



Shepherd University Assembly Minutes
Spring Meeting 2021
Monday, April 12

4:10-5:55 p.m. Electronic Meeting

<http://www.shepherd.edu/assembly>

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88078317921?pwd=QnlKWlSR0lOS2M1SzJyRTNzYkYrZz09>

- I. **Call to Order: Assembly President:** Mr. Christian Benefiel
- II. **Remembering Dr. Scott Beard:** Christian asked that the Assembly take a moment of silence to remember Provost Scott Beard, who passed away Sunday a week ago. Scott's untimely passing is mourned by all.
- III. **Approval of Minutes of the Fall 2020 Assembly Meeting:** Mr. Christian Benefiel
Motion: Larry Daily, Jason Best MVP
- IV. **Elections**
 - A. **Shepherd University Assembly Moderator** (one-year renewable term) — Mr. Benefiel is incumbent. A Motion was made by Dr. Best to re-elect Mr. Benefiel for another term.
Motion: Best/Shurbutt MVP Nominations be closed, MVP
 - B. **Shepherd University Assembly Secretary** (one-year renewable term) — Sylvia Shurbutt is incumbent. A motion was made by Dr. Penland/Rice to re-elect Dr. Shurbutt for another term. Shurbutt noted that she would be happy to step aside for another.
Motion: Dr. Best/Meads to Close Nominations, MVP
 - C. **Shepherd University Assembly Parliamentarian** (one-year renewable term) — Dr. Christopher Lovelace is incumbent. A motion was made by Meads/Dr. Wing to re-elect Dr. Lovelace for another term. **Motion: Daily/Best to Close Nominations, MVP**
 - D. **Board of Governors Faculty Rep** (two-year term Renewable) — Dr. Elizabeth Rini is incumbent but will be retiring. Dr. Hanrahan nominated Dr. Tim Nixon; Jackie Cole was also nominated. A motion to close the nominations was made by Dr. Dailey/Slocum Shaffer. **MVP: Faculty only voted for this position and Dr. Nixon was declared winner and new BOG Faculty representative.**
 - E. **ACF Representative** (two-year renewable term) — Dr. Max Guirguis is incumbent. Dr. Guirguis was nominated to serve another term by Sam Green/Christian Benefiel **Shurbutt/Slocum-Shaffer moved to close nominations, MVP**
 - F. **ACF Representative Alternate Election** (two-year renewable term). Dr. Best is the incumbent. Dr. Shurbutt/Dr. Penland moved to re-elect Dr. Best for another term. Dr. Best suggested that this was an easy position and a good way to learn about the workings of the state and faculty involvement with the legislature, noting he was happy to step aside for another. There were no further nominations. **Motion: Dr. Shurbutt/Christian Benefiel to close nominations, MVP**

V. President's Report: Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix

The president's report dealt with the theme **Moving Forward Together in Uncertain Times**. However, she began with a tribute to Provost Scott Beard, a beloved colleague who passed away unexpectedly.

President Hendrix went through the **temporary reporting assignments** for everyone who had reported to Dr. Beard. Two permanent reporting changes were also included; however, in the coming year other permanent assignments will be sorted out. (See Presidents Report PowerPoint online). President Hendrix noted several guiding principles in these "uncertain times." These include **financial stability; healthy students, faculty and staff; HLC preparation; and the Strategic Plan**.

HLC Accreditation is being led by Dr. Jason Best, and we are on track. **The Covid 19 Dashboard** is up-to-date, with a remarkable record of low numbers for Shepherd. Dr. Hendrix extended thanks to Holly Frye, Kay Dartt, Chase Molden, Michael Mendez, and the nursing staff and community members who have been vigilant, consistent, and proactive.

Enrollment Management: Dr. Kelly Hart reported that we are down 28% in enrollment numbers, a trend that has been steady for the last few years and following a national phenomenon of downward college enrollments. This year we are behind some 500 applicants at this point in time. The good news is that that we hosted this past weekend a successful on-campus event for parents and students; other events are planned which will be useful in getting students to commit. Shepherd has invested over \$300,000 in marketing. VisionPoint Marketing is assuming this task, with a TV ad soon to appear.

Financial Overview: Pam Stevens shared the University goal to eliminate the deficit by year 2022. There will be no tuition fee rise for undergrads, but there will a slight increase for graduate students, one more in line with other graduate institutions. Room/Board rates will also remain the same. A higher rate for single occupancy, however, is inevitable. In terms of state appropriations, Shepherd will not be reduced by any substantive amount when all is said and done by 2022. "Cost Containment" will move forward with a range of projects which will bring energy savings. Travel Restrictions will also offer some savings and will offset losses from Auxiliary Services. The new copy machines have allowed for savings as well. Likewise, savings on hospitality and travel have offered some budget offset. Guaranteed energy savings contracting is the new process now used to manage expenses. Covid costs were certainly sizeable, but grants were helpful. Moneys requested from the Governor were rejected. Total expenses for 2020/2021 are \$3, 318,980.81.

Eastern Panhandle Economic Outlook 2021-2025: President Hendrix delivered a report to the legislature which presented the Eastern Panhandle region as faring best in the State. The East Campus project is moving forward and will dramatically change the look of the campus. New initiatives and partnerships include a Hospitality Program partnership with Glenmark Developers, an Aviation Program in partnership with

Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport Authority, a Risk Management Insurance Program, a Financial Education Program, and a Center of Excellence for Photobiomodulation, to train health care providers managing pain with low level light administration as an alternative to opioids. New Academic Programs have been approved as well; these include a BS in Nutrition, BA concentrations in Criminal Justice Law Enforcement Administration/Forensics, a variety of graduate certificates, a minor in Business Information Systems, and an Interdisciplinary Major in Appalachian Studies with BA/BS tracks.

Questions were open to the Assembly following the President's Report. Mr. Benefiel addressed concern about new technology on campus. Christian saw problems with our heavy reliance now on technology and the outdated campus labs and tech resources. Joey Dagg noted that advancements and improvements are constantly being made. Dagg also noted that at this point decisions about labs and new technologies are being considered that will impact our tech resources.

VI. Approval of Student Life Council Bylaw Amendments: Rachael Meads

Student Life Council Bylaws: Though changes look voluminous, most deal with title changes, including those of Holly Frye and Jack Shaw. Also changes in the college structure designations were included. These changes for clarity were generally innocuous but important; see Assembly website at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/student-life-council-by-laws>. **Motion to Approve: Chris Lovelace/Christian Benefiel, Debate MVP**

VII. Constitutional Amendment: Dr. Hanrahan

Article IV, Section 7- Establishing The Interdisciplinary Curricular Committee

“The Interdisciplinary Curricular Committee considers changes to interdisciplinary courses and curricula programs, taking the place of a college in the approval process. Policies that are passed by at least a 2/3-majority vote in committee shall be forwarded directly to Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Committee membership consists of one member elected from each department/school serving a two-year term and one representative of the library faculty serving a two-year term. The committee elects a chair from its membership. The committee does not meet unless it receives proposed curricular changes.”

Discussion: Dr. Best asked what would be considered interdisciplinary. There were a number of questions about this new committee, with Dean Rob Tudor generally supportive. Dr. Sylvia Shurbutt, whose APST proposal last fall for the Interdisciplinary BA/BS undergraduate degree appears to have inspired the Senate motion to change the Constitution, shared the process used, after stressing the importance of a strong interdisciplinary board to oversee the interdisciplinary curriculum, which for APST includes Environmental Science, Business, Leisure Studies, History and Appalachian Studies. Dr. Shurbutt noted that though somewhat ragged since it was the first, the process appeared to work well after the APST Board was asked by AH&Social Studies to carry the proposal to all three colleges involved. This college input yielded, she said, significant changes to the BS core component. Shurbutt

noted that the degree was a better degree for those changes, through the input particularly from Business and STEM via the ASPT Board representatives Dean Martz and Dr. Groff. Dr. Hanrahan noted that this assertion was subjective. Julia Tracy questioned the need for a new committee as an added layer and wondered about the motivation. Dr. Brasher and Senator Lovelace, however, said they thought an added university committee would be helpful to the process. Mr. Benefiel asked if the new Interdisciplinary Committee could overrule what a college wanted. **Motion to Close Debate: Christian Benefiel/Dr. Cantrell MVP**

VIII. Announcement of Shepherd University's 150th Anniversary Year: Rachael Meads shared the Official webpage link: <http://www.shepherd.edu/150th>.

She noted that seven working committees have been charged with developing plans and the celebration and the website, which gives details, including the three signature events in the form of a kickoff event, convocation event, and opportunities through theater and music. Call Hannah Brumbaugh or Monica Lingenfelter in order to participate. On April 15 the website goes live.

IX. Reports to the Assembly:

A. **Advisory Council of Faculty:** Dr. Guirguis noted that the 2021 Legislative session has ended. The most contentious debate was to eliminate state income tax, an issue which failed. The Governor was disappointed and is considering a special session. Bills allowing guns on campus were popular with legislators, but none saw action in either senate or house. SB657 passed senate and house and will impact higher education. The Student Financial Aid bill did not pass. See Dr. Guirguis's written report below:

- “1. A proposal to repeal the state's personal income tax failed.
2. Four campus carry bills were introduced this year, but none advanced to the floor for a vote.
3. A free expression bill has passed both houses and moved forward to the governor's office for signing. It prohibits public institutions from limiting expressive activities to designated areas of campus. It also prohibits unequal treatment of student organizations.
4. A bill mandating that all high school seniors fill out the FAFSA form was defeated in the House.”

B. Faculty Senate: Dr. Heidi Hanrahan

“The following issues were undertaken in Senate:

- COVID
 - The Senate worked to respond to the challenges of COVID, which included
 - discussions with the head of the Campus Health Task Force
 - discussions about hybrid/online teaching
 - procedures for reporting suspected cases
 - and online fees for Spring 2021 courses

- Evaluations
 - Rigorous discussion of proposed changes to Policy 19, particularly involving student evaluations.
 - A working group, working closely with Provost Beard, came up with revisions to Policy 19 that the Senate endorsed.
 - Connected to this, but not exactly directly, were many discussions about our existing student evaluation tool
 - A working group led by Dean Renninger and Senator Anthony developed (for the first time) a tool for the evaluation of online, asynchronous courses.
 - The Senate approved/endorsed this tool.
 - Members of that same working group have agreed to take on the larger task of reviewing and revising the tool used to evaluate other modalities.
 - That work will continue into next year.
- A working group was formed to address curricular development and changes for interdisciplinary programs.
 - That group recommended the formation of a committee with representation from every department and school to take the place of a college's endorsement in the curricular process.
 - We need somebody to take on this role—after the program, but before C&I, Core, or Provost
 - Since these programs touch multiple colleges, this seems like the right way
 - Faculty oversee curriculum; that's the way it works; this assures it will stay this way
 - The Senate endorsed this recommendation
- Some other highlights:
 - The Senate welcomed VP of Enrollment, Dr. Kelly Hart, to discuss the challenges and opportunities Shepherd is facing.
 - The Senate endorsed a resolution in opposition to SB 246, an iteration of the campus carry bill. That bill did not come to the floor, but we expect other versions to emerge in the future.
 - Finally, following a charge from the Advisory Council of Faculty, the Senate has begun work on a process for faculty evaluation of the Board of Governors. A working group has developed a tool, but work will continue into the next year.”

C. **Advisory Council of Classified Employees: Mary Beth Meyers**

The question of moving from classified to non-classified is a concern for ACCE, as they interact with the legislature. This issue appears to be a significant one for staff.

C. **Classified Employees Council: Cecelia Mason**

Cecelia Mason shared with Assembly some highlights from CEC, which meets monthly, with regular Covid updates from Holly Frye. She noted that CEC is updating its bylaws and was also concerned that the numbers of classified employees is declining, currently 140 out of 225 employees. Staff Scholarships will go out this year as well. Below is the CEC Assembly Report that Cecilia submitted:

“The Classified Employees Council (CEC) has met every month since April 2020 via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions. While CEC members miss interacting in person, conducting the meetings via Zoom has had one positive side effect—many more employees have been able to attend and participate in the meetings from all sectors of the campus community. Holly Morgan Frye, vice president of Student Affairs, has generously attended all meetings to provide updates on COVID-19 protocols and to answer questions, and President Hendrix has presented comprehensive updates on how the university was faring in the pandemic, so the meetings have provided a valuable forum for employees to learn what is happening and to have their questions and concerns answered.

The CEC is in the process of updating its bylaws (constitution) and is in the process of bi-annual elections. Currently there are approximately 140 classified employees working at Shepherd. There is concern that the number of classified employees is eroding, making it more difficult to engage people in CEC and creating a group of employees who aren't able to participate or benefit from representation and CEC programs. Numbers from last fall indicate there are 225 full and part time staff working at Shepherd, leaving about 85 staff who are outside the classification system. The number of classified staff has continued to decrease as some open job positions have been converted to non-classified status and as some classified employees have opted to leave the classification system for a variety of reasons. The CEC considered the idea of opening participation to non-classified employees when updating the bylaws but opted at this time not to proceed because state code authorizing Classified Employees Councils and Faculty Senates has not been updated to reflect changes that have been taking place at institutions across the state.

CEC once again will give scholarships to employees' children who attend Shepherd. Approval is on the agenda for the April meeting.”

E. Student Life Council: Rachael Meads shared that Bylaws revision was a main concern. See above and at the Assembly website: <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/student-life-council-by-laws>.

X. Adjournment Motion: Dr. Best/Jayne Angel MVP

Shepherd University Assembly Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Dr. Sylvia Bailey Shurbutt, Assembly Secretary