

# McLennan Community College

## Faculty Council 2016-2017

**MEETING DATE:** The McLennan Community College Faculty Council met Thursday, October 13, 2016, in MAC 304. President Andria (Andi) Ramon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**ATTENDEES:** Andria (Andi) Ramon, Becky Parker, Brian Johnson, Caleb Stroman, Cynthia McAdams, Erik Emblem, Felicia Gladden, Gail Wade, Heather Mattingly, James Gibby, Jenna Hoefler, Jennifer Black, Jessica Zbeida, Karen Garrett, Karen Weil, Kurt Chunn, Larry Salazar, Laura Hays, Lisa Lindloff, Liz Painter, Mandy Morrison, Marc Nicholas, Mary Sides, Melody Flowers, Meredith Heffner, Miley Pulliam, Misty Edwards, Reid Makowsky, Robert “Bob” Ammon, Sharon Kenan, Sholly Gunter, Sondra Dubowsky, Suzanne Baldon, Terri Barnes, Theresa Sparks

**ABSENT MEMBERS:** Becky Griffin, Donna Mendoza, Jon Fox, Leslie Henderson, Richard Pringle

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### MEETING MINUTES

#### NEW BUSINESS

1) **ISSUE:** Approval of Minutes

**DISCUSSION:** FCP noted that there was a minor discrepancy in a name in the minutes from the last meeting for Mary Sides. At the last meeting, there might have been some confusion about the Vet Tech switch to Allied Health and Agriculture to the Sciences. After clarification was given, FCP said that she would revise them and send them out via email after the meeting was over. If there are no objections, then the minutes will be confirmed by unanimous consent.

**ACTION:** FCP sent out revised minutes after the meeting. No objections were made. Therefore, the minutes were approved.

2) **ISSUE:** TCCTA Fall Leadership Conference

**DISCUSSION:** Kent Hoeffner, TCCTA representative for MCC, recently attended the TCCTA Leadership Conference. He could not attend the meeting, but submitted a summary of the findings to share with FC. FCP and FCVP were not able to attend the conference because of teaching conflicts. A report was distributed and discussed by FCP. First, dual-credit is expanding drastically. Legislators are in favor of dual-credit, but are worried about the rigor of it, especially with “in-house” instructors at the high schools. Secondly, guided pathways are being restructured here at MCC to align closer to the high schools, primarily due to the grant that MCC received for doing so. FCP noted that there

might be concerns that the high school and college might be more of the same, but rigor is being instilled into each dual-credit class to ensure standards. FCVP noted that undecided majors/occupations might be a concern for some students. A brief discussion ensued about some of the concerns about how to differentiate a high school course with a dual-credit course. FCP addressed these concerns by noting that pathways are a good way for a student to find out if they are interested in a particular area, while not wasting too much time into that area if it does not interest them. FCP noted that the legislature has asked everyone to reduce their budgets by four percent, but that TRS and ORP are secure. Kent had reminded everyone that liability insurance is an important commodity today. At Victoria College, despite having a tenure policy, their administrators wanted to have each faculty member sign a clause that they are an “at-will” employee, which was eventually turned down by the administration there, after a faculty backlash occurred.

**ACTION:** If there are any questions, contact Kent Hoeffner for further information.

3) **ISSUE:** Testing (SENSE, CAAP, & CCSSE)

**DISCUSSION:** FCP noted that there were questions regarding the recent administration of the three tests, primarily with how sections are selected to administer each exam. Dr. Brandon Moore mentioned that our scores are very good, especially in comparison to some of our institutions across the state. Dr. Moore noted that each instructor is supposed to be informed that they need to administer the exam before the semester starts, but last minute scheduling changes make that virtually impossible. Dr. Moore mentioned that he would like to see this go to an online format, so there is a push to move in that direction. Each semester, MCC has approximately 75-80 sections chosen for the CCSSE. Next, Dr. Moore discussed the three testing formats, including why there was a recent removal of some instructors from potential testing. He mentioned that the CAAP & CCSSE exams dictate which sections are to be administered, but after reviewing them with administration, they felt that too many sections were being asked to administer the exam. He said that if you were chosen in the spring to take the CAAP, he removed you from administering the CCSSE in the fall. As a result, some instructors were removed from the administering of the exams this semester. Our students are self-reporting that they are well supported here on our campus, which is higher than at other institutions. Dr. Moore noted that the combined amount of money spent on administering these exams is approximately \$15,000. FCVP asked Dr. Moore if the real problem is coming from CCSSE, which then causes a problem here, and trickles down. Dr. Moore said that they do their initial selections during the summer, but again, schedule changes between when they select and when classes are held, make this process difficult. Dr. Moore finished by noting that students could be given an exam multiple times, but that they have the opportunity to select that they have already taken the exam. Also, he mentioned that he would like to see a push for more part-time students taking these exams, since MCC has more PT than FT students.

**ACTION:** Contact Dr. Moore if you have any additional questions or concerns.

4) **ISSUE:** Academic Freedom

**DISCUSSION:** FCP stated that a faculty member stumbled across an article regarding a lawsuit over academic freedom, this person began to investigate MCC’s current policy on academic freedom. FCP showed the current policy to the FC for a discussion. FCVP asked

if the instructor has the same rights as the students in the classroom. FCP asked hypothetically if writing an editorial in the newspaper and addressing yourself as a professor at MCC would open up someone to possible retribution if comments were not approved by MCC. FCP said that the MCC policy does not explicitly support faculty, nor does it call a professor's academic freedom as a "right." FCP made it clear that there was a big distinction between "support" and "protect" as well. At Washington University in Saint Louis, they note that academic freedom is a *right* that is *protected* at that institution. There was a discussion on whether academic freedom and tenure need to be addressed in separate policies, whether the current policies need to be strengthened, a policy to protect all faculty members (including adjuncts), and whether we needed to support faculty members' involvement off-campus as well. FCP suggested that a committee be formed to investigate this in more detail. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Reid Makowsky, and later seconded by Karen Garrett, for a committee to be formed to look into the MCC academic freedom policy and give recommendations for any possible changes. A sign-up sheet for an *ad hoc* sub-committee for those that want to look into the matter more carefully was then passed around. FCVP noted that tenure helps to ensure that you have more economic freedom to say what you think without fear of losing your job, while also helping to improve society by speaking your mind. Karen Garrett mentioned in her area that the portfolio asks to list community service (*e.g.* teaching Sunday school at church) as part of the evaluation process. It was also brought up that MCC is part of the community at-large, so maybe it should be considered. FCP noted that portfolio requirements seem to vary from division to division, which complicates this process even further. FCP suggested a motion for a separate committee to examine the portfolio process. FCVP noted that if the proposed replacement of the four-year educational requirement gets approved, it is more essential that the portfolio process becomes more uniform across the board. A motion was made by Jennifer Black for the Policy committee to examine the portfolio process, which was seconded by Karen Garrett. A clarification on what was actually approved was made by Sholly Gunter. FCP and FCVP re-clarified what motions were passed.

**ACTION:** The sign-up sheet for the *ad-hoc* committee was sent around twice with no one volunteering to be on the committee. An email will be sent by the FCP to the FC members urging them to sign up, otherwise, the issue will have to be tabled until a committee can be formed.

##### 5) **ISSUE:** Faculty Delineation

**DISCUSSION:** FCP presented the information, received directly from Human Resources, about how many full-time versus part-time instructors there are on campus this semester. A discussion about the number of total faculty members (394) in the fall 2016 semester was brought up by FCP. The number of current full-time faculty members is 216, with 122 being tenured, 43 on the tenure-track, and 51 being tenure-eligible. 178 faculty members are adjunct instructors, who represent 45% of the faculty members, but only teach 35% of the sections this semester. A question was asked about how full-time temporary instructors fit into these numbers. FCVP noted that there might be a perception that tenure-eligible and tenure-track instructors might not feel as comfortable voicing their concerns, since they have not earned tenure yet. FCP mentioned that last time, there was a concern that MCC was moving to a majority of adjuncts teaching our sections, but that is not the case.

**ACTION:** FCP will find out how many full-time temporary instructors are teaching this semester and will report back to the FC.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- 1) **ISSUE:** Professional Development Policy Recommendations (Kurt Chunn, *Ad Hoc* Committee Chair)

**DISCUSSION:** An ad hoc committee was formed during the last FC to look into altering the four-year educational requirement of faculty members. Several years ago, an *ad hoc* committee was formed in FC to do the same task. Essentially, the current committee essentially proposed a similar policy recommendation. The committee recommended that the four-year educational requirement be replaced by a yearly review of professional development between the faculty member and his or her division chair / program director during the yearly portfolio and contract renewal discussion. The FC approved the policy recommendation, after a motion was created by Sholly Gunter and seconded by Reid Makowsky.

**ACTION:** FCP and FCVP will take the recommendation to Dr. Hills and Dr. Balmos.

- 2) **ISSUE:** Policy Clarification – Elections (Marc Nicholas, Policy Committee Chair)

**DISCUSSION:** Marc noted that the Policy committee discussed whether to include adjuncts into the voting process for three elections: PD Committee, Faculty Council Vice-President, and the Minnie Piper award. A breakdown of the committee's pro's and con's were discussed by Marc. Additionally, there was a discussion among the committee to bifurcate adjuncts into "senior adjuncts" and "junior adjuncts," which was turned down. Ultimately, the Policy committee recommended that all faculty be allowed to vote in the three aforementioned elections. FCP announced that last year's FC Compensation Committee requested a seven percent pay increase. MCC President, Johnette McKown, dropped the FC Compensation Committee's request to two percent. However, the MCC Board of Trustees increased that to a three percent increase. This includes an equivalent increase for staff members as well. A motion was made by Sondra Dubowsky, and seconded by Misty Edwards, to change the previous policy to include "(which includes all faculty)" for future clarification. FCP reminded committee chairs to provide reports before future FC meetings.

**ACTION:** NONE

- 3) **ISSUE:** Service to College Opportunities

**DISCUSSION:** FCP announced that Service to College will be an important aspect in the future. She announced several possibilities to share with their colleagues. (1) There will be a Walk for the Homeless on Sunday, September 18, 2016 from 8:00am – 10:25am at The Meyer Center on Washington, (2) Constitution Day will be held on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 from 2:30pm – 4:00pm in MAC 111, (3) and the Visual Performing Arts Schedule recently sent out via email.

**ACTION:** Please attend these events, if possible.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Jessica Zbeida, which was seconded by Sondra Dubowsky. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Larry G. Salazar  
Faculty Council Secretary

### **Abbreviations:**

**FC = Faculty Council**

**FCP = Faculty Council President**

**FCVP = Faculty Council Vice President**