

## Faculty Senate

### September 2024 Senate Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved at the 10/1/2024 Regular Senate Meeting

Tuesday, September 3, 2024

3:30 – 5:00 pm

Curris Center Barkley Room

Public Access Zoom link: <https://murraystate.zoom.us/j/83844364068>

Senators in attendance: Oliver Beckers, Michael Bordieri, Brian Bourke, Alison Brown, Erica Brown, Michael Busby, Paul Foote, Stephaine Ford, Chad Gaylord, Eran Guse, Marshall Hayes, Ray Horton, Amanda Joyce, Samer Khalil, Jonathan Lyon, Susan Miller, Naveen Musunuru, Shauna Mullins, Braun Oldenkamp, Heidi Ortega, Julie Cyzewski proxy for Michelle Panchuk, Barbie Papajeski, Jeremy Phillips, Elena Picech, David Pizzo, Jessica Pryor, Thomas Powell, Brenda Reeves, Selise Ridolfi, David Roach, Faris Sahawneh, Sarah Martin proxy for Cintia Segovia Figueroa, Shri Singh, Jan Super, Ken Sutrick, Carol Terracina-Hartman, Jenilee Williams, and Abdul Yarali.

Guests in attendance: Provost Tim Todd, Associate Provost Renee Fister, Faculty Regent Melony Shemberger

- I. Call to Order at 3:35pm by President Roach.
- II. Welcome and Sign-in. President Roach welcomed senators to the meeting and reminded senators to notify the senate in advance ([mso.facultysenate@murraystate.edu](mailto:mso.facultysenate@murraystate.edu)) if they will be attending remotely or sending a proxy.
- III. Approval of Minutes. A motion to approve the May 2024 organizational meeting minutes was made by Senator Terracina-Hartman and seconded by Senator Sahawneh. The minutes were approved by a majority display of hands.
- IV. Appointments and Rulings from the Chair
  - President Roach appointed Senator Selise Ridolfi (Adolescent, Career, and Special Education) and Senator Chadwick Gaylord (Department of Agricultural Science) as at-large senators with unanimous consent.
  - President Roach appoint Senator Brenda Reeves as Faculty Senate Liaison to the Advance Grant and ex officio to the Executive Committee with unanimous consent.
- V. New Senator Cord Ceremony
  - Passed over in the orders of the day.
- VI. State of the Senate Address – President of the Faculty Senate, David Roach
  - President Roach presented a state of the Senate Address highlighting both personal and professional concerns he faced during the previous academic year. He highlighted several concerns that the senate confronted at the start of the 2023-2024 academic year, including an outdated faculty handbook from 2019, compensation concerns, faculty retention, instructor representation in the Senate, Senate representation from the school of nursing and health professions, and state legislative concerns.
  - President Roach also provided background on the charge of the faculty senate, including a mandate to advise the president on all matters related to faculty. He also provided a brief overview of how the Faculty Senate works, with an emphasis on the guiding nature of Senate

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bylaws, Senate precedent, and Robert's Rules. He also briefly reviewed the four major items of senate business: motions, special resolutions, resolutions, and handbook revisions.

- President Roach also highlighted select Senate accomplishments from the 2023-2024 term, including:
  - A. Updated Faculty Handbook 2023 edition
  - B. 2% COLA for all faculty and a market salary adjustment for 50% of faculty (all ranks).
  - C. First At-Large Instructor elected under new constitution, first instructor to chair a subcommittee(at least in recent memory), and several more instructors elected by departments
  - D. By-laws revision restoring representation for SONHP
  - E. State Legislative encroachments on academic freedom and tenure were defeated or delayed and mitigated by senate action on post-tenure review
- President Roach also outlined his priorities for the 2024-2025 academic year, including:
  - A. Academic Policies
    - Regular faculty classification to include instructors
    - Promotion for instructors
  - B. Finance
    - Inflationary adjustment for Associate and Full promotion
  - C. Government Affairs
    - Administration Evaluation Procedures Update/Review
  - D. Handbook and Personnel
    - Update the Faculty Handbook 2024
  - E. Rules, Elections, and By-Laws
    - Review constitutional representation in light of new university structures
  - F. Executive Committee
    - Post-tenure review revisions
    - Summer Compensation Review

### VII. Distinguished Guests

- a. Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, Tim Todd.
  - Provost Todd welcomed faculty back for the fall semester. He reported that he met with faculty senate officers throughout the summer and with the Senate executive committee last week to discuss academic program review. Provost Todd reported that the intent of the recently announced credit hour production tool is to assist chairs and deans with course scheduling and to ensure equity in teaching load. Provost Todd also noted that the credit hour production guideline is significantly less than peer institutions. Associate Provost Fister shared that feedback from many chairs has been positive and that the institution has saved approximately \$200,000 in overload costs since implementing the tool. Senator Bourke shared that he has had some difficulty meeting the threshold with his graduate course loads and expressed that the need to write justifications for falling below the threshold is burdensome and concerning. Provost Todd and Associate Provost Fister acknowledged the tool is still in development and that the thresholds were developed based on university-wide metrics.

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- Senator Bourke asked a follow up question regarding increased enrollment caps for summer courses. Associate Provost Fister shared context as to how summer salaries are funded, and noted that the Provost office is committed to support \$1.2 million of summer faculty salary. She also noted that the enrollment minimums were increased to 15 from 10 for undergraduate to 12 from 8 for graduate courses with a target enrollment of 20. Provost Todd shared that summer teaching is part of the core university budget, and that these steps are needed to keep within the overall annual budget. Senator Horton asked if the summer minimum enrollment caps might also become minimums during regular academic terms. Provost Todd noted that the primary goal is to sustain the overall financial health of the institution, and noted that Murray State has avoided cuts and force reductions that have occurred at peer institutions. Senator Bourke asked a question regarding increasing enrollment, and Provost Todd noted that faculty play a key role in recruiting. Associate Provost Fister followed up that the composition of students can lead to different revenue rates, and clarified that the intent of these recent changes is to maintain the financial health of the institution without the need to resort to more disruptive measures in the future. She followed up that we have wonderful faculty, and that we need to work together to solve this challenge with as much transparency as possible.
- Senator Pizzo raised a concern regarding the large amount of tuition discounts, and how that might impact our overall revenue. Provost Todd replied that this is a balancing act that is continually monitored and discussed. Senator Martin asked what aspects of recent student demographic shifts have impacted our revenue. Associate Provost Fister replied that there are multiple factors, including changes in international enrollment and increases in dual-credit hours earned by incoming students. Senator Martin asked if there are any additional international recruitment efforts, and Associate Provost Fister shared that there are several international recruitment efforts underway. Senator Super asked about the potential for another early retirement offering. Provost Todd indicated that he is not aware of any discussion regarding such a program.
- b. Associate Provost, Renee Fister.
  - Associate Provost Fister provided an update on the state performance funding model set by the legislature and implemented by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). She noted that recent increases in low-income bachelor degree weighting has helped Murray State along with several other changes to the model. Associate Provost Fister shared that now is a great time for faculty and staff to use tuition waivers for courses at Murray State, as adult learners are weighted more heavily in the model. She shared that increases in performance funding are important to the financial health of the institution, and that they are already innovating by developing a new financial literacy course for adult learners. Senator Bourke asked if adult learning classes need to be taken for a grade, and Associate Provost Fister clarified that a letter grade is needed for the course to count in the funding model. Senator Horton asked about possibilities for other departments to offer courses targeting adult learning, and Associate Provost Fister indicated that there may be opportunities for additional courses.



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- c. Faculty Regent, Melony Shemberger.
  - o Regent Shemberger welcomed faculty back to the new academic year. She highlighted her recent email update to all faculty, and provided a brief overview of her ex officio role in the Faculty Senate. Regent Shemberger reported that she is currently serving her second term as regent and that she will not seek reelection at the expiration of her term in 2025. Regent Shemberger shared that she looks forward to returning her focus to her teaching and research, and that she is happy to talk with any faculty who might be interested in the position.
- VIII. Senator Spotlight, Dr. Alison Brown, Center for Communication Disorders
  - Senator Brown shared that she is starting her 12<sup>th</sup> year at Murray State and that she grew up in Murray. She shared that her professional interests are voice and her research focuses on dyslexia. Senator Brown shared some highlights of her recent research, and noted that she loves working with her departmental colleagues.
- IX. New Senator Cord Ceremony
  - Senators Brown, Gaylord, Hayes, Miller, Lyon, and Pryor were presented graduation cords by President Roach and Regent Shemberger.
- X. Reports --- Faculty Senate Standing Committees
  - A. Academic Policies – Chair, Brian Bourke
    - a. Senator Bourke shared that the committee plans to focus on senior instructor promotion and instructor classification in the faculty handbook.
  - B. Finance – Chair, Jan Super
    - a. Senator Super shared that the committee plans to look at cost of living and promotion raises as well as following up on recommendations from the 2023 faculty engagement survey.
  - C. Governmental Affairs – Secretary of the Senate, Michael Bordieri
    - a. Secretary Bordieri shared that the committee plans to continue to advocate for faculty priorities during the upcoming legislative session, and he noted that challenges from the previous session will likely continue this year.
  - D. Handbook and Personnel – Chair, Michael Busby
    - a. Senator Busby praised former Senator Post for his leadership of the committee, and reported that the committee plans to continue to work on modernizing the handbook. He also noted that the committee plans to continue working on a proposed revision to the inclement weather policy.
  - E. Rules, Elections, and Bylaws – Faculty Senate Vice President, Heidi Ortega
    - a. Vice President Ortega shared that the committee plans to continue to oversee nominations and elections for faculty shared governance. She also noted that there will be a regent election in the Spring that her committee will oversee. Vice President Ortega also noted that any questions regarding subcommittee membership or change requests should be directed to her.
  - F. Executive – Faculty Senate President, David Roach
    - a. President Roach reported that the executive committee was informed of an election error at their last meeting. Vice President Ortega took responsibility for the error. President Roach reported that the executive committee is continuing to work on post-tenure review but that no immediate action is expected. He also announced a plan to increase faculty social engagement via a monthly coffee hour.

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President Roach shared that the senate has been given some money from the Provost office to hold a faculty social event, and that he plans to form an ad hoc committee to plan a social event for faculty. President Roach also noted that the executive committee will also discuss recent changes to summer compensation.

- XI. Other University Committees
  - A. Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee
    - a. Senator Pizzo reported that the committee received an initial report from the new consultant regarding benefit costs and they are waiting to receive utilization data.
  - B. Parking Advisory Committee
    - a. Senator Foote shared recent updates regarding parking on campus, including the planned installation of two electric vehicle chargers. Senator Foote also reported that 15 spaces in the 15<sup>th</sup> and Olive Street lot were converted to faculty only (blue) parking. President Roach added the several new ADA spaces were opened near faculty hall prior to the start of the Fall semester.
- XII. Old Business
  - None
- XIII. New Business
  - None
- XIV. Adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:05 pm.