

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE
The University of Oklahoma (Norman campus)
Regular session – December 14, 2020 – 3:30 p.m. – via Zoom

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Note: The remarks of the Senators and others are summarized and not verbatim. A recording of this meeting is available by appointment in the Faculty Senate office.

The Faculty Senate was called to order by Professor Amy Bradshaw, Chair.

PRESENT: Allen, Anderson, Benjamin, Bergey, Bradshaw, Burns, Butler, Cline, Cryer, Cuccia, Dee, Dunn, Edwards, Fithian, Fuenzalida, Hambright, Hoagland, Hougen, Hsieh, Jervis, Jiran, Kornelson, Lai, Lifset, Lyst, McCarthy, Miller, Moore-Russo, Mortimer, Natale, Nollert, Olufowote, Parsons, Randall, Raymond, Remling, Rubenstein, Schmeltzer, Schwartz, Shehata, Sikavitsas, Steele, Stetson, Stock, Teodoriu, Tepker, Wang, Weaver, Worley, Zhu

Provost’s Representative: Jill Irvine, Lori Snyder
Staff Senate Representative: Crystal Ary
ISA Representative(s): Christopher Cook
SGA Representative(s):
Guests: Megan Elwood Madden, Stewart Berkinshaw

ABSENT: Muller, Riggs

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APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular session of November 9, 2020 was approved without revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following faculty will serve on the 2020-21 Academic Program Review Committee: Karlos Hill (African & African American Studies), Somik Ghosh (Construction Science), Mike Bemben (Health & Exercise Science), Marilyn Byrd (Human Relations), Elizabeth Pober (Interior Design), Leehu Loon (Landscape Architecture), Charles Warnken (Regional & City Planning), and Julie Miller-Cribbs (Social Work). The units to be reviewed are Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and the Honors College.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, by Prof. Amy Bradshaw

The Senate Chair's Report was distributed to all regular faculty members prior to this meeting along with the meeting agenda; it is attached. Prof. Bradshaw asked if there were questions or comments about any of the items in the report. There were none.

REMARKS BY PROFESSOR MEGAN ELWOOD MADDEN, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR FACULTY EXCELLENCE

Chair Bradshaw introduced Prof. Megan Elwood Madden, who has been Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) since August 2020. Prof. Elwood Madden said that the CFE is located in Old Science Hall, but they are doing everything virtually both this semester and next. She said that the mission of the CFE is to support faculty success and well-being at all stages of faculty growth and development. The CFE provides support and skill development to help faculty enhance teaching, extend research and creative activities, engage in their communities, and foster leadership in an environment that encourages a culture of collegial support, inclusiveness, and excellence.

The CFE core team includes:

- Megan Elwood Madden, PhD, Director, melwood@ou.edu
- Michele Eodice, PhD, Senior Writing Fellow, meodice@ou.edu
- Karen Horne, Managing Director, khorne@ou.edu
- Mauve Kay, Manager of Operations, mauve@ou.edu
- Joy Pendley, PhD, Associate Director-Community Engagement, pendley@ou.edu
- Hong Lin, PhD, Associate Director-Teaching, honglin@ou.edu
- Robert Scafe, Director, Writing Enriched Curriculum, rscafe@ou.edu
- Clara Smith, PhD, Associate Director-Research, clara.smith@ou.edu

The CFE has developed a Faculty Development Resource Request form to support faculty in their efforts to grow as faculty members at the University of Oklahoma. Prof. Elwood Madden asked faculty to fill out this survey at https://ousurvey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3QVLa8V14rhHziB to help the CFE provide the most relevant and timely support possible.

Prof. Elwood Madden stated that this year they will have their first group of CFE Faculty Fellows. The faculty members chosen and their primary tasks as CFE Faculty Fellows are:

Andrea Benjamin (African and African-American Studies), who will create resources to prepare faculty and students for community-engaged experiences.

Shane Brady (Social Work), who will build an infrastructure and a transdisciplinary faculty learning community emphasizing community-engagement.

Aparna Nair (History of Science), who will develop resources and programming integrating disability studies and inclusive pedagogy.

Julie Ann Ward (Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics), who will create a Faculty Learning Community to support research and creative activities in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts.

According to Prof. Elwood-Madden, the CFE's plans for Spring 2021 include:

- Survey -What topics and modes would be most helpful?
- Planning professional development series and curricula (New faculty, Mid-career, Proposal development, HIP)
- Networking and writing groups for new faculty
- High impact practices-engaging students online and in person
- Teaching tools (e.g., Hypothesis, Gradescope, Jamboard)
- Manuscript development and revision
- Proposal development
- Other professional writing: reference letters, job ads, awards
- Developing infrastructure to support faculty as they engage with community partners
- Develop tools to integrate faculty development activities across campus

Prof. Elwood Madden would like to remind faculty about the resources available from the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD), available at <https://www.facultydiversity.org/>. The NCFDD provides a variety of workshops and webinars.

The floor was opened to questions. Senator Shehata suggested that junior faculty be given a semester off to work on research and requested additional writing workshops especially in terms of transitioning dissertations into papers or books. Former Senate Chair Nelson noted that he appreciates all the work that the CFE is doing.

Prof. Butler would like short one-session workshops describing Jamboard, Gradescope, and Hypothesis. Prof. Bradshaw would like to see workshops for upcoming and potential program area coordinators and departmental chairs. Prof. Kornelson said that the Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) has been in discussion with Stewart Berkinshaw regarding a seminar on the university budget and understanding how budgets work from various perspectives, and suggested that such a seminar be presented through the CFE.

Senator Hsieh would like training and resources for faculty on how to write for the local press. Prof. Elwood Madden said that Senator Shehata might be a good candidate to do that presentation as he has been successful in that area. Senator Raymond would like more information given to junior faculty about applying for, receiving, and administering grants. She would like new faculty orientation to include introducing new faculty to the grant proposal development and support system at OU. Prof. Elwood Madden said that that is something that they have been including in the weekly new faculty seminar series and she welcomes any faculty who are interested to participate in those.

There were no further questions and Chair Bradshaw thanked Prof. Elwood Madden for speaking with the Senate.

REMARKS BY STEWART BERKINSINSHAW, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR BUDGET AND FINANCE

Prof. Bradshaw introduced Stewart Berkinshaw, Associate Vice President for Budget and Finance. Mr. Berkinshaw thanked the Senate for this opportunity and noted that he has spoken to the Senate several times in the past. He said that he recently changed roles at OU, moving from the Provost's office to Associate Vice President for Budget and Finance. Mr. Berkinshaw said Financial Services, the Bursar, Payroll in the Controller's Office, Risk Management which handles property insurance, insurance claims, and enterprise risk on campus, Research Financial Services (including Post Awards which is no longer under the office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships (VPRP), Budget Office, and the Shared Business Services Center all now report to him. His vision for his role includes ensuring effective leadership to support faculty and students on campus and that he would like to make sure that his staff is doing things as efficiently as possible, which he admitted may mean doing things differently than in the past.

Mr. Berkinshaw said his vision includes better training and development of the Budget and Finance staff. He also will be looking at staffing levels across the departments regarding efficiency, workload, and usage of information technology tools. Finally, he would like to improve their coordination on campus with other departments.

The floor was opened to questions. Senator Teodoriu asked if there are plans to reorganize Sponsored Research Incentives (SRI) and how overhead is calculated and distributed. Mr. Berkinshaw said that this question would be better for the VPRP, although he is personally not aware of any plans.

Senator Parsons expressed concerns about delays in IT purchases supporting grants. Mr. Berkinshaw said this requires close coordination with OU IT and also a clear definition of what is included in "post-award". Mr. Berkinshaw suggested that maintaining as small inventory of standard computers that could be issued immediately might be helpful.

Prof. Mashhad Fahes, Chair of the Budget Council, also asked about changes to the SRI program. She indicated that there seems to be a lack of clarity in the role of Post-award Services under Financial Services and the VPRP's office. Prof. Fahes appreciated confirmation that her concerns and those of her colleagues should be directed to the VPRP's office. Senator Jervis expressed concern about staffing instability in Post-award Services as well as Pre-award Services.

There were no additional questions and Chair Bradshaw thanked Mr. Berkinshaw for speaking with the Senate. Mr. Berkinshaw said that faculty members should always feel free to contact him with concerns and noted that he is working closely with the Budget Council.

FACULTY COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE (FCBC) PROPOSALS

Chair Bradshaw said that there have been three proposals made by the Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee (FCBC) for discussion and approval by the Senate. These proposals were discussed at the November meeting and we will vote at today's meeting. Chair Bradshaw gave the floor to Senator Natale who also serves as the Chair of the FCBC. Initially, he said that due to recent policy changes, we will not need to consider the renumeration proposal today, as it was based on a misunderstanding of recent changes to university policy and is therefore moot and withdrawn from consideration. Senator Natale said he would share with the senators the changes that were made.

Of the remaining two proposals, the first one was “COVID-19 Disrupted Sabbaticals”. This came from the FCBC as a motion and was seconded by Senator Butler. Secretary Hambright asked why Fall 2020 sabbaticals were not included and that there are some faculty that took a two-semester sabbatical for Spring 2020 and Fall 2020. Chair Bradshaw said that Prof. Lori Snyder from the Provost’s office was present and could answer questions about the specific numbers of faculty affected. Prof. Snyder said that about 40 faculty were on sabbatical during Spring 2020 and about 9 of those were two-semester sabbaticals for Fall 2019 and Spring 2020. The Provost’s Office felt that those faculty who had sabbaticals planned during Fall 2020 had the opportunity to make changes to their plans related to Covid-19. Chair Bradshaw consulted with Senator Natale and they took it as a friendly amendment to remove specific dates in the proposal. The revised proposal (attached) was approved by the Faculty Senate.

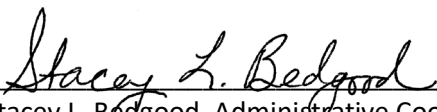
Chair Bradshaw then moved to the second proposal “Additional Protections for Faculty from COVID-19 Related Health Costs and Disability”. This came from the FCBC as a motion and was seconded by Senator Miller. Chair Bradshaw asked if there was any discussion before the vote. Senator Butler asked whether this is primarily a request to create this fund. Senator Natale explained that actually there were multiple elements to the proposal meant to help the administration understand the effects of Covid on long-term health care coverage. Senator Hougen expressed concern that there were specific references to when the campus would reopen, and he suggested we make it more general. Senator Natale said that when this was written those dates made sense. There was a friendly amendment made by Senator Hougen to change the wording under “Issue: Faculty and Staff Risks” from “other campus job duties in the fall” to “other campus job duties during the pandemic”. The revised proposal (attached) was approved by the Faculty Senate.

NEW BUSINESS


Chair Bradshaw said she would entertain any new business. There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m. The next regular session of the Faculty Senate will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, February 8, 2021, via Zoom.



 Stacey L. Bedgood, Administrative Coordinator



 K. David Hambright, Faculty Senate Secretary

Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Amy C. Bradshaw

November 10 – December 11, 2020

On **November 12**, I met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for our weekly FS Officers meeting.

On **November 13**, I attended the Oklahoma State Regents Faculty Advisory Council (OKR-FAC) General Assembly meeting in advance of my service (related to my FS role) on that council beginning in December. That same day, I provided Interim Provost Jill Irvine and Interim Vice Provost Lori Snyder with recommendations regarding a task force related to how units might use data in support of their benchmarking and strategic planning needs.

On **November 18**, I attended the Staff Senate Meeting. On **November 20** and **November 24**, FS Secretary Dave Hambright attended ORS AVP Search candidate interviews, as the representative of the FS Executive Committee.

On **December 3**, I attended the December OKR-FAC meeting, and later that day met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for the FS Officers meeting.

On **December 7**, I met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine. We discussed issues related to the faculty remuneration cap, which is the subject of a proposal from the FS Compensation and Benefits Committee introduced with FS agenda of November 9. FSEC understanding was that there previously was a policy-based cap on extra remuneration at 25% of faculty's reg salary, but that it was removed by the Regents from the handbook with other recent changes related to conflict of interest. We were curious about where the policy resides, if there is one, and whether / how to modify that practice. We briefly discussed whether and how this practice may relate to salary equity issues. We also briefly discussed: continuing problems related to the splitting of post awards from VPR; COVID-19 and spring semester concerns, during which she mentioned that the COVID-19 vaccination would shortly be available for OU's frontline health workers, with broader availability of the vaccine likely to be available during the spring '21 semester; and Equity and retention concerns particularly related to women and BIPOC faculty.

Later the same day, FSEC held our monthly meeting. We discussed recommendations for the Board of Directors for the Writing Center, and for the Ombudsperson Search Committee. We continued our ongoing discussions related to search committees, matters of equity and inclusion, representation of faculty not included under the "Regular Faculty" designation, and agenda items for the next FSEC meeting with President Harroz. Associate Vice President for Budget and Finance Stewart Berkinshaw joined the meeting. In addition to sharing with us his vision for his role, and we continued the discussion regarding the faculty remuneration policy and practice. He clarified for us that the original intent of both had been related to effort distribution, rather than monetary amounts. He expressed interest and willingness in continuing the conversation beyond that meeting. Following his visit with FSEC, we continued ongoing conversations with Interim Provost Jill Irvine. Later, Center for Faculty Excellence Director Megan Elwood-Madden joined the meeting to discuss developments in the Center for Faculty Excellence and to preview a presentation for the December 14 FS meeting.

On **December 10**, I met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for our weekly FS Officers meeting.

COVID-19 Disrupted Sabbaticals

Proposed by the Faculty Senate Compensation and Benefits Committee

Passed FSCB on September 8, 2020

Approved by the OU-NC Faculty Senate on December 14, 2020

Summary

The OU Faculty handbook states: “Sabbatical leaves of absence are among the most important means by which an institution's academic program is strengthened, a faculty member's teaching effectiveness enhanced, and scholarly usefulness enlarged. The major purpose is to provide an opportunity for continued professional growth and new or renewed intellectual achievement through study, research, writing, and training.”

Faculty on sabbatical that extended through the coronavirus pandemic experienced several unique disruptions that could not have been foreseen when they completed their application. These disruptions involved data collection with community research partners such as schools; differential accessibility to state and federal funding agencies experiencing mandatory shutdowns; access to research laboratory facilities and supports; and unexpected increases in caretaking (child, partner, elder). As a result, faculty on a sabbatical that extended through the pandemic have been unable to realize the benefits of uninterrupted time and focus on furthering their scholarship.

Issue: Timeline for Sabbatical Eligibility

The current policy indicates that after six years of service that eligible faculty may apply for sabbatical leave.

Proposal: Amended time for Sabbatical Eligibility

The Faculty Senate is requesting that the University allows for waivers from the current policy for those who were on either a year-long or a semester-long sabbatical during the coronavirus pandemic. Waivers could include:

- Being eligible for submitting a sabbatical application after three years.
- Course and service releases over a period of time that is negotiated between the faculty and their unit Chair or Committee A rather than a dedicated sabbatical period.

Additional Protections for Faculty from COVID-19 Related Health Costs and Disability

Proposed by the Faculty Senate Compensation and Benefits Committee

Passed FSCB on September 8, 2020

Approved by the OU-NC Faculty Senate on December 14, 2020

Summary

A number of recent publications have shown that patients who contract COVID-19 may suffer prolonged illness lasting several months, even if they were previously healthy and had no pre-existing conditions prior to infection (see sources below). Doctors are also realizing that some patients go on to develop kidney damage, neurological problems, cognitive decline, permanent lung scarring, and/or other complications that require extensive rehabilitation. The newness of the disease means that these different clinical profiles are still not well understood.

Issue: Faculty and Staff Risks

These uncertainties mean that OU faculty and staff who return to in-person teaching or other campus job duties during the pandemic will be at risk for an infection that could require extensive hospitalization and prolonged rehabilitation services. Some employees could end up permanently disabled. While faculty with pre-existing conditions have been given the opportunity to petition for adjusted job duties, there is no guarantee that young, healthy faculty will be spared these long-term complications if they contract the virus.

OU is among one of a slight majority of schools that self-insures employee healthcare. This model of providing health insurance is generally advantageous for cost control but remains untested as a model to address a 21st-century pandemic that will make the already unpredictable costs of healthcare difficult to project.

Proposal: Additional Protections: Funds for Out of Pocket Health Costs

The Faculty Senate is requesting that the University create a special fund for faculty and staff who may need assistance with out of pocket health costs (including co-pays and deductibles) in the 2020-2021 academic year due to COVID-19 infection. While several federal policy initiatives (such as the CARES Act) have sought to limit out of pocket costs for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic, this benefit is likely to expire during the pandemic.

Additional Protections: Enhanced Coverage for Short- and Long-Term Disability

In addition to catastrophic out of pocket costs, COVID-19 infection may result in long term disability. The current disability insurance offered by OU includes short-term disability (60% of salary, with coverage up to 26 weeks), and long-term disability (3 plans with variable coverage, up to 2/3 of salary, uncertain duration). The Faculty Senate is also requesting that the University either negotiate with an insurance provider to offer additional disability insurance with an open enrollment period or

set aside additional funds that could be used to bolster the payout of existing short- and long-term disability policies.

Stop-Loss Coverage Review:

Self-insured plans usually feature stop-gap coverage for employees whose costs exceed \$50,000-\$100,000. The Faculty Senate is requesting that the University review projections for current COVID-19 projected health care costs and consider those against the current stop-loss coverage provisions. Faculty should not face financial ruin to comply with the universities reopening plans.

Improving Faculty Confidence in Re-Opening

The Faculty Senate appreciates that the University has already invested significant resources in redesigning classroom spaces to encourage social distancing in ways that will protect faculty. We are confident that appropriate precautions will reduce the risk of outbreaks in the campus community. But at the same time, we encourage the University to demonstrate additional support for faculty by pledging to fund these initiatives. Faculty who return to in-person teaching should not have to face devastating out of pocket medical costs or lasting disability for complying with the University's re-opening plans.

SOURCES

1. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-12/covid-19-s-health-effects-can-last-long-after-virus-is-gone>
2. <https://www.vox.com/2020/5/8/21251899/coronavirus-long-term-effects-symptoms>
3. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-symptoms-long-haulers/>
4. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/06/covid-19-coronavirus-longterm-symptoms-months/612679/>
5. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-kidney-damage-caused-by-covid19>
6. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600\(20\)30222-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(20)30222-8/fulltext)
7. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/04/one-third-of-hospitalized-covid-19-patients-show-signs-of-delirium/>
8. <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/a-tsunami-of-dementia-could-be-on-the-way/>
9. <https://www.sciencealert.com/covid-19-can-target-the-entire-nervous-system-causing-dizziness-and-delirium>
10. <https://www.higheredjobs.com/Articles/articleDisplay.cfm?ID=498>