

Faculty Senate Minutes

Monday, June 26, 2023, 3:10 p.m., via Zoom

Senate Roster for 2022-2023:

Kurtis Adams (MUSC), Haley Albright (CHEM), Robert Anthony (SCCJ), James Broomall (HIST), Court Campany (BIOL), Larry Daily (PSYC), Rhonda Donaldson (LIB), Tuncer Gocmen (ECON), Karen Green (SOWK), Max Guirguis (PSCI), Osman Guzide (CME), Melissa Hall (RSES), Mary Hancock (NURS), Heidi Hanrahan (ENGL/LANG), Belinda Mitchell (EDUC), David Modler (ART), Sytil Murphy (DEPS), Robert Richardson (BADM), Cindy Vance (ACCT), Kevin Williams (COMM), Max Guirguis (ACF).

Officers: Heidi Hanrahan (President), Belinda Mitchell (Secretary), Larry Daily (Parliamentarian)

Special Meeting called by Senators

Called to order 3:10pm

Kurtis Adams	MUSC	Present
Haley Albright	CHEM	Present
Robert Anthony	SCCJ	Present
James Broomall	HIST	Present
Courtney Campany	BIOL	Present
Larry Daily	PSYC	Present
Rhonda Donaldson	LIB	Present
Tuncer Gocmen	ECON	Absent
Karen Green	SOWK	Present
Max Guirguis	PSCI	Absent
Osman Guzide	CME	Present
Melissa Hall	RSES	Absent
Mary Hancock	NURS	Present
Heidi Hanrahan	ENGL/LANG	Present
Belinda Mitchell	EDUC	Present
David Modler	ART	Present
Sytil Murphy	DEPS	Present
Robert Richardson	BADM	Absent
Cindy Vance	ACCT	Present
Kevin Williams	COMM	Present

I. Academic Restructuring

The floor was open for Senators to voice concerns from their various departments/schools. Productive conversations were had and the following conclusions occurred:

- The Senate realized the need to cut costs and reduce the deficit. The senate is committed to doing our part to help the University through this crisis. We believe the Senate should and will play a key role in the coming years. We are committed to the University's success and are grateful to be part of a larger community with the same goal.
- The senate remains unclear as to how we got here beyond broad and significant patterns like declining enrollment. Particularly, how did no one realize that our days of cash was inflated by COVID relief funds and the CMTA project funds? The answers we have been given—people

realized this problem *after* the Spring Assembly—don't actually answer the question of *how the oversights happened* and *what is being done to prevent them from happening again*. The particular experience of two very different messages (one at the Spring Assembly, another via the President's email in mid-June) has been very unsettling. We will invite Dr. Barton, VP of Finance and Administration, to come to a future meeting and speak to these issues.

- Universally, senators expressed dissatisfaction with the speed at which the restructuring is happening, with limited space for faculty input. Again, we understand the sense of urgency, but are frustrated by the situation, especially given the enduring questions/issues raised about in item #2. If we had “seen this coming,” we could have prepared more. Additionally, there is great dissatisfaction that the proposed models were shared without any indication of cost-saving potential. Faculty are frustrated about being asked to respond to the models in a short window of time with limited information and not a lot of clarity about how the process will move forward, much less any assurance that they will save money. Finally, there is little clarity and conflicting rhetoric as to whether the models presented are *the models* or if they are open to tweaking and modification.
- Additionally, some senators claim not to have been contacted *at all* by their chair, director, or dean about the process or asked for their input. This points to a larger sense of continual dissatisfaction about how communication works. We ask (again) for important communication to be shared not only with deans, chairs, and directors, but *directly* with faculty. This is vitally important in times of crisis. Simply telling deans, chairs, and directors to “share with your faculty” is not enough. Very little harm is done by making sure everyone knows what's happening—one “extra” email from a chair that repeats what the Provost has said, for instance, does no damage. In contrast, relying on others to convey information to faculty can result in disinformation and faculty feeling cut out.
- The Senate voted to approve two resolutions, which are below. Both of them speak to “action items” we can begin working on right away, even before the final models are revealed to us. Not only do we heartily endorse each proposal (each passed unanimously), we believe they show our willingness to work to help whatever structure is approved succeed.

Resolution Regarding Academic Restructuring

Endorsed by the Shepherd University Faculty Senate on June 26, 2023

Though we wish that faculty could have had a greater role in what the new structure looks like and wish that the process was not so accelerated, the Faculty Senate recognizes that academic restructuring will likely happen. The Senate asks that, regardless of the new academic structure:

1. Faculty play a primary role in decisions about committee structures (P&T, C&I, A&C, Core, etc.).
2. Departments and schools that are combined be allowed, encouraged, and supported in their efforts to maintain individual disciplinary identities in marketing, recruiting, and professional efforts.
3. The University maintains a commitment to supporting faculty professional development and being transparent about how resources will be allocated.

The Faculty Senate believes that the ultimate success of the new academic structure depends on the faculty. We stand ready to do our part.

Resolution Regarding Faculty Senate Representation

Endorsed by the Shepherd University Faculty Senate on June 26, 2023

The Faculty Senate proposes that the 2022-2024 Senate maintains its membership as outlined in the Constitution through the end of the term, regardless of the new academic structure.

Next Special Meeting: Monday, August 7 at 3:10 via Zoom