academic Operations/Deputy Provost Jeff Osgood <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Bessie: We asked about PASSHE. Today some colleagues at other institutions will be receiving retrenchment letters. It will not be as big a number as was expected; last fall it was expected to be 700, but it is now down to about 300 due to retirements. The provost suggested it may be closer to 150 due to efforts by the institutions. We have received ten requests to transfer from other institutions. IUP is eliminating its fine arts programs, and went from 15000 to 10000 students. If we take WCU out of the mix, PASSHE enrollments have declined by 30%. Institutions with low student-to-faculty ratio are not sustainable under these circumstances. The goal is a 20-to-1 ratio. The president says that WCU gets much lower appropriations than other PASSHE institutions, which he feels is unfair.</li> <li>b. Bessie: The PASSHE focus on integration will not affect WCU, as it was explicitly excluded. WCU is only included in discussions as a resource, and President Fiorentino says WCU is best served by having strong sister institutions. The integrated institutions will have reduced administrations. For example, each will have only one president.</li> <li>c. Bessie: Preferential hiring processes will affect us. Any position searched will get preferential hiring. Julie: Current searches (ad was posted more than 30 days</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

ago) are exempt. Anyone who has received a retrenchment letter is eligible for preferential hiring. If the department says that the candidate meets minimal qualifications, then the president will hire them. The APSCUF solidarity statement supports this. So if you have had adjuncts with masters degrees, that is minimum qualifications for your program. Bessie: This will be a two-year process, and each process has its own three-year clock. So it may be impacting searches here for the next four years.

- d. Bessie: We have good budget reserves, though we took a \$9 million hit in the fall. The president says we have a 300 FTE buffer for spring.
- e. Bessie: We cosigned a statement responding to student concerns expressed in the SGA survey and social media. There was to be a protest last Friday; the provost drove by and said she saw about eight people. So it's not clear how many students are upset, so they are going to do outreach to learn more.
- f. Bessie: The administration is looking into limited in-person instruction, for example in chemistry labs. They are also considering giving some students more opportunity to be on campus during the spring semester.

3. SGA feedback report from SGA representative to Faculty Senate Michaela Karlesses

- a. Bessie: How was the information collected? Michaela: Thank you for taking a look at the report! I and about ten senators from SGA arranged for a survey for student senators to fill out. We created subsections for overwhelming responses, ranging from synchronous/asynchronous work to mental health. We are working on an ad-hoc committee to advocate for students. I am leading the task force. We are hoping to create a survey of students to get feedback. And we want to bridge the gap between faculty and students; we recognize that faculty are under stress as well! The report is a work in progress, and was based on SGA senators' concerns. I will keep you updated on the task force's work. We are excited to represent student views from across campus.
- b. Rachel: If you can assess how the Counseling Center can meet students' needs better, that would help us! Michaela: Yes, we want to advocate for student life as well as academic concerns.
- c. Bessie: The Shared Governance groups met regarding the COVID-19 situation. We discussed this survey. We discussed the grading policy; there is a process for students to file a petition with CAPC; you have mechanisms for your voice to be heard, and should be addressed to Dr. Francis Atuahene. So there is a process for this! We also discussed confusion about synchronous and asynchronous courses. PeopleSoft will be updated to allow faculty to provide more information about what parts of the class are synchronous. We also discussed office hours. Faculty are trying to figure out how to fulfill contractual obligations in this environment. The provost's office is looking into best practices, and they will be sharing this information with faculty.

4. Other announcements

- a. Rachel Daltry: We are doing Campus Connect training next Monday, another the week before Thanksgiving, training to help identify students in distress.
- b. Bessie: The graduate dean search has been suspended until spring.
- c. Bessie: A few years ago the university had a childcare center, and it was closed due to budget concerns. We have brought this up with administration, shifting the idea from a childcare center to a "learning lab" that might help place students in education. The administration is open to this idea as a self-supporting entity (faculty and staff would have to pay to use it). Yesterday the provost asked us to proceed. I wanted to bring this up because there are senators who are interested in seeing this happen. Is there anyone interested in helping with this? Heather Schugar: We are excited about this! We've been charged with developing a survey to measure interest among faculty—how much are faculty willing to pay, etc. Kathleen: I'm in CESW, and this is exciting. I hope we center accessibility in the conversation, and make sure that low-income employees could access this. Lia: I wonder if we can also think about this as a research center, such as research into child development. Jackie Hodes: There used to be a demonstration school on campus, so there is a precedent. Heather: Sue Fiorentino may have attended that school as a child! Jackie: We may have some retired faculty who we could contact about this. Gary: Risk management and insurance will need to

	<p>be part of the conversation. It will need to be a separate entity. Heather: Since we've done this before, the administration were ready to talk to legal. Perhaps it needs to be through the WCU Foundation or something like that. Bessie: Would senators be interested in sending their children to this? Meg Panichelli: Yes! It is a lot of stress to manage childcare during the pandemic. Tara: Lab school is key. It should be heavily learning-based. Megan Mraz: We might want to consider working with other campus groups. Kathleen: It could provide field placement for teacher candidates with transportation issues. Jackie Hodes: It creates community among people bringing children to the school, faculty and staff. Melissa Whidden: The fact that there wasn't a center at WCU was sort of a turn-off for me as a new faculty member. Bessie: Who is willing to be part of this working group? (Meg Panichelli, Melissa Whidden, Selen Razon volunteer) Bessie: Who might be a good partner? Orkideh: Teacher preparation programs we have, anyone doing robust early childhood education. We should stay aware that these programs are precariously positioned when there are funding problems. Bessie: Thank you!</p>	
Liaison reports	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presidential Cabinet liaison – Senator Jim Brenner</li> <li>2. R2 Carnegie Classification Working Group – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez: This task force serves at the pleasure of the Provost, and we have strong Senate representation. We have done some research studying peer institutions that have undergone this reclassification. We're finding that it doesn't seem to have much impact. It is a consequence of things changing at these institutions, but the reclassification itself doesn't have big impact. We'll be doing some internal research among our constituencies for feedback about what impacts they will expect. I'll be contacting Senators on the faculty research committee about this. Next semester we will assemble the report.</li> <li>3. LGBTQIA+ Caucus – Senator Julie Tennille: Karen Dickinson and Steven Feldman were invited to generate bylaws, and we've renamed ourselves. We've been working on integrating into the structure of the university. We will be reporting to Tracey. First meeting at beginning of the spring semester, and we will have a web page.</li> <li>4. Campus Climate Intervention Team – Senator Erin Hill and Senator Kathleen Riley – Kathleen: We met on Thursday. Tracey Robinson talked about the student survey, they are getting responses right now. Seth Jacobson spoke about post-election resources and events to support students in processing it. We discussed the recent White House executive order, which does not apply to courses, but it does apply to workshops for faculty or staff; anyone doing this should consult with Tracey to talk through strategies for addressing this, since we do receive public funds. Rachel Daltry: It was more about mandated training, not voluntary.</li> <li>5. Faculty Mentoring Committee – Senator Vipanchi Mishra: Two events held this fall, one for new faculty and another for adjunct faculty.</li> <li>6. Sustainability Advisory Council – Senator Kurt Kolasinski</li> <li>7. ADA – Senator Matt Pierlott</li> <li>8. University Forum –</li> <li>9. APSCUF – Senator Julie Wiest: APSCUF wants to remind you that year one evaluation has changed; it will be a sit-down, qualitative assessment. Retrenchment is a big topic; at the department reps council we passed a statement committing to doing what we can to support colleagues at other PASSHE institutions. We also discussed faculty burnout, and there's a lot of pressure for everybody. Megan: Our department's understanding is that the faculty member can request or decline the performance evaluation. The language does not mention observations. Is there still a formal written report for that, or is it request-or-forgo? Julie: You are right; the department can only request formal report if there is concern. There should be an observation, but it should not in writing unless it is being done formally. [Correction 11/5: Senator Julie Wiest: "I misspoke in the Senate meeting regarding the observation for Year 1 probationary faculty. This is correct: Although there does not need to be a formal evaluation, the observation should be done as usual, including putting it on paper with signatures. The observation change is just that it now will be included in the Year 2 evaluation (since there isn't a Year 1 evaluation, unless one is requested)."]</li> <li>10. Multicultural Faculty Commission (MFC) – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez</li> <li>11. Council for Diversity, Inclusion and Academic Excellence –</li> </ol>	

	<p>12. Budget Review Committee – Senator Kurt Kolasinski</p> <p>13. President’s Commission on the Status of Women – Senator Kathleen Riley</p> <p>14. Student Government Association – Michaela Karlesses</p> <p>15. Graduate Student Association – Montana Leaks</p> <p>16. LMS Advisory Committee – Senator Dan Forbes</p> <p>17. Strategic Plan – Senator Heather Schugar</p> <p>18. Middle States Self-Study – Senator Heather Schugar</p> <p>19. United to End Racism –</p> <p>20. Alumni Association – Adjunct Faculty Representative William Sawyer</p> <p>21. Military Veterans Coordinating Committee – Senator Jim Scythes</p> <p>22. Technology Committee – Senator Erin Hill</p>	
Committee Reports	<p>Faculty Welfare/Ethics – Senator Deborah Mandel (Chair)</p> <p>Student Welfare – Senator Julie Wiest (Chair)</p> <p>Membership and Elections – Senator Julie Wiest (Chair)</p> <p>Communications – Senator Kurt Kolasinski (Chair)</p> <p>Research – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez (Chair)</p>	
Committees	<p>Committee meeting:</p> <p>Faculty Welfare/Ethics – Senator Deborah Mandel (Chair)</p> <p>Student Welfare – Senator Julie Wiest (Chair)</p> <p>Membership and Elections – Senator Julie Wiest (Chair)</p> <p>Communications – Senator Kurt Kolasinski (Chair)</p> <p>Research – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez (Chair)</p>	
Senate Exec Committee	<p>President: Bessie Lee Lawton</p> <p>Vice President: Julie Wiest</p> <p>Recording Secretary: Dan Forbes</p> <p>Corresponding Secretary: Kurt Kolasinski</p> <p>At-Large Members: Erin Hill and Israel Sanz-Sanchez</p> <p>Immediate Past President: Heather Schugar</p>	
	5 pm adjournment	
<b>NEXT MEETING</b>		
<b>Day and Time:</b>	December 4, 2020, 3-5 pm	
<b>Topics/ Presenters:</b>	TBD	