

McLennan Community College

Faculty Council 2019-2020

MEETING DATE: The McLennan Community College Faculty Council met Friday, 4/17. President Ashley Cruseturner called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Because of the COVID-19 lockdown, Faculty Council met virtually via Zoom video conferencing.

ATTENDEES: Amber Bracken, Amber Leibold, Amy Winslow, Andrew Clayton, Anna Iushchenko, Anne Merchant, Bailey Cole, Bonnie Sneed, Brian Johnson, Cynthia Wagner, Deanna Robinson, Debbie Williams, Dennis Clark, Gail Woodward, Helen Moore, Holly Towns, Ivanna Campbell, Jarred Hankhouse, Jessica Zbeida, Jim Terry, John Seawright, Justin Lawson, Kelly Parker, Kim McCoy, Marighny Dutton, Michele Davis, Otsmar Villarroel, Paula Unger, Scott Bryant, Stacy Kuehn, Susan Spooner, Tammy Thompson, and Yolanda Gonzalez

ABSENT MEMBERS: Bob Ammon, Larry Salazar, Linda Ratliff, and Michael White

GUESTS: Elaine Fagner

MEETING MINUTES

- Call to order
 - The FCP called the meeting to order and expressed his gratitude along with the gratitude of MCC's leadership team: *"Hats off to everyone! Hard times can bring out the greatness in a group and this crisis seems to be doing just that."*
- **ISSUE:** Consent Agenda Items:
 - **DISCUSSION:** The FCP reviewed the consent items to insure everyone understood the vote. He also addressed the issue of maintaining an annual history of FC accomplishments made every year, starting with the 2019-20 academic year, so that every new faculty council does not "start from scratch" every year.
 - FC voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda. Items included:
 - Acceptance of Faculty Council President's Summary of Academic Year 2019-2020

- Amendment to **Policy and Procedures Manual, Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Tenure, F-III-a:**
<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/F-III-A.pdf>
 - Agreement to forward our Attendance Drop Policy consensus on to Faculty Council 2020-2021 with the recommendation that they integrate the recommendations into policy with the support of the student services liaison committee and the VPI and academic deans
 - Agreement to authorize Ashley Cruseturner and a select committee of his choosing to pursue possibilities (over the summer of 2020) for a five-payment disbursement adjunct pay plan for Spring 2021 target with the relevant principals including Missy Kittner, Laura Wichman, VPI Hills, and President McKown
 - **ACTION:** Review Resolutions 1-3 attached to these minutes.
- **ISSUE:** Compensation Committee Report // Vote to Reconsider Previous Recommendation\
 - **DISCUSSION:** In the March meeting Faculty Council voted to approve the Compensation Committee's report. Before that report could be delivered, the COVID-19 crisis descended upon the college. In the wake of the new reality, FCP asked the Compensation Committee to reconsider their report based on new information. FCP also asked FC reps to consult their constituents to determine faculty sentiment in light of the many changes to our lives and the sense of uncertainty. Members of the FC Compensation Committee (FCCC) kicked off the discussion.
 - The FCCC Chair commented that he did not see any reason to rescind the Compensation Report at this time.
 - Another FCCC member added that all of the reasons that were outlined in the original report are still sound. She knows there will be financial repercussions to the pandemic, but believes we don't have enough information at this point. She does not see any problem with asking for a raise if it is possible.
 - Another FCCC member stated that she supported the committee's report. She also mentioned MCC will be receiving a large reimbursement from the federal government for students on financial aid, so lack of funds may not be an issue, although she acknowledged that no one really knows what the future holds.
 - Another FCCC member expressed that he believes the college can afford the raise request.

- Another FCCC member said that many faculty who do not support the raise are from families who have two incomes. She thinks the best part of the request is the addendum, which acknowledges the changes with COVID-19.
- After Faculty Council heard from all the FCCC members, other FC members not on the Compensation Committee then commented:
 - One said that she shared the report with her nursing colleagues and that most of them agreed with it.
 - Another confirmed his support of the committee's report.
 - The FCVP said that while he gave his support for this request in February, he no longer supports it. He is concerned that making a request now would make FC lose credibility. He feels the Board has always been good to faculty and not requesting it would demonstrate faculty integrity.
 - An FC member said that she discussed the issue with her division colleagues. Most supported not asking for the increase, but if we do, it should only be for staff.
 - A FCCC wanted to add to her earlier comments. She emphasized that our college does not have the same financial problems as private universities. If we are not impacted as negatively as some people think, we will be secure financially.
 - An FC member stated that he wanted to reiterate what the FCVP had said. He added that the optics are really bad to ask for a raise at this point. No one knows what our property taxes are going to look like, which is a major source of the College's budget.
 - Another FC member polled her faculty and everyone said that a raise should not be requested at this time. She read comments from her constituents. *"I think it sends a really selfish and arrogant message." Who right now is asking for a raise? The Board has always taken really good care of us. It would be perceived well if we don't ask."*
 - Another member also took a poll of her division. Most believed that asking for a raise right now would not be gracious. The money that the college typically receives from workforce programs has stopped, for example, cosmetology, healthcare labs, etc., The College is no longer charging for these services out of concern for the impact of COVID-19. In other words, there are many funds that were normally expected that are no longer in accounts receivable.

- Two other members polled their colleagues and most did not want to ask for a raise. One shared a powerful response from a constituent: *“Asking now makes it seem like we are out of touch with what’s going on. It will seem like we’re not paying attention.”* Lastly, one colleague whose income has been significantly affected by the pandemic also did not want to ask. They all agreed that we need to think about the College’s value: People First!
- Another member talked about her husband, who is an executive at another college. She shared that administrators all over the country are having to make plans if enrollment declines significantly. It would be a shame to lose other positions, which could happen if we are not prudent about our spending. Many positions are at risk. We must keep in mind that we may lose students in the future.
- Another member stated that he thinks it’s pretty short-sighted for us to push for a raise.
- Another member said that her family is experiencing lots of hardships. Her husband has not been working for four weeks. She doesn’t see asking for a raise when we have no idea what’s going to happen. *“Do we really want to be those jerks asking for a raise when others cannot even put food on their table?”*
- Another member agreed with many of the other comments and thinks it is probably not a good idea. *“Are we living on another planet? Doesn’t it seem like we’d be sending that message?”*
- Another member spoke with her colleagues, and they all feel fortunate to have a job and understand there are budget constraints and COVID-19 concerns.
- A FCCC member interjected perhaps we could find a good compromise.
- Another FCCC member declared her support for a compromise.
- Other comments included:
 - *“I have complete faith that the Board will give us something if they have it.”* She typically is big on compromise, but not in this situation.
 - Another stated that he is still curious why the original proposal needs to be communicated.
 - An FCCC member responded that the report should be submitted because it was work that was done.

- Another FCCC said that we don't have to send up the original report, but communicate the information that the work was done.
 - An FC guest and faculty member explained we want the President to communicate it to the Board.
 - An FCCC member added that it will be the CFO who will make the final decision about whether the college can afford raises.
- An FCCC member moved that the report with the additions go to the leadership team. The motion failed for want of a second.
- Asked whether Faculty Council held the power to change a formerly agreed upon resolution, FCP affirmed FC was not bound by any previous votes on this issue. Anything we pass today supersedes anything we passed previously. He asked for a motion to reflect our current sentiments
- A member said that we acknowledge that we voted for a COLA (cost of living adjustment), but we now reconsider that motion. (We would not forward the former request.) We would send forward a resolution that states our current position.
- A member said to include that we want to commend the leadership team for all they have done during this crisis.
- A member asked that we support staff in the motion.
- A member asked that we make clear that we trust the Board to make the best decisions in the moment based on the best information at the time.
- A FCCC member moved and another FC member seconded this motion.
- The motion stated that the FC voted in March to recommend a cost of living pay increase for ourselves (just before COVID-19 crisis hit our community). In light of all the unexpected and unforeseeable events, FC reconsidered. FC commends the Leadership Team and Board for their stellar leadership. FC commends and supports staff. FC strongly believes the Board will make the best decision concerning finances this summer as they budget for AY 2020-2021 with the best information they have available at the time. We trust and affirm their capacity for discernment.
 - With overwhelming support, the FC supported this motion; one member dissented.

- An FCCC member moved that the new report include the former report as an addendum. The motion was seconded.
 - The FCVP asserted that he and the FCP will communicate to the President and the VPI what happened. He wanted FCCC members to know that the work that had been done will be noted.
 - The vote passed by a large majority. The original report will be included in the new resolution.
 - FCP applauded FC for their principled votes and an extremely collegial discussion. FCP also praised the FCCC for great work under stressful conditions
 - **ACTION:** Review Resolution #4 attached to these minutes.
- **ISSUE:** Other Committee Reports
 - Elections
 - The Elections Chair reported that 160 faculty (37 percent) voted in the first round of faculty elections. All those who were nominated for the second round of voting have been contacted, and he is waiting on the replies from everyone.
 - The Chair reported that over 90 percent of faculty supported the idea of a standing workforce committee on FC. FCP hailed this development as an overwhelming endorsement of our workforce colleagues.
 - **UPDATE:** Congratulations to all our dear faculty willing to serve our institution. A list of faculty selected for various positions and honors: **Faculty Council Vice President:** Becky Parker; **Minnie Piper Stevens Professor:** the Great Nicholas Webb; **Sabbatical Leave Committee:** Melody Flowers, Elizabeth Mitchell, John Spano, Paula Unger, and Jessica Zbeida; **Professional Development Committee (Arts and Sciences):** Amber Bracken; **Professional Development Committee (Workforce/Public Service, Health Professions):** Karen Crump and Alexandra Shiu; **Tenure Committee (Arts and Sciences):** Ashley Cruseturner; **Tenure Committee (Non-Instructional):** Mikken Canham
 - Other Committee Reports (as needed): Bookstore, Policy, Student Success Liaison, Workforce, Evaluations Matter, PD Committee, and Proctoring

Paula Unger,
Faculty Council Secretary

**Abbreviations: FC = Faculty Council | FCP = Faculty Council President | FCVP = Faculty Council Vice President | FCCC
= Faculty Council Compensation Committee**