Kent State Stark Faculty Council Minutes
January 16, 2015

I. Chair Norton-Smith called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

II. Secretary Moneysmith called the roll and determined a quorum was present.


Ex-officio: Interim Assistant Dean Bathi Kasturiarachi and Interim Dean Denise Seachrist

**Guests:** Clarke Earley, Angela Guercio, Rob Kairis, and Gwendolyn Purifoye

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Councilor Heaphy
Second: Councilor Hovhannisyan,
The agenda was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of minutes for the November 21, 2014 meeting

Motion to approve: Councilor Hovhannisyan
Second: Councilor Birch
The minutes were unanimously approved.

V. Chair’s Report

A. **Faculty Reviews.** Chair Norton-Smith began his report by thanking those members of the Council who have this morning participated in the first year reviews of our tenure-track probationary colleagues—along with our full professors—as well as those members of Council participating in the simplified review of our full-time non-tenure-track faculty colleagues. He also took this opportunity to deliver the cheery news that the Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Review Committee will meet at 10:00 on Friday, February 20th, to consider Full Performance reviews.

B. **“One University Commission.”** The work of the various subcommittees of the “One University Commission” continues. Chair Norton-Smith’s subcommittee, “Structure and Leadership,” is now crafting a first draft of its findings from the online “Civic Commons” forum and from other sorts of “listening posts.” Stay tuned.

C. **Retirement of Dr. Wanda Thomas.** The Associate Provost for Systems Integration, the Dean of the Regional College, and the Interim Dean of the Trumbull Campus, Wanda Thomas, has announced her retirement.
D. **University Handbook.** Chair Norton-Smith had reported in November that “the University Handbook is about ready for prime time,” so our Handbook Committee needed to gear up to fulfill its charge “of revising the Stark Campus Handbook in accordance with the University Handbook and the Collective Bargaining Agreement by the end of the Spring semester.” He learned at the December 8th Faculty Senate meeting that the University Handbook Committee is behind schedule, the University Handbook will not soon be ready for prime time, so our Handbook Committee is now relieved from the charge laid upon it last September.

E. **Assistant Dean Search.** The Assistant Dean Search Committee—ably chaired by Rob Kairis—will bring three candidates to the Stark Campus. Please consult Rob’s email concerning the scheduling for the candidates and to participate in their interviews next week.

F. **RCFAC.** The RCFAC has not yet met this semester, so there is no current report. Chair Norton-Smith did provide the Provost's response to a number of ongoing questions raised by the RCFAC and asked that these responses be added to the minutes of today's meeting.

VI. Dean's Report

A. **Update on Searches.** Dean Seachrist explained that her strategy on searches was to take a global look at campus needs overall. If it were possible to fill all campus needs, we might have as many as 40 searches, 20 faculty and 20 staff. Because that many searches is not feasible, we created a prioritized list and asked for 10 faculty searches. Concern about possible decreases in state funding and our campus enrollment led to only five faculty searches being authorized at present, with the possibility of more being approved depending on our 15th-day enrollment. We will also be hiring several new staff members, including another academic advisor, an assistant for the Recreation & Wellness Center, an internship and employer relations coordinator, and several positions related to the new Science Building.

B. **Physical Plant Update:** The Science Building is now about eight days behind schedule, but the timing is not yet a concern. Timelines are being established for moving faculty into the new building. There will be a monetary hardship to the builder if the building goes beyond 14 days behind schedule.

   We will be planting new trees around the recreational center, as the older trees were presenting a safety issue. There is new signage for the building.

   The name change for the Conference Center is in progress. Any materials that say “University Center” on them we will be using, but those are being changed out steadily. Changes in the physical wall, the signage, has been approved by the architect’s office and should be up within six weeks.

C. **Florence Center.** Nick Vasiloff from the Global Education office will be on our campus regularly to assist our students with Study Abroad programs. The whole team will be coming to campus on the 28th. We currently are focusing on the Florence Center. Dean Blank has given us 5, $500 scholarships; our campus will match them. Our students will be put into Stark sections in Florence at a lower cost.
VII. Assistant Dean’s Report

A. Information on Faculty Searches. Interim Assistant Dean Kasturiarachchi provided details of the searches now going forward. Because a full search was conducted for the position last year, we may be able to move the instructor hired for a one-year FTNTT position in music technology into a permanent position. We also have posted TT positions in Art, Communication Studies, and Education, all of which are replacement positions. We will be posting one new TT position in marketing soon. Meetings to charge the search committees will be held in the next two weeks. Search committee members need to complete some online training that can be accessed through Blackboard.

B. College Credit Plus. We are hoping that we will have some good partnerships with area high schools beginning in the fall of 2015. We now are waiting for the paperwork to go through to finalize these partnerships.

C. Assistant Dean Meetings about Online Course Scheduling. The assistant deans of all the regional campuses have now had two productive meetings to look at summer schedules across campuses, focusing on low enrollments in multiple online sections of the same course. A few adjustments have been made that should make the regional campus offerings more cost-effective while still meeting students’ needs.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. PAACC. Councilor Lloyd indicated that 12 travel requests have been made this semester. We seem to have adequate funds for the rest of the academic year.

B. Committee II. Councilor Sturr gave a status update, indicating that the committee had had productive discussions during its investigation of Goal #2 of the strategic plan, exploring new ways to recognize teaching and scholarship. The campus is already quite active, but we often don’t know what everyone is doing. It might be that we just need to open up the lines of communication.

C. Colloquium Committee. The second colloquium of the semester is set for Friday, February 20. Dr. Jennifer Cunningham and Dr. Jim Seelye will present. Posters advertising their talks are already on display.

D. Treasurer/Social Committee. Councilor Heaphy announced that the spring dinner will be held on May 1. Colleagues Roger Davis and Maureen Kilcullen, who retired in December, were unable to attend the December dinner. We will be making donations to scholarships in their names. Councilor Heaphy also indicated that both the coffee fund and the faculty fund need money.

E. Handbook Committee. Councilor Shepherd indicated that the committee has no report because it has no charge, as the University Handbook will not be ready in time for this year’s committee to look into revising ours. Chair Norton-Smith was able to remedy this situation by indicating that Cabinet recommended that the committee be charged with reviewing both Parts A and B of the Faculty Excellence materials to see if any changes would be useful, as we have recently finished the Faculty Excellence review process and the procedures and form are fresh in our minds.

Motion to so charge the committee: Councilor Lloyd
Second: Councilor Hovhannisyan
The motion passed unanimously. Chair Norton-Smith asked for a report at the March meeting. Councilor Shepherd requested that Council members send him comments and suggestions.
F. **Technology Committee.** Committee Chair Dr. Earley suggested that faculty contact him directly if they submit a request and do not get a response within a month. The committee had a request that was somehow lost, and regrettably the requestor waited an unusually long time.

IX. Old Business
None

X. New Business

A. **Gasper-Hulvat Tolling Request:** Chair Norton-Smith introduced Dr. Gasper-Hulvat’s tolling request and read the pertinent policy.

Motion to recommend approval of the request: Councilor Birch
Second: Councilor Shelestak

Discussion: Councilor Heaphy noted that the request is exactly in keeping with the policy, and additional councilors supported this statement.

The motion was unanimously approved.

A. **Discussion of DTA Protocol Committee’s Recommendations:** Chair Norton-Smith reminded Council that Dean Seachrist had charged an *ad hoc* committee to examine the protocols of the Distinguished Teaching Award and Award of Distinction Committee. The committee’s final report, submitted by chair Dr. Finer, had also been sent to the Council prior to the meeting.

Motion to endorse the DTA Protocol Committee’s recommendations: Councilor Heaphy
Second: Councilor Thacker

After a short discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. Chair Norton-Smith thanked the committee for their efforts.

Chair Norton-Smith then indicated that the Council needed to recommend faculty members to be on the committee. Discussion ensued, focusing on whether the committee should consist of former DTA members primarily or exclusively; the need for representation across disciplines; and the need to inform potential committee members of the time commitment demanded by service on the committee. It was determined that the process of recommending this year’s committee should begin with Cabinet bringing forth names. Chair Norton-Smith instructed Cabinet members to send nominations to him by Tuesday, January 20.

B. **Consideration of Faculty Members’ Emeritus Status.** Dean Seachrist explained that Tom Sosnowski recently asked about his emeritus status. Upon inquiry, she found that since 2009, the process has not been completed for any of our faculty. There could be as many as 10 retired faculty affected. Chair Norton-Smith indicated that he would like to rectify this situation as soon as possible and said that we might be able to take some action on February 20, when the RTP committee next meets—the body that considers emeritus requests on our campus.
XI. Announcements and Statements for the Record

Interim Dean Seachrist announced that May 1 is the date selected for President Warren’s installation.

XII. Adjournment

Chair Norton-Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:37 PM.
Response to RCFAC Questions:

1. **Budgeting for Bad Student Debt:** Although we are aware of the issue that faces Trumbull, our budgeting practices are conservative; meaning we would rather err budgeting too much than not enough. For instance, from FY 2009 to FY 2014, actual bad debt write-offs have averaged 123% growth annually at the RC’s. During this time our conservative bad debt budgeting helped the regional campuses overall by not presenting surprises at year end, for the most part. We agree that, as bad debt write-offs decrease, the methodology may appear very conservative. However, this methodology represents budget, not actual activity. The actual activity will be reconciled at year end and whatever actual write-offs were realized will be recorded and if the variance is positive it will be reflected. For instance, the following table represents actual write-offs compared to budgeted allowances for FY 2009 to FY 2014. When the difference is a negative number, it means that extra costs occurred that were not budgeted for:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>297,138</td>
<td>1,128,228</td>
<td>747,411</td>
<td>2,344,195</td>
<td>4,813,061</td>
<td>2,496,018</td>
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<td>Budgeted Write-offs</td>
<td>1,019,400</td>
<td>939,900</td>
<td>1,428,000</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>2,715,600</td>
<td>5,151,600</td>
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<td>Difference</td>
<td>722,262</td>
<td>(188,328)</td>
<td>680,589</td>
<td>(844,195)</td>
<td>(2,097,461)</td>
<td>2,655,582</td>
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Note in FY’s 2010, 2012, and 2013, the RC’s were hit with additional costs that were not budgeted. Although over budgeted in FY 2014, the RC’s realized a surplus compared to budget. Also, notice actual write-offs above. They have not been stable over the period. This fluctuation makes budgeting difficult and leads toward a more conservative estimate.

2. **Paying RC Service Fee on bad Student Debt:** Just like the colleges are expected to live by a budget, so are support units and central. Support unit budgets are derived from your total revenue budget. If this deviates, support units either have to cut expenditures or increase the percentage in the service fee. Gross revenue is much easier to estimate and utilize for budgeting than net revenue. As discussed above, write-offs have fluctuated each year. These fluctuations would lead to a fluctuating support unit budget, which is not practical. Further, charging the service fee on gross revenue incentivizes colleges to aggressively work their bad debt to keep net revenue as close to gross revenue as possible.

3. **Computing the Formulas for Summer Break-even Numbers:** The reason that SSI is not included is because the amount of SSI that will be received is not known. For Trumbull in particular, a 9% service fee is utilized in the break-even formula even though 14% is being charged. So, in essence, Trumbull is getting credit in the calculation that can be allocated to SSI that represents 5% of tuition. It is certain that some amount of SSI will most likely be realized. However, being conservative in projections ensures that, even if no SSI is realized, the course should break even. Note also that other expenses are not factored into the calculation. Most likely other expenses will be realized when teaching a course during the summer (utilities, supplies, etc.). The current calculation is conservative, easily explainable, and easily computable.