

# **Faculty Administration Collaborative Committee**

**Thursday, October 8, 2020**

**2:00-3:30 p.m. SUB Banquet A & B**

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## **Minutes**

Present: Melinda Arnold, Susan Simmers, Kim Hayworth, Natalie Bohlmann, Vicki Trier, Rolf Groseth, Christine Shearer, Scott Butterfield, Joy Honea, Jennifer Lynn, Suzette Nynas

Approval of September 10, 2020 minutes pending a correction.

The correction is in regards to the original pilot group for hyflex, who have never been compensated. However, Joy Honea raised the question as to what we doing now to compensate faculty for hyflex training or teaching. Melinda Arnold noted that we will have COVID funds for this. Melinda Arnold and Joy Honea will discuss compensation now and continuing in the future, separate from this meeting.

Order of Business:

- Spring calendar implications

Joy Honea stated that the calendar is not an issue for this group, but in the CBA faculty are allowed five personal days per year. Because all breaks have been eliminated from the spring semester (per OCHE's mandate), Joy Honea proposes increasing the number of personal days available to, say, seven. School District #2 will actually have more breaks in the spring, including a spring break for the first time in many years. Faculty who have children may be in a childcare pinch.

Scott Butterfield asked if there is any CBA issues with an increase in instructional days for the spring semester. The proposed calendar would add two instructional days. Joy Honea responded that the contract length has not changed. Perhaps more instructional days would mean more flexibility for students, should they need to miss a day of class. There is also a very long time for faculty to turn in grades after the spring semester ends, and spring commencement remains on the same day (May 1). Melinda Arnold noted that we can change the date grades are due.

Kim Hayworth noted that before the academic year starts in the fall, Financial Aid is required to file our schedule for the upcoming year with the Department of Education. It's an arduous process. Changing the dates of spring semester won't just impact the staff of Financial Aid, it will affect student's aid that has been awarded. It is essential to keep the dates the same.

Susan Simmers asked if there was any BOR policy that may govern faculty personal days.

Melinda Arnold noted that faculty who had originally planned on breaks in the spring are free to build their course schedule to their advantage. Reasonable accommodations for childcare and other personal needs will be made. Rolf Groseth suggested there be a couple days in spring during which no mandatory meetings would be scheduled.

Joy Honea stated that a clear communication to faculty about in-person courses and other campus business will be needed. Rolf Groseth said we will be tracking the data if we need to pivot, but students want the modality they signed up for. Melinda Arnold noted that spring will be similar to fall, and she is fine with extending flexibility to spring. Changing the modality after students have signed up and come to class is different than students knowing some or all of the course is online at the time of registration.

Joy Honea and Natalie Bohlmann both noted that students may sign up for face-to-face and be disappointed that the course is actually hyflex due to the size of the classroom. This happened quite a bit in the fall. In the fall, it was left to faculty to interpret how often students would be face-to-face, and it ranged from once per week to once in the whole semester. The administration needs to be very clear about what is expected of faculty. We also need to be sure that we communicate to students what exactly they are getting. If the class has to be split and only meets face-to-face once per week while the rest is online, students should know that up front by indicating it is a hybrid course in Banner. Faculty were not allowed to do that in the fall, but it's essential they do for spring. Rolf Groseth noted that advisors especially should be telling students if a course may be hybrid due to social distancing constraints.

Christine Shearer noted that the face-to-face directive came from OCHE. Instructors are essential and face-to-face instruction is essential. If they checked our spring schedule and saw the majority of our courses were hybrid, that could be a problem. Natalie Bohlmann said what OCHE is asking for is impossible, given our space limitations. It is more important we be honest with our students. Scott Butterfield noted that the solution for this is to cap each course according to the space limitations in the classroom with proper social distancing. Joy Honea noted that we would then have multiple sections of the same course. Rolf Groseth said this would impact faculty workload, and students will likely fall behind in their programs. Melinda Arnold noted that she likes this idea, and we may have the space, but faculty only want to teach between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. There are only so many rooms available during that time. Joy Honea noted that students also like the 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. span, as courses outside of that are usually low enrolled. Melinda Arnold noted that spring registration opens October 19. If courses are to be listed as hybrid, that must be confirmed before the 19th. Rolf Groseth asked if there is any guideline on how much online work constitutes a hybrid course. Suzette Nynas and Natalie Bohlmann responded that there is no campus guide, as long as the course is not fully online. It qualifies as hybrid if just one class session is face-to-face. Kim Hayworth noted that students don't realize we are winging it in terms of how we manage social distancing, and they have high expectations for us. Suzette Nynas noted that faculty can include notes for when students are registering, including a schedule of when the course is online and when it is face-to-face.

- DRTC composition when there are not three tenured members in the unit

Joy Honea said the COE came to her about this issue. What have other units with few tenured faculty done? Christine Shearer and Suzette Nynas responded that, in their situations, they asked tenured faculty members from another similar discipline to join the unit DRTC. Joy Honea clarified that this would be in addition to the outside faculty member from a totally different discipline, not replacing the outside faculty member. The group agreed. Natalie Bohlmann stated that the Ed Department has discussed splitting into two units, but it will cause more problems than it solves.

- Concerns about commencement given the newest COVID numbers

Joy Honea noted that the current COVID numbers are horrifying. What will trigger a change for commencement, either to move online or cancel? Rolf Groseth responded that we are moving toward the threshold set by the county health department to end all large gatherings. When they advise cancelling, we will. Suzette Nynas advocated for developing a virtual ceremony. If we cancel this commencement, it will be the second ceremony cancelled for this group of students. Scott Butterfield noted that the county deadline is the end of October, so if we wait until then to plan a virtual event, we won't have time. Rolf Groseth stated that he will gather and welcome ideas for facilitating a virtual commencement. Jennifer Lynn stated that departments will be thrilled to create content for an online event. Scott Butterfield noted the importance of early notification, for any family who might may travel for the event.

Joy Honea noted that the only state institution doing in-person commencement is Bozeman, and they are doing it in the football stadium. Natalie Bohlmann suggested we do ours at the drive in!

- Budget update

Rolf Groseth mentioned the University Budget Advisory Committee. He stated that he has been contacting individuals for the committee, which will convene by the end of the semester. The intent is to make the process more transparent and involve people in the process, so it's ready for the new Chancellor in 2021.

- Minute taking procedures

Joy Honea noted that the minutes are overwhelming and due to the nature of this committee, accurate, detailed minutes are critical. Rita Rabe Meduna suggested the meetings be recorded and transcribed.

Meeting adjourned 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rita Rabe Meduna