

# McLennan Community College

## Faculty Council 2022-2023: March 2023 Meeting

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**MEETING DATE:** The McLennan Community College Faculty Council (FC) met Friday, 2/24/2023 at 9am.

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

**ANONYMOUS SURVEY FACULTY COUNCIL TOOL:**

[https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6Pt85J2daPWiWfc](https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Pt85J2daPWiWfc)

**PARTICIPATING/ATTENDING MEMBERS:**

- Amber Bracken: Literature, Languages, & Communications
- Andrew Clayton: Government
- 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
- Donna Mendoza: Health Professions
- Edgar Sierra: Music
- Elaine Fagner: Faculty Council President (FCP)
- Jarred Hankhouse: Criminal Justice
- Jan Robertson: CIS & Multimedia
- Jenna Warf: Nursing
- Jessica Zbeida: English
- Jenna Hoefler: 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)
- Peter Olson: Visual and Performing Arts Adjuncts
- Raymond Kessler: Science
- Reid Makowsky: LLC
- Scott Bryant: Business
- Shelley Blackwood: Associate Degree Nursing

- Shelly Rogers-Sharer: Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Thomas Lowrance: Business Programs
- Tiffanie Elbrecht: ADN
- Tim Martin: Nursing
- Yumei Wu: Mathematics
- Zachary Cleere: EMS/Paramedic

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

- Abriel Garrick: Adjunct – English
- Anne Merchant: Science
- David Choate: Health Professions
- Deborah Williams, HITT
- Lacey Chapman: Sociology (Social & Behavioral Sciences)
- Lindsey Shelmedine Lungas: Emergency Services Education
- Mike Campenni: Social & Behavioral Sciences

#### **MEETING AGENDA:**

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

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

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

- a) A motion was made by Crystal Johnson to approve the February 2022 meeting minutes and was seconded by Reid Makowski and Amber Bracken. A poll was conducted in person and via Zoom and was 100% approved.

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

- a) Committee Reports (Committee Chairs/Members)
  - Bookstore Committee (BC) –
    - John Spano said to make sure to get adoptions in, and that IA is closed for the fall officially.
    - FCVP said there will be a representative to talk to faculty on April 11 about Equitable Access.
  - Elections Committee (EC) –
    - Reid Makowsky said they are in the process of getting the list of everyone who is moving on to the second round of elections.
    - Reid Makowsky said that while the election for FCVP ran smoothly, there is still ambiguity in how the candidates for the committee assignments should be included in the run-off, and that the EC will be looking into this in the future.

- Reid Makowsky said that the second-round ballot should come out next week. He also said that the current policy is that the second-round ballot must begin 10 days after the first-round closes.
- Policy Committee (PC) –
  - No news to report.
- Compensation Committee (CC) –
  - Scott Bryant said that the report has been updated to reflect the most recent numbers for inflation from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which came down slightly from the draft in February.
  - FCP mentioned her concerns from faculty about the local tax district, and asked Jenna Hoefler and Amber to clarify.
  - Jenna Hoefler said there was an article in the Waco Tribune about the tax district.
  - Amber Bracken said via Zoom chat that the Board voted to lower tax rates, since if they had kept them the same, it would have been a tax increase since valuations went up. [https://wacotrib.com/opinion/columnists/chris-woolsey-to-lower-property-taxes-we-must-vote-as-well-as-protest-valuations/article\\_85b35ff0-c00e-11ec-b73a-df8dfd34f468.html](https://wacotrib.com/opinion/columnists/chris-woolsey-to-lower-property-taxes-we-must-vote-as-well-as-protest-valuations/article_85b35ff0-c00e-11ec-b73a-df8dfd34f468.html)
  - Jessica Zbeida made a motion to accept the compensation committee report in its current state, and Catie Capp-Hayes seconded the motion. A poll was launched via Zoom, and 100% approved the motion.
- Tenure Ad-hoc Committee
  - Melody Flowers said that our current tenure policy looks like what other community colleges in Texas currently have. She thinks the major things to look for are after how many years of service tenure is awarded at other schools.
  - Melody Flowers also mentioned that the committee is on hold right now due to the SB 18 bill currently in the legislature that if passed, would not allow any faculty to receive tenure after September 1.
  - Laura Wright asked if the administration would be open to fast-tracking awarding tenure for those who are currently on tenure-track if SB 18 were to pass.
  - Melody Flowers said that the administration views tenure as important and does not want to get rid of it.
  - FCP said she and FCVP have been having this conversation with the administration. She said that if any MCC employees want to contact their representatives about the bills, that they are free to do so using their own resources (phone,

computer, email, and on their own time) and not as representatives of MCC or TCCTA.

- FCP mentioned that Fred Hills met with elected officials in Austin and that he doesn't feel that the tenure bill won't gain traction in the House, but there are several politicians who are for it.
  - FCP mentioned that another concern is that if someone with tenure comes to MCC from another institution, or goes to another institution from MCC, they would start as a new employee and not be eligible for tenure at the new institution.
  - FCP mentioned that the administration feels that tenure is essential as a tool for recruiting and keeping faculty, and is a recognition of commitment to the institution, and how students determine expertise of faculty. The administration feels it will affect big universities more than community colleges.
- Student Success Committee (SSC) –
    - No news to report, FCVP encouraged any faculty who had issues pertaining to student success to please bring them to the SSC.
  - Workforce Committee (WC) –
    - No news to report.

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

- a) Consideration of two Ad-Hoc working committees
  - a. Faculty Council Elections System (clarify policy to clarify vagueness of elections for PD Committee, Tenure Conversion Committee, Sabbatical Leave Committee, and Minnie Piper)
    - i. FCP said that last year, only the FCVP elections were addressed, the policy for everything else was not changed, and that changing it will require a full faculty vote.
    - ii. FCVP asked to confirm that the policy for professional development and sabbatical leave are not in the faculty policy and are under the purview of administration.
    - iii. Andrew Clayton said it is in the faculty handbook, and that we can recommend changes to this.
    - iv. FCP said that this ad-hoc group will make recommendations for the policy committee to look at in the fall and that we will probably have to work with other departments, such as professional development, and with the administration to make sure that FC has the autonomy to run their own elections.

- v. Andrew Clayton recommended making two committees, one to look at professional development and one to look at elections.
  - vi. Jessica Zbeida also agreed with having an elections committee.
  - vii. FCP said that the elections committee should also look at the professional development issues.
- b. New Faculty/Employee Evaluation system
- i. FCP said that the new evaluation system has been purchased by MCC, and that they will be formulating ours over the summer. FCP would like faculty to have a committee to have input into this process.
  - ii. FCP said that the new system will evaluate things like student retention, grade distribution, qualitative and quantitative student comments, and service to MCC. In addition, those who are evaluated on teaching, there will be documentation typed in to give faculty input, and everything will be digitized.
  - iii. FCP said we will also be evaluated on core values, like people stuff, which is why she suggested the ad-hoc committee over the summer to make sure faculty have input into this process.
  - iv. Reid Makowsky asked for clarification on people matter items, FCP said that it is how we treat colleagues, etc. FCP said they will no longer have the “always, sometimes, never” options, and have new verbiage for their Likert scale. FCP said it will be a more comprehensive look at how we are evaluated. FCP said there needs to be a way to make sure we know how the qualitative comments from student evaluations will be counted, as well as collegiality.
  - v. Jessica Zbeida said via Zoom chat that she agrees that faculty should have a voice in this process. She also said that “people” is another way of saying “collegiality” and to her, it reaches beyond colleagues to students and community.
  - vi. Melody Flowers said that in the past, the student evaluations that we currently have were originally going to be given without faculty input, and that faculty fought so that we had some say in them. She said this underscores the importance of having a committee to look at faculty evaluations this summer.
  - vii. FCP asked for anyone wanting to serve on either of the two ad-hoc summer committees, to sign up on a Google document. She said that she and FCVP will join some of the meetings to help.

- viii. Tommy Lowrance said that the committees should be objective, and to make sure the collegiality be clear in what this means and not a popularity contest, for instance, should there be a certain number of committees, etc. FCP agreed that currently much of our evaluations are unclear, and that it varies depending on the department.
- ix. FCP said that if the tenure bill passes in the Texas Legislature, everyone will be required to be evaluated every year, so that it is very important we have a clear evaluation process.
- x. FCP asked if there should be two or three committees, a third specifically for professional development.
- xi. Amber Bracken there is a lot of overlap between the elections committee and the PD issues, so that if there are two separate committees, they should at least collaborate.
- xii. Jessica Zbeida agreed, and said that a lot of how the funding is awarded is controlled by the foundation, and that there is only so much we can do about that. She said the elections part, and how things are decided like who gets funding to go to conferences, and the NISOD award election process, that the committee can make suggestions on.
- xiii. FCP said that there are two honors faculty can win each year, and that Minnie Piper is decided by election, but NISOD is decided by another group of people.
- xiv. FCVP said they have brought the NISOD issue to Dr. Hills, and that it will be changed next year, but that we need to keep a close eye on it. She also mentioned that there needs to be a better process for how proposals for PD sessions are chosen that the committee can work on.

b) Recognition of long-term adjuncts and OER faculty

- a. FCP said that she approached Dr. Hills about a way to recognize adjunct faculty members who have been here for a long time, and for those faculty members who have made significant contributions to OER materials.
- b. Jessica Zbeida said she thinks the service awards would be a great way to recognize them, as well as maybe have them on a podcast to highlight the work they have done if they are interested.
- c. Jessica Zbeida said she is in the OER cohort group and that many of the people in the group have made significant contributions. She suggested having time to recognize them, maybe on Scholar Day.
- d. Andrew Clayton mentioned that maybe Dr. Hills could have them onstage at the General Faculty Meeting to recognize them.
- e. Melody Flowers said that she feels long-serving adjuncts should get service awards at the service awards dinner.

- f. Daelynn Copeland mentioned that for those courses that use OER, students will still have to pay for textbooks because of equitable access, and asked if this diminishes the work of those who use and develop OERs.
- g. Jessica Zbeida said no because the OER work has already been done. She said we should ask if we are committing to low cost, or are we committing to open pedagogy.
- h. Bernie Smith said via Zoom chat that Equitable Access is a money grab by publishers because of OER and other free resources.
- i. FCP said she encourages everyone to attend the session by Dr. Hills about Equitable Access, that there is a way for students to opt out of Equitable Access per semester, and that it is not the publishers benefitting from this, it is Follett that is pushing for this.
- j. Melody Flowers agreed that Follett is who profits from Equitable Access, and that MCC receives money for this as well. She suggested that there should be a calculator for students each semester where students can determine whether opting in or opting out will save them money. FCP recommended sharing this idea with Dr. Christian. Melody Flowers said that they had brought it up to Dr. Christian, FCP said she would also bring it up to Dr. Hills.
- k. Crystal Johnson said via Zoom chat that Follett costs a lot more money for students, and that it seems like the poor students are punished because they must use Follett if they receive financial aid.
- l. Jessica Zbeida said via Zoom chat that there are some good calculators online related to OER and other textbook options, and that the THECB had information about this in its last OER report.
- m. Jan Robertson mentioned via Zoom chat that she wished she could use OERs for her classes but there are not good, up-to-date OERs for computer science.
- n. Crystal Johnson said via Zoom chat that her program will opt out of Equitable Access because their textbooks are cheaper than the \$27/credit hour each semester. She said that this will cause other programs to move to more expensive books, which will in turn increase the average cost.
- o. FCP said they will put together a list of adjuncts to recognize at the service awards dinner and asked for suggestions for the list.
- p. Peter Olson said that he feels there should be specific benchmarks on which adjuncts get recognized. Jessica Zbeida agreed with him via Zoom chat.
- q. Jessica Zbeida said that the adjuncts who develop courses, and that we have some adjuncts who are only here because they teach very specific courses that no one else can teach.
- r. Reid Makowsky said via Zoom chat that he agrees with Melody and that the calculator should be somewhere conspicuous for students.

- s. Jan Robertson said via Zoom chat that she likes the idea of receiving service awards.
- t. Jarred Hankhouse said via Zoom chat that he likes the idea of both years of service and teaching specific courses as criteria for recognizing adjuncts.
- u. Tiffanie Elbrecht said via Zoom chat that she said adjuncts should receive 5 and 10 year service awards, as well as for other specific criteria. Meredith Brown agreed with her via Zoom chat.
- v. Crystal Johnson mentioned via Zoom chat that adjunct recognition will put a lot more work on HR and that they are already understaffed.
- w. FCP encouraged all faculty to attend the upcoming session on this issue and voice their concerns, questions, and comments.

c) Updates from FCP

- a. New Faculty Council survey tool for faculty:  
[https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6Pt85J2daPWiWfc](https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Pt85J2daPWiWfc)
  - i. FCP said she sent this survey to FC first before sending it to all faculty. The support staff and professional staff council leadership teams have a similar survey, so FCP pushed to get one for faculty. The survey is anonymous.
  - ii. FCP said that FC leaders will check it regularly, and they can bring any issues that need to be brought to the attention of the administration.
  - iii. Peter Olson suggested that maybe we change the wording, because “survey” makes it sound like a one-and-done form, rather than something that can be repeatedly utilized.
- b. Centralizing scheduling and standardizing load assignments
  - i. FCP said there is now a document that standardizes how loads are applied to faculty, including regular loads and overloads. She said it also should have been sent to all deans, division chairs, and program directors.
  - ii. FCP said the guidelines explain how dual credit works in terms of a minimum number of students at a dual credit institution or a dual credit-only class. She said the other part outlines how Hyflex, F2F, online classes, etc. are assigned what to expect for the minimum number of students to make a class, and what the faculty member agrees to be paid for it. She said that this document makes it more transparent how faculty are paid for prorated classes.
  - iii. Crystal Johnson said that this document really just standardizes what is already being done and doesn’t really change anything.



- iv. Shelley Blackwood said via Zoom chat that the document didn't change anything for the ADN program.
- v. Melody Flowers asked for clarification on what is meant by department chairs. FCP said that some departments don't have chairs, they have program directors. FCP said that department chairs have an administrative role in which they are supervisors. Daelynn Copeland said that program directors are in control of the budget.
- vi. FCP said that she was advocating that this is shared with the faculty, and that program coordinators should also receive it since they are dealing directly with the scheduling. She said that it makes it more transparent how we are paid for loads.
- vii. Daelynn Copeland said it is important to ask when the numbers will be taken, because she had a faculty member in her program who had a drop in numbers after the first two weeks, and lost pay. She said the same thing happens when students are added during the first week of class.
- viii. FCVP said they discussed this with Dr. Hills, and that he said the Friday before class starts is when the salary is set, if students drop after then it does not decrease in pay. She said there was not a clear answer if students are added during the first week.
- ix. Jarred Hankhouse said that load sheets don't come out until 2-3 weeks into the semester, and that adjuncts don't learn that they are being prorated until 2-3 weeks into the semester. FCP said this document is to prevent this from happening.
- x. FCP said the superloading is addressed in this document as well. She said it is not clear if this will go into effect for Summer 1 or for the Fall.
- xi. FCVP said that if a student drops after the last working day before class starts, faculty is not penalized, but if students are added after this date, the load would be increased.
- xii. Daelynn said this is not an actual policy, FCP said correct, it is a procedure.
- xiii. Shelly Rogers-Sharer said that there was some question in her department if it should be shared with general faculty, however she believes it should be. FCP agreed that it is important that everyone understands how they are getting paid.
- xiv. Shelly Rogers-Sharer asked if this would start affecting base pay and affect evaluations for professors who are consistently not meeting loads. FCP said that this is addressed in the document and that she will bring it up to Dr. Hills for

confirmation so that someone doesn't realize too late they are not meeting their load.

d) Open Conversation for Faculty Council

a. Legislative Session updates

- i. FCVP encourages everyone to look at the bill tracker in the TCCTA website <https://www.tccta.org/billtracker/>
- ii. FCP screen-shared an overview of the various bills that are coming through the Texas Legislature this session.
- iii. FCP said she and FCVP put together some talking points for Dr. McKown for when she meets with elected officials. There are several bills in the Texas House and Senate that pertain to academic freedom.
- iv. FCP said there is no telling which of these bills will get passed, but many states are trying to eradicate tenure and limit what can and cannot be taught in college courses, especially dual credit.
- v. An FC member said that if these bills pass, they would no longer be able to use their textbook or teach their subject the way it needs to be taught. FCP said it puts personal liability on faculty members.
- vi. FCP said it highlights the need for faculty to speak up, however emphasized that it cannot be done in the name of MCC. Speaking to representatives must be done on a faculty member's own time, computer, phone, etc. or other college resources, and you can only represent yourself as a citizen, not as a representative of MCC.
- vii. An FC member even if faculty are in subjects that are not currently considered controversial, these bills open the door so that topics that may become controversial in the future can also be limited. Another FC member agreed over Zoom chat.
- viii. An FC member mentioned that even though this time those who already have tenured are protected, it opens the door in the future so that it may be taken away with future bills and that they will slowly chip away at tenure and academic freedom.
- ix. An FC member mentioned that part of the grant for their program involves awarding DEI certificates, and that this bill puts the classes required to earn this certificate at risk, and hopes that Dr. McKown knows that these programs are at risk when she is advocating to elective officials.
- x. FCP asked for emails from faculty members whose subjects and programs are threatened by these bills so that she can put something together for Dr. McKown immediately.

- xii. An FC member said that Dr. McKown contributes monetarily equally to both democratic and republican politicians.
- xiii. An FC member asked if the tenure bill passes, if the administration has thought about what the new structure would look like and if it would affect the salary schedule.
- xiv. FCP said that tenured faculty are paid according to the same salary schedule and still have an annual contract, however they have a year's grace period if their contract is not to be renewed, as long as they are not released for just cause. FCP said that just cause became an issue this past year and it is important for faculty to look at the just clause policy.
- xv. FCP said that the administration is committed to keeping tenure, however if the bill is passed, they will create something that looks like tenure, however it is unclear what that would be.
- xvi. An FC member said that they had worked for an institution without tenure before, and that the contracts were 3-5 years for those that had been there a long time. They said that tenure protects faculty in cases of just cause, and tenure also protects faculty if their program closes, they still need to employ them.
- xvii. FCP said that if any of these issues alarm you, to read up on these bills. She emphasized again that if anyone wants to reach out to their representatives about these bills, that you cannot do so with MCC resources or as a representative of MCC. You can only do so with your own resources on your own time, as a private citizen.

e) State of the College for Faculty and General Announcements (Elaine)

- a. A poll was given via Zoom to determine whether the next meeting should be held on April 14 or on April 28. 30% voted for April 14, 70% voted for April 28. Meredith Brown made a motion to move the meeting to April 28, it was seconded by Shelley Rogers-Sharer and Joseph Taylor seconded. The motion was passed.

**V. Adjournment:**

- a) A vote was given to adjourn the meeting. There were no dissenting votes. The FCP adjourned the meeting at 10:46 am.