



DRAFT Shepherd University Assembly Minutes
Monday, April 10, 2023
Reception at 3:45 p.m. in Erma Ora Byrd Atrium
4:10-5:30 p.m. Erma Ora Byrd 117

- I. Call to Order** Call to Order – Moderator, Dr. Larry Daily
- II. Approval of Minutes of the Fall Assembly Meeting** – See Minutes at <https://www.shepherd.edu/assembly/assembly-minutes>. Approval by Acclamation.
- III. President's Report – Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix**

President Hendrix began by introducing Dr. James Taylor, new Exec. VP of the Foundation, followed by reviewing her agenda and introducing administrators who would give reports: Dr. Hart, Dr. Barton, and Sonya Sholley. Dr. Hart went over numbers all trending ahead of last year, which trended above the year prior. So enrollment bodes well. Marketing and recruiting has likewise been successful, with a total of 930 students entering in the fall. Regarding the 3E Enrollment Marketing partner, we are exceeding our recruitment goal. New Mission, Vision and Core Values, and we are entering into phase 2 of the marketing and branding for Shepherd. Most remarkably, website traffic is up 23%, a good sign. International Affairs is likewise rallying forth in terms of international student recruiting, utilizing digital marketing, agreements with international colleges and universities moving forward. Dr. Hart ended with a word about Beth Thomas who is retiring and noting the superb work she has done with the RBA program. Likewise Cathy Ellzey received an award for her work in Admissions. Both Beth and Cathy were lauded for their excellent work.

Dr. Scott Barton, VP for Finance and Administration gave the budget update. Operating revenue is higher than ever before. In terms of appropriations, a \$2300 per person raise will happen in July for all employees. Shepherd will get \$20 million for deferred maintenance, a tidy sum. However, PEIA's \$70 million will still incur an employee cost increase of 15%. Dr. Hendrix shared how fortunate we were to get the deferred maintenance funding appropriation of \$20 million, and she shared how this came about with a clear communication about our deferred maintenance needs, utilizing the help of one of our legislators who is also a Shepherd graduate. Persistence and crafting careful arguments have moved Shepherd from the bottom of the appropriations funding to near the top. The faculty and staff were appreciative of these efforts.

Under the heading of "Noteworthy Highlights," Dr. Hendrix shared her thoughts about Dr. Stephen Spencer's retirement and the Spencer family "Dream Job" Scholarship created in his name, a superb way to honor our Provost who had to retire for health reasons after an auspicious beginning and year. All extend encouragement to Dr. Spencer. A new search committee includes, Drs. Daily (chair), Albright, Barton, Dewalt, Dewilt, Hart, Howard-Bostic, Kendig, Martz, Green, and Holy Frye and Valerie Wright. Classroom technology is in phase I. A working group was put together to upgrade working conditions. Upgrades have occurred in Gardiner, Ikenberry, Knutti, and White Hall. Senate Bill 10 has been addressed, with a 6:30 p.m. April 12 event set to update

faculty and staff on campus security. This meeting is immensely important for all to attend, given the violent situation currently in the country. A range of other noteworthy improvements were highlighted including accessibility technology services, dual enrollment, technology and equipment updates, as well as attempts to make the campus more appealing. Dr. Hendrix touted the Tabler Farm improvements, funding, and interest among legislators' interest concerning the farm. The plan for the campus transformational project, occurring in 2 phases, was explained by Sonya Sholley: that is, remodeling of Turner and Kenamond Halls. Phase 2, also involving a welcome Gateway Arch, will involve EOB parking reorganized for a safer and more efficient parking system. Exiting the large parking lot for faculty/staff parking will be reorganized to accommodate the new parking system for the commuter lot. New signage off 480 will be more visible. The Gateway arch will be near Stuzsman Slonaker, with brass lettering to enhance the campus and Shepherd's image. Projects on King Street, as well as a range of others, will be a welcome facelift for Shepherd. For full details see the President's report posted on the Assembly website. Dr. Hendrix thanked the staff and faculty for all our good work.

IV. Elections—Moderator Dr. Daily

Assembly Parliamentarian **Dr. Chris Lovelace** Motion to close nomination MVP

Assembly Moderator **Dr. Larry Daily** Motion to close nomination MVP

Assembly Secretary **Dr. Sylvia Shurbutt** Motion to close nomination MVP

ACF Representative (election odd years) **Dr. Max Guirguis** Motion to close MVP

ACF Alternate: **Dr. Jason Best** Motion Motion to close nominations MVP

BOG Representative (election odd years) **Dr. Mary Hancock** Motion close nomination MVP

V. Strategic Plan Update—Dr. Jason Best gave an overview of where we are with a new strategic plan. Every goal is connected to the new mission and vision. The committee came up with 10 strategies, winnowed down from 45. These and tactics for accomplishment will be given to the Strategic Planning Committee to turn into the new strategic plan. Four meetings are planned to pull this all together. By May 27 a finalized strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Governors.

VI. Brief 5-minute Summary Reports to the Assembly with Questions – See written reports below.

A. Classified Employees Council—Cecelia Mason

During the past year, more employees either quit, were promoted, or were transferred to non-classified status. We have had to run elections to replace CEC representatives and the ACCE representative. There are no employees in category 1 who are classified, so we are unable to fill those slots. We had difficulty finding employees willing to run in category 6/7. There is currently one representative serving from that category. The Classified Employees Council at this time consists of seven representatives and no alternates. Elections are taking place this month to fill terms for the next two years. Hopefully enough employees will be willing to run to fill all the positions on the

Council. As of last week, there were 114 classified employees at Shepherd. The breakdown is as follows:

Category 1, Executive, Administrative, and Managerial—0
Category 3, Professional Non-Faculty—19
Category 4, Clerical and Secretarial—27
Category 5, Technical and Paraprofessional—21
Category 6/7—Skilled Crafts and Service/Maintenance—47

President Hendrix appointed a small committee consisting of Human Resources Director Marie DeWalt and CEC Chair Cecelia Mason with one other classified and one other non-classified employee to explore creating an all-staff council so that all employees can participate in the shared governance of the university. Two surveys were taken, one that included all staff and another that included only classified staff. Few employees responded. In the first survey (classified and non-classified staff) 21 classified and 39 non-classified staff responded—52% of the classified respondents supported having an all-staff council and 79% of the non-classified staff were in favor. In the second survey involving only classified staff, 54 percent favored having an all-staff council. The decision was made by the administration to not pursue creating an all-staff council.

CEC members are concerned about the increase that PEIA is implementing starting July 1, 2023.

The CEC sponsored a motivational talk by Alex Demczak will be speaking at Shepherd on Oct. 28, 2022. All employees were invited to participate. That presentation is posted to the CEC webpage if anyone wants to watch it.

Teresa Newcome and Cecelia Mason represent the CEC on the Strategic Planning Committee, bringing input from classified employees to the process.

CEC is in the process of taking applications for the Classified Employees Children's Scholarship Fund.

B. Advisory Council of Faculty—Dr. Guirguis

ACF Report – April 2023

Below are highlights of education-related bills that were passed in the 2023 legislative session.

1. Campus Carry (SB 10): It allows licensed individuals to carry concealed firearms on public college and university campuses. Proponents of the Campus Self-Defense Act claim it would make students safer, while opponents assert it would put students in harm's way. The law will take effect on July 1, 2024. Similar legislation is already enacted in 11 other states.

2. Pay Raise (SB 423): It provides a salary increase for public employees in the next fiscal year. Although it was widely reported that the bill would raise the salary of all eligible employees by \$2,300, the funds that higher education institutions received from the state are insufficient to cover the full amount of the raises. This leaves institutions in the difficult position of having to find ways to supplement the funding shortfall.

3. PEIA Insurance (SB 268): It brings a variety of changes to the state's insurance system that was on the verge of insolvency. First and most notably, the bill sets the employer-employee contribution at 80/20 for treatment services received in-state and at 70/30 for those received out-of-state, which translates into a premium hike of about 25 percent. Second, it raises the cost of coverage for employee spouses who have access to alternative health insurance through their employers by about \$147 per month. Third, it would reimburse healthcare providers at 110 percent of what Medicare would pay for the same services to ensure wide acceptance of the plan. Retired employees will not be affected by the cost-shifting provisions of the bill.

4. Dual-Enrollment Courses (HB 2005): It subsidizes dual-enrollment college-level courses for high school students. The bill requires the legislature to appropriate funds to the HEPC and the CCTCE to pay higher education institution for courses that high school students can take for college credit. This pilot program covers only dual-credit courses leading to a degree or certificate in an area of workforce need, as recognized by the West Virginia Department of Commerce.

5. Textbook Costs (HB 3555): It seeks to reduce coursework costs for college students. The bill directs Boards of Governors to create an "educational materials affordability committee," which would identify cost-saving options and make recommendations to the Board. Committee membership would include faculty, administrators, students, and bookstore representatives. It also directs institutions to encourage instructors to select course materials that would save students money, such as open educational resources, older textbook editions, electronic textbooks, online textbooks, and custom textbooks, so long as they are appropriate to the course and do not compromise its academic quality. There are other provisions relating to the disclosure of course material costs to students and collaboration between institutions and booksellers.

6. State Budget (HB 2024): It makes new funding available for deferred maintenance. The \$4.87 billion budget bill for fiscal year 2024 dedicates \$282 million in deferred maintenance funding for higher education institutions and correctional facilities in the state. This money would help pay for repairs and replacements that had to be postponed due to COVID-19 or lack of funding.

7. Tax Reform (HB 2526): It implements a \$750 million tax cut by lowering taxes on individuals and businesses. Concerns have been raised about the potential impact of the revenue reduction on the funding of higher education. However, lawmakers are confident that the new tax plan will work well for the state in the long term and will not affect the funding of higher education.

C. Faculty Senate—Dr. Heidi Hanrahan The Faculty Senate has continued to address all aspects of the Shepherd experience and has had a busy and productive year.

1. Mission, Vision, and Values Statements:

- October, the Senate endorsed the University's new mission, vision, and values statements.

2. Campus Technology:

- All year long, the Senate has advocated for increased funding for campus technology (including reliable computers for classrooms and faculty offices) and a revitalized Technology Oversight Committee.
- The Senate is pleased to see the University allocating resources towards these needs and identifying new revenue streams to continue this important work.

- The Senate is also encouraged that TOC is now meeting regularly.

3. Merit Pay:

- A Senate task force worked from August to March on possible revisions to the merit pay model.
- In March, the Senate endorsed a motion supporting the use of current merit pay system.
- The Senate continues to support BOG Policy 26.

4. Hybrid Course Clarity:

- Beginning in August, a Senate task force took on the charge from the Deans Council to provide clarity for students about hybrid courses.
- In October, the Senate endorsed the proposal brought forward by the task force.
- That proposal was sent to the Provost/Deans Council.

5. Evaluation of Deans, Associate Deans, And Chairs/Directors

- In November, the Senate endorsed the new evaluation form for deans, associate deans, and chairs/directors, which was implemented in February.

6. Promotion and Tenure Processes:

- In August, Dr. Richard Stevens, Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs and Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, organized several task forces related to Phase Two of possible revisions to promotion and tenure processes.
- Each task force included at least one senator.
- Dr. Stevens attended the April 3 meeting to discuss the task forces' recommendations. The Senate endorsed these changes.

7. Other Senate Business Included:

- Discussions of proposed WV legislation impacting higher education, the new Strategic Plan, Chat GPT, commencement speakers, PEIA, and much more.

8. Other Senate Guests Included:

- Jack Shaw, Associate Vice-President for Campus Services, to discuss the importance of timely textbook adoptions, HEPC guidelines for textbooks, and the Textbook Affordability Committee (October).
- President Mary J.C. Hendrix, Dr. Scott Barton, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Mr. Joseph Dagg, Chief Information Officer/Chief Information Security Officer, to discuss campus technology (December).
- President Mary J.C. Hendrix, to discuss salary adjustments and merit pay (December).
- Dean Ben Martz, to discuss sponsorship of faculty (September), salary adjustments (March), and Academic Affairs Funding (March).
- Cameron Colwell, SGA President, to give an overall sense of issues and topics of concern to students as expressed to the SGA (March).
- Jessica Anders, Director of Accessibility Services, to share resources and best practices and to answer questions about supporting students with accommodations (April).

As always, please consult the Senate Highlights emails and regularly communicate with your senator if you have questions or concerns. In this time of great challenges in higher education, a vibrant, engaged, and active Faculty Senate—fully representing their constituencies—is vital.

D. Student Life Council – Rachael Meads This year the Student Life Council reviewed and approved the following new student clubs: Rams Care (mental health awareness and advocacy group); the Chess Club, Pi Epsilon Environmental Science Honor Society, the Hidden Opponent (student-athlete mental health organization), and the Rowdy Rams pep club. In addition to discussing campus life and hearing regular reports from Program Board, Student Government Association, and other student activities subcommittees, Student Life Council are currently completing updates to the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for Student Clubs and Organizations.