

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
April 4, 2023

Regular Meeting No. 13 of the 69th Session Virtual Meeting April 4, 2023

Present: Chair McGowan; Associate Chair Collins; Parliamentarian Bird; Senators Ange-van Heugten, Auerbach, Bernhard, Blessing, Carrier, DePerno, Friend, Hakovirta, Hergeth, Koch, Kuznetsov, Lee, Lunardi, Morant, Narayan, Phukan, Reiskind, W. Robinson, Roland, Stallmann, Taveirne, Tourino, Verhallen, and Zagacki

Guests: Katharine Stewart, Senior Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic Affairs ; Bruce Branson, Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor & Director of Undergraduate Accounting Program; Katie Graham, Assistant Dean and Associate Athletic Director for Academics; Joel Pawlak, Chair of the Council on Athletics and Associate Professor, Forest Biomaterials; Lori Petrovich, Associate Teaching Professor and Director of General Chemistry Labs; Michael Taveirne, Faculty Senator and Associate Teaching Professor, Biological Sciences; Michael Vepraskas, William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor, Crop and Soil Sciences

1. Call to Order and Announcements - *Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty*

Chair McGowan called the thirteenth meeting of the 69th Session Faculty Senate to order at 3:00 p.m.

Chair McGowan made the following announcements.

The Faculty Senate elections went live today. The elections include elections for the Faculty Senate, the 603 Hearing Committee and the 604/607 Faculty Grievance and Non-Reappointment Review Committee.

Current Faculty Senators are encouraged to run for Associate Chair of the Faculty Senate; there will be an opportunity for senators to make nominations from the floor at the April 18th Faculty Senate Meeting. Elections for faculty representatives to the Council on Athletics will also occur during the April 18th Faculty Senate meeting.

The Governor's Commission on the Governance of Public Universities in North Carolina will be holding a Public Forums on April 11, 9 am - 12 pm, at Durham Tech Community College. Individuals interested in attending one of the Forums and speaking should sign up in advance.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Building a Trauma Informed Practice, a workshop geared towards faculty and staff, will be held on April 28, 2023. For more information visit go.ncsu.edu/saam.

2. Approval of the Minutes, Regular Meeting No. 12 of the 69th Session, March 21, 2023

Maria Collins, Associate Chair of the Faculty

Associate Chair Collins called for a motion to approve the minutes of the twelfth meeting of the 69th session of the NC State Faculty Senate. A motion and second were made and the minutes were approved.

3. Chair's Remarks

Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty

The current session of the Faculty Senate is winding down; we only have one meeting left after this one. Today, we have the annual athletics update. This will be followed by a discussion about the size of online classes, their increase during the pandemic, and some of the challenges of teaching large sections online.

Looking ahead to our last meeting of the academic year, we will hear the results of the Faculty Senate elections and have the opportunity to welcome newly elected senators. We will hold elections for Associate Chair and the Council on Athletics, and we will hear updates from the university standing committees and the special select committee on DEI that convened at the start of this semester.

Over the summer, I will start building goals and plans for the Faculty Senate during the next academic year. I mentioned last time that one area of focus will be faculty mental health and well being. I will also continue to monitor and keep you informed of policy discussions occurring at the system level. If you have ideas of additional topics you would like to discuss next year, please email them to faculty_senate@ncsu.edu. I'm also happy to meet with faculty over the summer if you have ideas or concerns you would like to discuss.

4. Provost's Remarks and Q&A

Katharine Stewart, Senior Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic Affairs

Senior Vice Provost Stewart gave the following leadership updates. The finalists for the dean for the College of Engineering and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences have concluded their visits and an announcement of the new deans may happen in the coming weeks. The finalists' visits for the dean of the College of Sciences will continue through April 18, 2023. The nomination committee for the new Vice Provost of Global Engagement will meet in April.

Senior Vice Provost Stewart reminded those in attendance that Chancellor Woodson sent an email on March 20, 2023 providing updates related to student mental health; the University's official 3-year academic calendar has been updated to include one wellness day in each fall and spring term for the coming three academic years.

PackWays for All: Learning By Doing has been selected as the university's next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) proposal. The selected proposal is a universitywide initiative that

aims to equip students for a lifetime of success by increasing their awareness of, access to and participation in NC State's wide variety of valuable experiential learning opportunities, also known as high-impact experiences. The initiative will have several components, including a PackWays for All online tracking platform, stakeholder advisory board and community of practice.

Question and Discussion

Question: Are there plans to create more financial help or scholarships for students to participate in the QEP activities?

Stewart: That is an important part of what the QEP planning team will be working with the PackWays for All team.

Ashley McIver: Access is a huge component of the QEP. As we continue to meet with the proposal review team and refine the plan for the QEP, we will continue to raise that issue.

Question: Could you speak to the rationale behind assigning the Wellness Days to Tuesdays instead of Thursdays, as they have been this academic year?

Stewart: I wasn't involved in those conversations, but I will work with Registration and Records and Don Hunt's office to find out more about how those decisions were made.

Question: Would that information be shareable to the students? Students used the Thursday Wellness Days to take an extended weekend. They will probably think we don't want them to take that long weekend, and therefore we made it Tuesdays instead of Thursdays.

Stewart: My bias is to be as transparent as possible. We will figure out what we might need to do in terms of communication, not just to the faculty, but also to the students.

5. Athletics Update

Joel Pawlak, Chair of the Council on Athletics and Associate Professor, Forest Biomaterials
Katie Graham, Assistant Dean and Associate Athletic Director for Academics

Mr. Pawlak presented an update on the Council on Athletics and the student-athlete experience. The Council on Athletics' purpose and responsibility is to assist the Chancellor in exercising institutional control. Membership is composed of faculty, alumni association, WolfPack Club, coaching staff, students and athletics department staff (ex officio).

The goal of the Student-Athlete Experience is to highlight the importance of student-athlete experience on campus. Over the past year, meeting agenda items have included a visit to football practice, time management for student-athletes, mental health and wellness resources and physical well-being for our students. On an annual basis, the Council also discusses other aspects of athletics, including the academic performance and graduation rates, the budget,

Title IX compliance, changes in NCAA rules, meetings with head coaches, and facility upgrades and improvements.

Some of the actions taken by the Council this past year include revising bylaws to update language to make it more inclusive and clarifying how voting members are selected. The academic intervention policy related to class attendance was also updated.

Ms. Graham presented an update on the Academic Support Program for Student-Athletes. There are approximately 550 student-athletes at any given time; those students can be on scholarship or non scholarship walk on student athletes. They represent NC State on 23 varsity teams. At the end of fall 2022, the student-athlete cumulative GPA was 3.18, compared to the general student body of undergraduate students GPA of 3.37. Fluctuations were seen coming out of the pandemic.

Ms. Graham provided additional GPA information. Sixty-two student-athletes received a 4.0 this past semester, 212 student-athletes were on the Dean's list, and 21 of 23 teams have a cumulative 3.0+ GPA. Every college that awards undergraduate degrees has a student-athlete.

The NCAA releases the graduation success rates and academic progress rates. The graduation rates for student athletes have been climbing and this year NC State posted a 92% graduation rate, which is the highest in history. NC State is projecting a 92% rate again for next fall. The national average is 90%.

The NCAA Academic Progress Rate (APR) provides a real-time snapshot of how an athletic department is doing related to retention and graduation. Students on athletic scholarships earn 1 point for retention and 1 point for continuing eligibility. A perfect score is 1,000 and is reported as a 4-year average. NC State will post the highest APR score in NCSU history with a 993. Ten teams had a perfect 1000 APR and received national recognition.

Post graduation success tracks what NC State student-athletes do after graduation. Since Fall of 2020, 204 student-athletes have graduated from NC State; 99% of those students are employed or continuing their education.

Question and Discussion

Question: In regards to the non-revenue sports and the academic incentive money, how much are students able to access that?

Mr. Pawlak: All student-athletes have available to them up to \$1,000 yearly, \$500 per academic semester for keeping their cumulative GPA up. Non-revenue is split according to their percentage of scholarship.

Ms. Graham: It's a maximum of \$5,980 per term.

Question: How deeply has your committee looked into the NIL issue? My second question is related to some athletes who become employees of the university. Do you talk about the implications of NIL?

Mr. Pawlak: There was a Congressional hearing last week related to NIL so we may receive guidance on the national level as well.

Ms. Menio: It's changing daily. We have hired a consultant, Doug Phyllis, who is with Accelerated Sports Ventures, to help us navigate this and what we should be doing as an athletic department.

Question: In regards to the GPA data shared, to what do you attribute this to? Is this something that NC State is doing right? Are we benefiting from societal changes in student-athlete attitudes, or are we grading easier?

Ms. Graham: Anecdotally, we are seeing our freshman student athletes across the board more prepared to come to college and be successful in their first term than ten years ago. Also, we have a great well developed academic support program, which has evolved over the last 15 years. We're now able to provide tutoring; we have developed a learning specialist program for our staff that are able to teach English to our international students.

Ms. Menio shared some competitive updates. NC State was one of 14 institutions to have the men's and women's basketball programs in the NCAA tournament and our football program in a bowl game. NC State finished 22 in the Fall Director's Cup. Cross-country won its second national title, and Katelyn Tuohy won the individual title. Men's cross country and women's soccer also went to postseason play. Coach Moore got his 800th win. Men's swimming won their 32nd ACC Championship title, setting a record for most points scored at a meet. Women's swimming placed 5th at NCAA.

6. Online Section Sizes

Bruce Branson, Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor & Director of Undergraduate Accounting Program

Lori Petrovich, Associate Teaching Professor and Director of General Chemistry Labs

Michael Taveirne, Faculty Senator and Associate Teaching Professor, Biological Sciences

Michael Vepraskas, William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor, Crop and Soil Sciences

Senator Walt Robinson presented a slideshow regarding large enrollment online classes. He shared that an issue of concern (IOC) was brought up in the fall on the rising number of students in online courses that resulted in increased faculty workload without an increase in compensation. The IOC was assigned to the Personnel Policy Committee who then requested enrollment numbers for all online sections in Fall 2019, pre-pandemic and post-pandemic.

Today's panelists were asked to briefly describe their experiences teaching a large online class and the implications of such classes for their workload and for the quality of instruction.

Dr. Branson has taught large enrollment courses for eight years. ACC210, which is the introductory financial accounting course, is typically taught in the auditorium with a section size of over 300. Throughout the course of the pandemic the course was online and many section sizes have remained the same. Dr. Branson raised an issue of concern through Poole College of Management's faculty senators; he questioned whether the university had a policy in place given the lack of physical capacity constraints on what could constitute an online section. Dr. Branson stated that, "There is an additional challenge just trying to build and maintain connections with students in large classes in general. When you leverage an online teaching environment on top of that it's difficult to recognize your students because you don't see them much. It's hard to enforce an on camera environment, especially if you're trying to deal with a significantly large number of students simultaneously."

Due to those challenges, Dr. Branson chose to teach asynchronously. He received a Quality Matters certification to maximize the quality of the materials, the experience the students were receiving in that environment.

Dr. Petrovich taught online courses during the pandemic; she did not teach online courses prior to the pandemic and is back to teaching in-person courses. Similar to Dr. Branson, Dr. Petrovich also taught online asynchronous courses. She developed videos that were no longer than 14 minutes that included questions associated with each video and a blank note template for students to upload after answering the questions. Dr. Petrovich held a larger number of office hours during the pandemic, doing nine office hours per week for two sections, which totaled 500 students. Testing was conducted via Zoom proctor, synchronous online testing. The chemistry department was able to get its homework system to program highly randomized questions.

Dr. Petrovich stated that, "Creating the videos was a huge workload. On the other hand, I've been able to use them as review material for students in the subsequent General Chemistry II course, and I've also been able to use them as supporting videos for the lab course for students who encounter a topic in the lab before they have seen it in lecture."

Dr. Taveirne teaches a course in biological sciences; in fall it was in the 250 range and this spring it is just under 200. He stated that, "DELTA is amazing with all their instructional technologies that make teaching large online courses more manageable and allowing for more engagement in the virtual world." He has taught pre pandemic, post pandemic, and during the pandemic and realized that structure is still needed.

Dr. Taveirne assigns weekly assignments to make sure students are engaging with the course in a timely manner. The downside, he noted, is that he was unable to modify the pre-recorded videos. "I use a lot of active learning and real time response type of software to gauge student involvement, so those are some things that are a little more limited in the online world." He also noted that in order to get the most students to schedule office hours, he waited until the first or second week of class to gauge their availability and then fit that into his schedule.

Dr. Vepraskas teaches Environmental Science 200 and has 20 years teaching online courses. ES200 was taught face to face prior to the pandemic, 6 semesters were taught online, including one summer. The last time ES200 was taught face to face was fall 2022 and included 450 students. He stated that, "This semester we teach face to face, keeping the online materials available on Moodle, and enrollment has dropped to 288 with only half of the students showing up for lectures." All course materials are posted on Moodle, PowerPoints are used for lectures and also posted on YouTube. Quizzes and exams are given on Moodle; the quizzes are not proctored, and the students have a 24 hour window to take the exams. The course is asynchronous, with the exception of tests and quizzes.

Dr. Vepraskas also noted that the final exam is optional for some students. Students who have a 90% or better on their exams 1 and 2 are able to opt out of the final but work on a research project. He also said that the average grade in his department is an A; grades of D and F are mainly given to students who stopped attending or skipped an exam or two and never contacted the professor.

Question and Discussion

Question: How would you feel about a section of 500 or 600 in an asynchronous course?

Vepraskas: I've never had much luck having a set time for students to meet with the online classes. They seem to like the online classes for the flexibility. It's the asynchronous they may find most attractive.

Petrovich: The challenge, when it's that large, is offering enough support for the individual students who need one on one assistance, and also the number of people that one person can effectively proctor would also be a limiting factor.

Branson: It was clear that DELTA was not going to be available for exam proctoring, so we did have to make decisions about how we were going to assess our students. We just had to acknowledge that there was no way to effectively control closed book and closed note type of requirements. We tried to design our tests in a way to randomize questions and give time constraints.

Taveirne: The biggest challenge with going extremely high in numbers is giving timely and constructive feedback. In a 15 week semester, the next section comes and a lot of foundational knowledge that we were assessing in the previous section is going to be critical. If a student does have a misconception on a topic, I want to make sure they get feedback so they do not carry that misconception along with them and affect their understanding of future content.

Question: In an in-person setting, professors are able to see if someone is confused and so are able to back up and rephrase or give additional explanations. Do you encounter this in pre-recorded lectures and how do you deal with it?

Vepraskas: I rely on the student to contact me if they do not understand something, to which I will respond individually. If it looks like a general question that others would have, I send a response via email.

Taveirne: I assess my exam questions. Moodle has great assessment metrics to determine if the question was a good question or if it was a highly missed question. That allows me to reevaluate the lecture content. If there is a misconception, I typically throw out the exam question and send an announcement to the course.

Petrovich: We pick up some of those questions by having problem sessions where students work on instructor generated questions that are similar to the homework.

Branson: There is a noticeable difference in performance of face to face versus online students. Online students seem to be a half grade below on exams. It's hard to know that they're putting effort in if they're watching recorded lectures.

Question: How do you explain the high number of A's in your course?

Vepraskas: I am under no illusion that it is great teaching but I can't figure out how they are cheating. Some students take less than 30 minutes for 50 questions. I just discovered that some of my exam questions are on Quizlet and now I'm changing questions to make them more challenging.

Taveirne: Moodle is an amazing tool to facilitate exams. By building test banks, Moodle can randomly assign questions.

Question: What is the impact on your mental health and emotional well being as an instructor teaching large, asynchronous courses?

Vepraskas: Online classes suit my style; it works for me. I do miss interacting with students, and I like having them contact me or come in for office hours.

Branson: I understand why we teach online and offer that flexibility, but it is not my favorite. I've always liked being in a classroom with students.

Petrovich: I don't mind teaching online and understand that it benefits students. I do get a lot out of in-person office hours and interactions with students because you can have social conversations with them.

Taveirne: My office hours are group office hours and are discussion based. They are the highlight of my semester.

7. Faculty Assembly Elections - *Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty*

Chair McGowan announced that for the ballot for the election of the NC State Faculty Assembly delegates will be sent electronically to current faculty senators. The candidate earning the highest number of votes will become the next delegate and the candidate earning the second highest will become the alternate.

8. Old and New Business - *Herle McGowan, Chair of the Faculty*

a. Update on revisions to UNC System Policy Manual Section 300.5.1

Chair McGowan stated, "I would now like to turn our attention to guidance regarding the implementation of the compelled speech policy that was recently provided to campuses across the system. The full document was included with the materials for today's meeting."

Chair McGowan highlighted a few passages that stood out to her. She went on to say, "I am cautiously optimistic as we go forward under this new policy. For those of us that value equity, this guidance, for the most part, reaffirms our ability to do this important work. We will have to be more conscientious in how we word questions to job candidates and in employee evaluation, but that is not inherently a bad thing. Whether we like it or not, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion have become buzzwords that can carry unintended meaning. Use of buzzwords can also allow people to become lazy in their language, with statements that lack substance or meaning. It is my hope that reframing questions and conversations to focus on student success and employee success will ultimately lead to better outcomes than we may have otherwise achieved when using the buzzwords."

9. Issues of Concern (IOCs)

Faculty Issues of Concern can be submitted at any time to a senator or to the Office of the Faculty Senate via email at Faculty_Senate@ncsu.edu

10. Adjourn

Chair McGowan adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.