

# McLennan Community College

## Faculty Council 2022-2023: April 2023 Meeting

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**MEETING DATE:** The McLennan Community College Faculty Council (FC) met Friday, 4/28/2023 at 9 am.

**LOCATION:** Faculty Council via Zoom video conferencing in Elaine Fagner's personal meeting room ID: 84348032179.

### **PARTICIPATING/ATTENDING MEMBERS:**

- Amber Bracken: Literature, Languages, & Communications
- Andrew Clayton: Government
- Anne Merchant: Science
- Bernard Smith: Science
- Bob Ammon: Physical Education
- Catie Capp-Hays: Mental Health & Social Work
- Crystal Johnson: Office Technology/HITT/Paralegal
- Cynthia Soll: Library Services
- Daelynn Copeland: Child Studies & Education, Human Services & Education
- David Choate: Health Professions
- Donna Mendoza: Health Professions
- Edgar Sierra: Music
- Elaine Fagner: Faculty Council President (FCP)
- Jarred Hankhouse: Criminal Justice
- Jan Robertson: CIS & Multimedia
- Jenna Hofer: LLC
- Jeremy Leatham: English (LLC)
- John Spano: Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Joseph Taylor: Visual & Performing Arts
- Laura Wright: Science/Faculty Council Secretary (FCS)
- Liz Painter: Nursing
- Mark Crenwelge: Mathematics
- Melody Flowers: Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Meredith Brown: Health Professions
- Michaela McCown: Science/Faculty Council Vice President (FCVP)
- Mike Campenni: Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Peter Olson: Visual and Performing Arts Adjuncts
- Raymond Kessler: Science
- Reid Makowsky: LLC
- Scott Bryant: Business
- Shelly Rogers-Sharer: Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Thomas Lowrance: Business Programs
- Yumei Wu: Mathematics

- Zachary Cleere: EMS/Paramedic

### **NON-PARTICIPATING/ABSENT MEMBERS:**

- Abriel Garrick: Adjunct – English
- Deborah Williams, HITT
- Jenna Warf: Nursing
- Jessica Zbeida: English
- Lacey Chapman: Sociology (Social & Behavioral Sciences)
- Lindsey Shelmedine Lungas: Emergency Services Education
- Shelley Blackwood: Associate Degree Nursing
- Tiffanie Elbrecht: ADN
- Tim Martin: Nursing

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### **MEETING AGENDA:**

#### **I. Call to Order:**

- a) Meeting was called to order by the Faculty Council President (FCP) at 9:00am via Zoom (Elaine Fagner’s meeting room 84348032179).

#### **II. Review and approval of March 2023 minutes from FY22 – 23:**

- a) A motion was made by Zachary Cleere motioned to approve the March 2023 meeting minutes and was seconded by Mark Crenwelge. A poll was conducted in person and via Zoom and was 100% approved.

#### **III. Old Business**

- a) Committee Reports (Committee Chairs/Members)

- Compensation Committee (CC) –
  - Scott Bryant said he hadn’t received feedback and took that to mean everyone was ok with the proposal
  - Dr. Benson came to talk to FC about several things
    - Dr. Benson said an HR task force has been created to handle issues, and faculty and support staff have representation. Jan Robertson, Mike Campenni, and Elaine Fagner are representing faculty on the task force. The HR task force started meeting in November 2022 and have several proposed recommendations, subject to funding availability and budget constraints.
    - New Faculty Evaluation system – Dr. Benson mentioned that they had purchased new software for faculty evaluation that will make the evaluation process easier. He said that Dr. Hills has been working with faculty to revise the faculty evaluation

tool, and that this will be uploaded into the new software next year.

- **Recommendation #1: Part-time/overload/summer schedule** – Dr. Benson said that the steps in the part-time/overload/summer salary schedule now match the steps in the full-time faculty salary schedule. For instance, if an instructor is M18 on the full-time schedule, they previously were paid for M12 if they had overloads or taught over the summer.
- **Recommendation #2: Workforce salary** – Dr. Benson said that there were issues with workforce faculty not being able to advance on the salary schedule, and now they are.
- **Recommendation #3: Staff Education/Longevity** - Benson said that staff now have a system to pay staff in terms of levels of education and longevity, whereas they did not before. They now get one-time payments per year for longevity, and another one-time payment for completion of various degrees.
- **Recommendation #4: Full-time Faculty Salary Schedule changes (longevity)** - Dr. Benson is recommending that for years-of-service steps 21-30, that the annual increment be the same as those for 0-20.
- Dr. Benson is recommending that for the full-time faculty salary schedule, the cap be removed for those who have been here for longer than 30 years at the Doctorate level.
- Dr. Benson said that those who have capped out on the salary schedule, regardless of degree level, will get a one-time payment each year in December for longevity.
- **Recommendation #5: Staff and Faculty Evaluations** - Dr. Benson said that instead of a probationary period for staff in their first year, that there would be evaluations during the first year to give new hires support and have documentation to make sure new hires are a good fit for MCC. Faculty in their first year will be evaluated in both the first and second semesters of the first year.
- He said these changes total \$500,000, and that he is working on getting this funded for next year.
- Crystal Johnson asked via Zoom chat about summer pay for program directors. Dr. Benson said that Dr. Hills is working on getting clarification for summer pay for program directors. FCP said they would follow up on this with Dr. Hills.

- Dr. Benson encouraged anyone who has questions about these changes to please email him.
  - FCP said that Dr. Hills told her it was okay to start telling faculty about these changes, even though official approval won't happen until August.
  - Meredith Brown asked if these changes are official or if the Board still needs to approve it, and if the funding was there to make these changes. FCP said that they don't need Board approval, they just need to approve the funding.
  - Mike Campenni said that these changes are pretty much assured, pending what the Texas legislature does and what the tax district does. He clarified that these changes do not involve what the Compensation Committee is asking for for the yearly raise, and that the leadership team did not seem surprised by the amount asked for in the CC's proposal.
  - FCP said that all of the issues the faculty representatives on the HR task force brought to the table have been addressed. She said that Dr. Benson was talking about fixing the issues with the salary schedule, and the funding for this is different from the funding for the cost of living raise the CC is asking for.
- Bookstore Committee (BC) –
  - John Spano said they will meet later today. The Committee found out that the Bookstore personnel changes are taking place on Monday, 5/1.
    - Melissa Willis will be the Course Materials Manager. Her email is [0482txt@follett.com](mailto:0482txt@follett.com).
    - Sonya Platt will be the Course Materials Marketing Manager. She will handle MCC, Baylor, and Ranger College. This change will take a lot of processes out of the store and make them more centralized. Her email is: [s.platt@follett.com](mailto:s.platt@follett.com)
    - Carl Thames will no longer be at the MCC location.
- Elections Committee (EC) –
  - FCVP encouraged FC members to sign up to be on the two ad-hoc committees over the summer, one for election procedures, and one for the new faculty evaluation process.
  - FCVP said they are working on finalizing the list of new FC members for next year, and that she will invite incoming FC members to sign up for these two summer ad-hoc committees.
  - FCP urged FC members to join these committees, and that the evaluation committee, and that the new evaluation is

launching in the next few weeks for staff, and that she wants to make sure that the appropriate changes relevant for faculty are in place by next academic year. She also mentioned that we as faculty can upload any supporting documents we feel is relevant to our performance, and that the evaluation is fair across all aspects of evaluation, student evaluations, grade distributions, etc.

- Melody Flowers said there is an issue with students rating professors, and doesn't want the student evaluations to be the main instrument in faculty evaluations.
- FCP said she and FCVP have been working with Dr. Hills so this doesn't happen, and that this is why the ad-hoc committee is so important.
  
- Policy Committee (PC) –
  - No news to report.
  - FCVP mentioned a request that was brought up to consider changing FC policy to standardize how often there is a leader from the workforce in the PC.
  
- Student Success Committee (SSC) –
  - No news to report
  - FCVP said the next meeting is next Friday, and she wants to look into other committees focusing on student retention, and that there is a lot of duplication of efforts but no communication, so she wants input on what these committees are, and make sure we're not duplicating efforts that are already happening.
  - Crystal Johnson mentioned via Zoom chat that Business Programs has a committee looking at this.
  - Daelynn Copeland mentioned via Zoom chat that Laura Wichman is heading a new Student Retention Initiatives committee.
  - Amber Bracken said via Zoom chat that Dr. Hills held a meeting involving several student success related groups and leaders, but had not included the FC subcommittee for Student Success. She recommended discussing this with Dr. Hills and holding those meetings more regularly.
  - FCVP said she wants to gauge interest in putting together a list of resources for the classroom for faculty to put into their Brightspace courses.
  
- Workforce Committee (WC) –
  - Crystal Johnson mentioned that they had been working on issues related to student conduct, and that there need to be clearly defined steps and outcomes for faculty when student conduct issues arise. She also said there needs to be a

clearly defined policy for when students make a claim about faculty members since faculty have been removed from classrooms without due process, and who determines when a faculty member is removed from the classroom, and what options do faculty have for appealing this process, especially if they are not tenured. She also mentioned the deans' offices are locked down now because of student conduct issues, and wondering what protections faculty have from students.

- o Melody Flowers asked if the grievance process that is already in place covers this. FCP said there is room for improvement, and Crystal Johnson said this process is not clear cut in the cases of faculty members.
- o FCP said several faculty members have had classes taken away in the past eight years, two of whom were adjuncts, without due process. She mentioned that they have been working with administration to make sure faculty have a fair opportunity to share their side of the story related to student grievances.
- o FCVP mentioned that since COVID, students are having a whole new type of issues than ever before and having not been in the classroom for two years, who do not know how to act or behave, or have more mental health issues than ever before. She said we need to be proactive about putting things in our syllabi to help protect ourselves, since these changes won't happen overnight.
- o Tommy Lowrance added that there are people at MCC who work in mental health, an emergency coordinator, the police chief, etc, and that all areas should work together to create a conduct policy campus-wide so that conduct issues are not dealt with in silos.
- o FCVP said she has seen a gap between faculty and staff, and that we need to strengthen that connection because they have many resources to help that faculty may not know about.
- o Catie Capp-Hays mentioned via Zoom chat that even when the syllabus is clear about consequences, administration does not back up faculty.
- o Tommy Lowrance said that a student who is being difficult is often afforded more protection than the faculty who are trying to educate the student, and this concern needs to be addressed.
- o FCP said this is exactly why faculty need liability insurance through TCCTA.
- o FCP said there will likely be an ad-hoc committee to look at this next year.

- Tenure Ad-hoc Committee
  - Melody Flowers said that she is putting this on hold since the Texas Legislature is still deciding whether to remove tenure, and that she will send her notes to FCVP to see if this committee will continue next year. She said that after doing her research, that MCC's tenure policy is pretty good compared to other community colleges in Texas.
  - FCP said that if SB 18 passes, the administration still wants to support faculty. SB 18 is to get rid of 2-year contracts, and MCC only has 1-year contracts anyway. They will implement a system that is similar to tenure so that we have the same protections afforded by tenure.

#### **IV. New Business**

##### a) Open Conversation for Faculty Council

##### a. Equitable Access

- i. FCP explained Equitable Access means that there will be a set fee per semester hour for students for their textbooks.
- ii. An FC member expressed concern over Follett's lack of willingness to provide students a calculator showing the total cost and whether opting out of Equitable Access would be more beneficial.
- iii. FCP mentioned that there is a calculator there, but a lot of it will be educating students on how to use this and making it transparent for students.
- iv. An FC member said it will fall on the shoulders of the faculty to educate students about whether to opt out.
- v. An FC member mentioned via Zoom chat that they had concerns about the price per semester hour increasing over time.
- vi. An FC member mentioned via Zoom chat that MCC doesn't actually need Follett, and that the poorest students are locked into using Follett because of financial aid, and this punishes the poorer students for being poor.
- vii. FCVP said someone asked in the information meeting if there was a way to automatically unenroll students if their costs would be lower to opt out, and that the Follett representative had said they could, but that it would increase the average cost for those who opted in.
- viii. FCP said that at the information meeting, Follett showed them a range of cost per semester hour for different institutions, and doesn't think the increases are likely.
- ix. FCVP said that she dislikes using Follett, and that they drastically increase the price on ebooks.

- x. An FC member said that as EA has only been around for a few years, it is hard to predict the pricing trends over time, and that if everyone decides to increase the cost of what they are requiring in their classes because of EA, that the overall cost will increase.
  - xi. An FC member said that in the past faculty have been discouraged from encouraging students to find cheaper books on Chegg or Amazon.
  - xii. An FC member said that in the EA information meeting, they presented some evidence that those who had their books at the start of class had higher completion rates than those who didn't.
  - xiii. An FC member mentioned via Zoom chat that it negates everything we've done for OER and lower costs. They said Follett is a business and does not make it easy for students if it won't make them money.
- b. Legislative Session Update:
- i. FCP said the funding bill will probably happen and that Dr. McKown will keep the campus informed of this.
  - ii. FCP said SB 16 is the CRT bill and colleges could be financially hit if they push these "beliefs" on students. She said this bill could have significant impacts on teaching across all coursework, and some courses will not be able to teach what is mandated in certain programs for certification and accreditation.
  - iii. FCP said that SB 17 will eliminate DEI or the ability to conduct DEI activities. She said this doesn't mean that services for people in those aspects at MCC will stop, so there will be a quick name change for that department.
  - iv. FCP said that SB 18 will eliminate tenure in institutions of higher education, and that several other states have passed similar bills.
  - v. FCP said to make a difference to look for the email from Richard Moore of TCCTA sent out on April 20 at 10:09 am, which provides information on wording to contact our representatives. She emphasized that contacting representatives must be done on your own time with your own resources (computer, phone, paper, etc), and that you cannot advocate as a MCC employee or a TCCTA representative when you reach out to representatives; however, faculty should identify themselves as a professor in higher education.
  - vi. An FC member said via Zoom chat that they would have to redo all the degree plans for their program.



- vii. An FC member said via Zoom chat that they have almost earned their DEI PD certificate and that it would be a shame to lose these programs.
  - viii. An FC member asked via Zoom chat if classes fall under the DEI bill and that it sounds like it is more specifically for using funding for DEI. FCP replied that was her interpretation of the bill.
  - ix. An FC member mentioned via Zoom chat that if the CRT bill is passed, mental health/social work might as well shut down.
  - x. FCP said that if the DEI bill passes, we will all be redoing our syllabi, and the institutional parts of the syllabi will have to change.
  - xi. An FC member asked via Zoom chat if administration would be open to fast-tracking tenure before September 1<sup>st</sup> for those who are tenure track. FCP replied that they have asked administration, and they are assessing this based on the outcome of the bill.
- c. Trends from the Faculty Council survey tool for faculty:
- [https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6Pt85J2daPWfWfc](https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Pt85J2daPWfWfc)
- i. FCP said they launched the new survey for faculty, and that they got some very good feedback. She said most of the comments were about the Tartan Café in the CSC, and that the comments will be elevated, and that the administration is working on getting food to them.
  - ii. FCVP said that one comment was about someone witnessing a faculty member treating a staff member very badly, and that she wants to emphasize the need for faculty to be more gracious to staff, and that both sides need each other, and to work to generate a healthy relationship with staff.
  - iii. FCP said that there is a historical perception from some staff about faculty pay, and Dr. Benson is trying to mitigate this to get staff on a more equal playing field with faculty in terms of education and longevity pay. She mentioned that staff have received the majority of the funding for the past eight years. She said that we need to show our care for staff, and to reach out to your supervisor first if there is an issue, and to keep a healthy relationship with staff.
  - iv. An FC member said that one thing faculty can do is attend more campus functions, such as coffee and conversation, and that the ratio of faculty to staff is very imbalanced. FCP said that faculty presence on campus is not as great as it used to be, and it has been noticed, especially by support

staff. FCVP said that it is hard sometimes to determine whether to spend that hour to attend those events, or to be helping students. An FC member mentioned that many times these events are during their class or office hours, which makes it difficult to attend.

b) Follett Equitable Access Representative:

- a. Roger Harvey came to the meeting to answer questions about EA.
- b. FCVP asked if it was possible to automatically opt-out if it was cheaper for them to. Roger Harvey said they can only automatically opt-out for all OER materials or if there is no textbook required for all classes that term.
- c. FCVP asked if they only need two textbooks that are not OER but are only \$10 each, they would not be able to be automatically opted out, Roger Harvey said that at this time that was not possible, but he could put a request in the system for that.
- d. FCVP asked if they had one OER class, but two that were not OER, Roger Harvey replied that it would be up to the student to opt-out, but it would not be automatic, they would have to take the initiative.
- e. FCVP asked if the automatic opt-out would increase the overall cost per semester hour, what the cost increase would be for MCC. Roger Harvey said that the max increase would be about \$1, since there is not much OER use on our campus.
- f. FCVP asked about annual increases per semester hour, Roger Harvey said he wrote the contract with MCC, and that the only way they can increase costs is if there's an inflation cost, unless there is an extenuating circumstance, such as instructors adopting many more books. He said that they give full transparency, so administrators can see who is costing more money for their courses. He said that he has reduced year-over-year pricing at some of his schools, and has only had one school where there was a price increase. He said that it is written in the amendment that the max increase can only be the cost of inflation, and it is written into the two-year contract.
- g. An FC member asked whether programs were able to opt their entire program out. Roger Harvey said that he has had that feedback from Workforce in particular, so they can exclude Workforce now, but they can work with campuses to adapt their model for certain programs.
- h. Roger Harvey said that if anyone has any questions or would like to set up a meeting over Zoom, he can be reached at [rjharvey@follett.com](mailto:rjharvey@follett.com)

- c) Transition of FCVP to FCP on June 1, 2023
  - a. On June 1, 2023, Michaela McCown will become the new FCP. Amy Antonika will be the new FCVP.

**V. Next Meeting date: August 2023**

- a) Michaela McCown will send out information for the next meeting date next academic year.

**VI. Adjournment:**

- a) Joseph Taylor motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Mark Crenwelge seconded the motion. A vote was given to adjourn the meeting, 100% approved the motion. The FCP adjourned the meeting at 10:31 am.