



Shepherd University Assembly Minutes

Monday, September 14, 2020

4:10-5:45 p.m. Electronic Meeting (Note Spring Assembly Cancelled Due to Covid-19)

Call to Order: Christian Benefiel, Assembly President

I. Approval of Minutes of the Fall 2019 Assembly Meeting (see minutes link at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/>) MVP (Electronic vote indicates 72% approval)

II. President's Report – Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix (please President's reports link at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/>)

President Mary J. C. Hendrix began by congratulating **Dr. Jeffrey Groff** for being selected **WV Professor of the Year**, an honor that Shepherd University, noted for its fine teaching, has garnered many times over recent years. Then Dr. Hendrix shared a presentation on **“Surviving Uncertain Times.”** Firstly, as Hendrix noted, Shepherd has not had to introduce salary reductions or let go of staff as have other institutions in West Virginia. Staying the course has been a goal—that is, keeping everyone healthy and the institution vibrant. Likewise, administrative focus has been on the upcoming HLC 10-year Accreditation Review, with a strong team having been put together toward that end. Aligned with this activity is the **Shepherd University Strategic Plan, with leadership for this endeavor provided by Drs. Beard and Kendig: refer to the plan at <https://www.shepherd.edu/strategic-plan/>.**

Meeting the COVID-19 Health Crisis: In terms of preparing for fall opening, **Holly Morgan Frye** lead the way with a team that has facilitated Shepherd's safe and expeditious opening of the new academic year. Preparations included testing more than 3000 individuals, readying classrooms spaces for social distancing and preparing dorms for single person status. Weekly COVID updates on the University landing page as well as mandatory face-masking and other measures for student, staff, and faculty protection. Holly shared statistics and noted one student being suspended for not adhering to COVID policy. Since the Governor will fund surveillance testing, President Hendrix noted that we should get back the \$400,000+ campus health investment. Shepherd is doing better than any institution in the State in terms of how we have managed the COVID crisis. Processes are ongoing to keep the campus clean and safe. Samples taken of surface area have all been negative, and this sampling will continue as long as the pandemic continues. Another health focus is in the air systems across campus. The campus **Health Task Force** includes the following working with **Chair Holly Morgan Fyre: Mayor Jim Auxer, Scott Beard, Rebecca Boehler, Joey Dagg, Marie DeWalt, John McAvoy, Valerie Owens, Alan Perdue, Elisabeth Sechler, Jack Shaw, Pam Stevens, Richie Stevens, Chauncey Winbush.** Dr. Hendrix also thanked individuals who developed **masking technology that has been used across the State: Kay Dartt, 3D Fabrication Manager; Chase Molden, Theater Technical Director; and Michael Mendez, Adjunct Instructor, Contemporary Art and Theater.** President Hendrix discussed the variety of platforms used for

instruction during spring and this fall, and she and **Provost Beard** thanked **Dean Renninger** for finding funding to provide massive faculty training over to meeting COVID crisis demands for creative and safe instruction. See “**Delivering Education in a Challenging Environment**” in the **President’s Report** at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/>.

Enrollment Management: Dean Richard Stevens talked about enrollment targets that have been reached or surpassed in many cases. Faculty and the admissions team did a great job reaching out to students. Dr. Stevens spoke about a range of recruitment strategies used this year and in the future. Digital and virtual recruiting strategies will continue to be important, as well as virtual advising and virtual orientation, all with the personal Shepherd touch that communicates friendliness and support. The result of this work was a total enrollment of 3,098, with new graduate enrollment surpassing its target by 121.5%. Dr. Stevens then talked about the team searching for the new VP of Enrollment Management, a task that will soon be completed. President Hendrix thanked Dr. Stevens for the excellent work performing such a range of tasks and his multi-tasking of late.

VP of Finance Pam Stevens Report, shared by President Hendrix: This financial update included no increase in tuition and fees, while it was noted that the state contribution has not gone up. Expenditures for keeping the campus safe exceeded \$400,000, which the Governor has promised to reimburse. For full budget details, please see the Presidents Report at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/>.

Office of Equity and Diversity: This new office is now located in Gardiner Hall. AVP Dr. Quita Howard-Bostic has worked with the HR Office to develop **Equity Training Guidelines**, and Dr. Howard-Bostic will be going to the various school meetings to share progress in this area. New Initiatives include **Title IX Diversity and Equity training** for faculty and staff and a new **Civility Code**, which includes CARE (Committed, Accountable, Respectful, and Evolve) initiatives. The Civility Committee is chaired by **Holly Morgan Frye**.

Tabler Farm Agricultural Innovation Center and Other Initiatives: Dr. Hendrix touted Tabler Farm improvements and the initiative to take the produce from the farm and share with the community. Likewise, the **East Campus Loop Development Project** will be a new initiative beginning in 2021, turning unused buildings into community and University investments. Finally, Dr. Hendrix noted that the **Transforming the Future** initiative is moving forward, at this point a good deal of behind the scenes work completed. Thanks were extended to **Monica Lingenfelter** for moving this fund-raising project forward. **Jack Shaw** concluded the series of administrative reports by talking about facilities and food services improvements. Dr. Hendrix closed this part of the Assembly meeting by thanking the faculty and staff for their hard work and heroic measures to keep the University strong and our mission moving forward during these difficulty and challenging times. For full details of these reports, see <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/>.

III. Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Accreditation Visit: Dr. Jason Best

The planned HLC visit is scheduled for Nov 2021, and this immensely important event will be the topic of university conversation in the coming months. Dr. Best talked about Title IV funding that our students receive and how this impacts our accreditation. This is a 10-year review Shepherd’s work that is essential for our continuance as a higher learning institution. During the campus visit, the HLC team will meet with every constituent group. Dr. Best briefly went through the process, with dates and tasks. Best was generally upbeat and positive, and he believes Shepherd’s position is in a good place for a successful visit.

IV. Constitutional Amendments: Christian Benefiel brought up the issue of constitutional amendments which now have been up on the website for almost a year. The following proposed revisions to the Constitution were discussed and then put forward for a University wide vote later:

A. Article V sect 4.j. Graduate Council Constitutional amendment: Dean Richard Stevens shared an overview of the changes which reflect the evolution of graduate studies and the growth of graduate programs. Christians asked for questions. **MVP: 64% electronic vote to approve to close discussions of the following changes.**

The following text will be deleted from the Constitution:

~~j.—The Shepherd University Graduate Council will be responsible for developing and implementing an ongoing strategic plan for establishing and administering all graduate programs instituted at Shepherd University. The Council will report to the Provost.~~

~~As part of its charge the Graduate Council will develop specific policy criteria by which graduate studies will be conducted on campus. Among others these include:~~

~~Review and recommend faculty qualified to teach graduate courses; Review and recommend graduate courses to be taught and notify the appropriate university committees;
Recommend programs to pursue and the best forum for their Implementation;
Recommend student admission and retention standards and policies;~~

~~Membership of the Graduate Council:~~

~~The chair of the Graduate Council will be the Dean of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. Other members of the Council will include:~~

~~Two members elected from each College within the university; and the Director of Teacher Education, or designee, ex officio.~~

~~The Graduate Council also reserves the right to add or eliminate additional members that they deem necessary for the development and implementation of new graduate programs at Shepherd University.~~

~~Term of Service:~~

~~As determined by the members, half of the membership will serve a two-year term, while the remaining members will serve a three-year term.~~

~~There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms served.~~

~~All members are voting members.~~

The following text will replace the deleted material above:

“Shepherd University Graduate Council – School of Graduate and Professional Studies

1. The Graduate Council, composed of faculty, staff, and students who represents the interests of the various graduate degree programs, Graduate Studies, and Shepherd University. The Graduate Council Executive Board is a division of the Graduate Council.
2. Graduate Council responsibilities include making recommendations to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies on the development and implementation of a strategic plan (competitive landscape, strategic approach, and value chain) for the School. The Graduate Council reports to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Specific Responsibilities of the Graduate Council are:

- Approve new graduate programs (degrees, concentrations, certificates) and to review intent to plan documents, proposals, and accreditation documents for new graduate programs.
 - Make and approve recommendations for graduate tuition and fees including course fees.
 - Establish and periodically review university-wide graduate policies. Approve additions, deletions, or changes to those policies.
 - Set and review criteria for graduate faculty.
 - Recommend the termination of graduate programs.
3. The Graduate Council Executive Board responsibilities include all regular, on-going administrative tasks associated with current degrees and certificates. These responsibilities include any not explicitly named as responsibilities of the Graduate Council.
 4. Members of the Graduate Council shall be constituted as follows:
 - Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, who serves as the chair (votes only if tie)*
 - Program Coordinators (one representative from each degree/certificate program)*
 - Graduate Admissions Counselor*
 - One faculty elected from each College. (A Program Coordinator may serve as a representative from their respective College.)
 - Registrar or designee
 - Director of Martinsburg Center and Graduate Marketing
 - Faculty Senate representative
 - Two graduate students appointed by the Dean. Attention paid to rotation of programs represented.

*Denotes Executive Board member

The Dean, in consultation with the Graduate Council and the Provost, may add or eliminate members deemed necessary due to the development and implementation of new graduate programs or termination of graduate programs at Shepherd University

All members of the Graduate Council are voting members. Quorum is defined as all Graduate Council members present at scheduled meetings including those who may be

present via technology. Electronic voting may be used for curricular decisions that may need to be decided before a scheduled Graduate Council meeting. Electronic voting does not preclude discussions necessary to make informed decisions. Electronic voting responses will be directed to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.

All members of the Shepherd community are welcome to attend the full Graduate Council meetings.

5. **Terms of Service:**

- Program Coordinators hold unexpired terms while serving in the role.
- Faculty elected by their respective College serve a two-year term with no limit to the number of consecutive terms. Program Coordinators may be elected to this role.
- Graduate students serve a one-year term with no limit to number of consecutive terms served. May be a part- or full-time student.”

B. Article V sect 2 Admin Council/SLC Constitutional Amendment see attached: Dr. Richard Stevens spoke first about the updates from Administrative Council/SLC. Then **Rachael Meads** noted that in the constitutional revision posted, representation of students was made more equitable—nonresidential and nonresidential—as well as college representation. Likewise, Holly Morgan Frye’s title has been updated and other updates were made for the Director of Student Activities 2A and 2E Director of Community Relations. Rachael and Holly mentioned other points reflected in the changes. **MVP** to close discussion of the constitutional change, with 62 yeas votes and passage to close discussion.

C. Article V sec 4. k. Institutional Review Board Constitutional Amendment: Dr. Jason Best Changes in the constitution were necessitated because of reorganization, which included changing name of schools to colleges. Other updating was noted. Dr. Best fielded questions and then a vote to close discussion and put forth the change was made. **MVP**

D. Article V Sect 4. m. Addition of Research Policies Management Group: Dr. Best This change adds section m. Defined below- Dr. Jason Best noted that as part of 2011 HLC evaluation, Exec Staff approved a number of policies but without mechanisms for administrative implementation. This proposal established a Research Policy Group that will review any proposals for efficacy. See the change in red. **“m. The Research Policies Management Group regularly reviews the University’s research policies to ensure consistency and currency, and ensures that any necessary changes or updates are made and communicated to the campus.”** A vote to close discussion and move forward the change was made: **MVP.**

V. Reports to the Assembly

A. Advisory Council of Faculty: Dr. Max Guirguis

Dr. Guirguis reported on the ACF retreat and other State faculty happenings. These included:

- 1) Shortening semester to send students home reported;
- 2) Code of conducts now to include health measures;
- 3) The small number of COVID cases reported across the State, with the exception of WVU, which was attributed to off-campus parties and events.

- 4) Commuter students' self-isolation, while campus students are kept isolated at the institution. Marshall reserves a dorm just for COVID positive students to isolate.
- 5) The Governor's office has been working with the WV Department of Education to implement the Kids Connect Initiative. This is a state-funded program that aims to provide free WiFi to areas with inadequate or no bandwidth around the state. As of this week, approximately 800 of the 1000 planned locations have gone live. The program is available to students in both K-12 and higher education.

B. Faculty Senate: Dr. Heidi Hanrahan

Dr. Hanrahan noted Chris Lovelace's yearly report on Senate accomplishments are on file for all to view. Senate met twice over the summer, to discuss COVID and BLM. Heidi asked all to read the update summaries that will continue after each meeting.

C. Advisory Council of Classified Employees: Mary Beth Meyers' report was postponed.

D. Classified Employees Council:

Cecilia Mason reported on Classified Employees Council elections with Jayne Angle serving as secretary, and Mary Beth serving as ACCE chair. Cecilia also noted that the staff scholarship and classified professional development funds were utilized to help staff and dependents. She praised the staff for the way the campus looked, as well as their work on COVID preparation and continued protection.

E. Student Life Council:

Rachael Meads reported on happenings last year and over the summer in Student Life, as well as on bylaws update (above). New campus groups were reviewed and approved by Student Life Council, and dining services, as well as building use requests were reviewed by students. Some COVID measures were placed in the student handbook as temporary addendum. **Rachael submitted the following report to articulate details of Student Life Council activities over the past year:**

"In the fall SLC completed a review of and update of their bylaws to bring them into alignment with the new Colleges of the University, new titles of the VP for Student Affairs, and to include more specific representation of student populations (commuter, resident, freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, transfer, and students at large).

Student Life Concerns addressed in 2019-20 included Smoking Cessation and the Tobacco-Free Campus initiative, campus safety, Campus Dining Services concerns, and policies for student group room usage and events. The Student Handbook committee revised the Student Code of Conduct for Clubs and Organizations, Fraternities and Sororities, and Professional and Service organizations. These were all reviewed and passed before Shepherd moved to virtual courses before spring break. This summer Temporary COVID-19 Addendums were added to the Student Code of Conduct creating new policies and operating procedures for students as well as student groups to comply with State, county, and Shepherd COVID-19 guidelines. All of these may be found on the Shepherd University Student Handbook website.

New Student Groups Registered: SLC reviewed and approved the following student clubs last fall: Rams Recovery Group, Campus Ministry International, Torrents, and Magic the Gathering Club."

**Motion to close the meeting by Acclimation: Christian Benefiel, Assembly President
Assembly Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Dr. S. Bailey Shurbutt, Assembly Secretary**