

West Virginia University at Parkersburg
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Full Faculty Assembly
January 6, 2022

Full faculty assembly – All faculty invited to attend meeting in college theater.

President Gilmer attended via zoom as requested by the Senate Chair to discuss various college issues.

Chair called meeting to order at 11:00 am.

Discussion by Chairman Aaron Crites:

- Crites explained why full faculty assembly had not met in the past 3 semesters due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Aaron Crites discussed that this is his last semester serving as Faculty Chair of the Senate. Elections need to be completed by the April 6th meeting. New senators and ACF rep should be submitted by this date. Aaron will meet with the new incoming chair at the May meeting to mentor the new Faculty Chair.
- The senate will continue to discuss Early College and its effects on enrollment and other factors. Senate will also discuss enrollment. In addition, the college may look to recruit from OVU (Ohio Valley University) due to its recent closure.
- Phased retirement continues to be unresolved and will continue to be discussed.
- The Senate will continue to discuss how the college defines faculty workload.
- The state will take over the Leave Policy.

Discussion by President Gilmer

- Dr. Gilmer discussed a WVU Parkersburg renaissance that will entail work to refocus on the intellectual component of college. He discussed that there has largely been a focus on workforce skills and programs and Early College. Dr. Gilmer said that he would like the college to also refocus on liberal arts values.
- Dr. Gilmer also acknowledged the work faculty did and continues to do through the pandemic.
- Phased retirement continues to be discussed. Dr. Gilmer asked the Board of Governors (BOG) about phased retirement and also took the issue to the CTC. All that is left is the meeting of the legislature to determine this policy. WVUP cannot piggyback on WVU's policy.
- Faculty leave was discussed. Dr. Gilmer mentioned that Southern Community and Technical College has a policy but most do not. He has approached the Chancellor and President, but there does not seem to be any interest at the moment. Dr. Gilmer discussed that the Human Resource Officer of the state said that faculty are better off without a formal leave policy because a college president has more flexibility in a case by case basis. We can have a leave policy. We can work with the new WVUP HR person to discuss this. Dr. Gilmer also said that a policy may not be as generous as the case by case

situations that have arisen in the past. He said that policies can protect bodies. President Gilmer will let faculty decide if they would like to continue to pursue a faculty leave policy.

Questions Asked by Faculty to Dr. Gilmer

- Charles Almond asked what the plan is for an updated Strategic Plan, which expired a year and a half ago. Dr. Gilmer discussed the need to reach out to different groups in the college community to work on this. An example he provided was the Early College Summit. He also mentioned possibly getting computer software for anonymous feedback. He also discussed bringing in a consultant to make sure it is not dominated by the administration.
- Gary Thompson asked about enrollment trends around the country. Dr. Gilmer discussed the number of traditionally-aged college students is declining, likely due to declining birth rates. The college needs to come up with creative ways to make college accessible and achievable for nontraditional students and the declining traditional student populations. Dr. Gilmer predicts that after the pandemic many people will need to be trained or retrained. We will have to tailor the college's marketing to bring in more students, in addition to working on the college brand in the community.
- Gary Thompson also discussed the link between the growth of the college and the growth of the community. Thompson asked if we could explore purchasing the OVU campus, which is being sold. Dr. Gilmer discussed that since the pandemic started we are trying to sustain what we have. We did see growth in the first year and a half after Dr. Gilmer arrived. Dr. Gilmer discussed looking ahead to making relationships with area businesses. He also discussed with various entities the situation at OVU. Dr. Gilmer made a point of doing what WVUP can do to support OVU's students, despite not being able to access the students' transcripts. HLC supported WVUP in allowing students to come to WVUP without transcripts and other documentation. The college has looked at the property. There is deferred maintenance and other legal issues with the property. The college is exploring this possibility.
- Aaron Crites asked how we can improve communication from the administration. Crites also asked if there could be an evaluation of administrators. Dr. Gilmer said Vice President's will have Q&As during the month of January. Dates will be communicated at a later date. Dr. Gilmer said that he is amenable to evaluation from the college community.
- Charles Almond asked, in the interest of communication, what the rationale is of putting off a decision on how to deal with students who claim to have Covid-19 until it happens. Dr. Gilmer said the protocol remains the same. Almond asked what the college policy is about students with covid. Dr. Gilmer will speak with Academic Affairs about this. Dr. Gilmer supports giving faculty a wide latitude on dealing with these situations.
- Uta Hempel discussed faculty evaluations. Hempel said that in her classes only about 40% of students complete their faculty evaluation. Hempel asked how we can increase student evaluations of faculty. Hempel asked if we can incentivize students to participate in faculty evaluations of classes. Dr. Gilmer said he will think about this and possibly discuss this with the Student Government Association. Hempel asked if someone could make the faculty aware when student evaluations are going to take place.

- Charles Almond asked about pay raises for adjunct faculty and supplemental contracts. Dr. Gilmer discussed that the pandemic put faculty raises on hold. Faculty will receive an additional \$2500 supplemental contract for all full-time faculty.

BOG Update

ACF Update

No votes or actions taken during meeting.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.