

FACULTY SENATE

Minutes

The Faculty Senate met October 6, 2020, via Zoom, due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements. \$ U H Q R U R G W K H
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Attendance/Quorum (0:17)

President Don McDonnell called the meeting to order at 6:00

Reports of Officers

Report of the President– Don McDonnell (1330)

x Don welcomed everyone back to the first meeting of the new academic year.

x

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- f* He will also be talking to Erin about the Testing Center cuts.
 - x Tanya Cody's staff is happy to work with faculty, but they are extremely understaffed. They were looking to add 1.5 FTE, and instead they've lost 1.5 FTE.
- o Will be meeting with Dr. Mott on Thursday.
 - f* They'll be discussing FOAC.
 - f* They'll also be discussing the Testing Center.
 - f* Don is also going to request that our Online staff furlough on different days, so one of them will always be available.

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Report of the Administrative Council Delegate – Brenda Campbell (1:37:20)

- x Brenda has forwarded her report to the SenEx Secretary, and it has been included here as ~~Appendix B~~ ~~(Appendix B)~~
- x

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Appendix A– Addie Clark’s Summarizing Her Constituents’ Pedagogical Concerns

This statement was prepared on behalf of several of my constituents based on the first two weeks of classes. As we begin the Winter term schedule, we urge the administration to allow faculty to make decisions regarding scheduling of classes modality that best suits pedagogical practices and content areas, not strictly based on “level” of class. As the content ex

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Appendix B – Brenda Campbell's Admin Council Representative Report (PDF)

1. After the June elections for vacant Admin Council seats, new leadership was elected to serve for the upcoming AY
 - a. Co-Chairs: Zach Jones and John Irvig
 - c. Secretary: Sarah

Phrasing questions about departments vs. the university, the results trended more positive which suggests department efficacy to achieve beneficial outcomes. As new initiatives emerge, building on the strength of departments may be insightful. Leveraging positive department relationships may help improve institution-wide communication and staff morale concerns, etc.

#		Mean	SD	Variance	n
1	My department will be able to achieve essential work given furloughs.	3.42	1.07	1.15	79
2	When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that my department will accomplish them.	4.00	0.74	0.55	80
3	In general, I think that my department can obtain outcomes that are impactful to the university.	4.17	0.88	0.77	80
4	I believe my department can succeed at almost any endeavor to which we put our mind.	3.98	0.84	0.70	80
5	My department will be able to successfully overcome recent challenges.	3.85	0.81	0.65	80
6	I am confident that my department can develop an effective reopening plan.	3.67	0.98	0.97	80
7	Compared to other universities in the region, my department can do most things very well.	3.63	1.03	1.07	79
8	Even when things are tough, my department can perform quite well.	3.99	0.87	0.76	78

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In terms of reopening the Oregon Tech campus, respondents scored “I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to Oregon Tech leadership” the lowest at 3.05. Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they will abide by physical distancing and face covering expectations and will take virus precautions seriously.

#		Mean	SD	Variance	n
1	I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to Oregon Tech leadership.	3.05	1.23	1.52	79
2	I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to my supervisor.	3.92	1.07	1.14	80
3	My colleagues are taking the COVID-19 virus precautions seriously.	4.04	0.86	0.75	79
4	I am taking COVID-19 virus precautions seriously.	4.49	0.79	0.62	80
5	There are leaders/role models at Oregon Tech that provide a positive example in terms of COVID-19 precautions.	3.52	1.02	1.05	80
6	Systems are in place to enable physical distancing at Oregon Tech.	3.10	1.13	1.28	79
7	I will practice physical distancing while on campus.	4.63	0.66	0.43	79
8	I will wear a face covering when physical distancing is not feasible.	4.71	0.58	0.33	79

Open-Ended Responses

Sarah Moore, Zach Jones, and Harmony Stobaugh analyzed the three open-ended questions yielding rich qualitative data.

In response to “One concern I have about furloughs is _____,” three themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the theme.

1. **personal financial concerns** (19 out of 54 comments, 35%)
 - Concerns around when furloughs will end
 - Loss of vacation benefit
 - UI/federal benefit payment issues
 - Non-continuance of the CARES Act benefit
 - Concerns about the number of furlough days to take by the end of December and financial implications
 - Staff attrition if people need to seek different employment
 - Insecurity about providing for family
 - Communication about budget concerns, desire for more frequent communication and empathy for difficulty furlough cause
2. **supervisor workplace expectations and student access to services** (27 out of 54 responses, 50%),
 - Departmental staffing shortages; compounding work for those who remain
 - Unable to perform/provide essential services to students and the Oregon Tech community
 - Maintaining 40-hour work week while furloughing 40 percent-long days or working Sat/Sun
 - Lack of clear expectations from supervisors about workload – what is not getting done with

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- a reduction in workforce?
 - Less services to students
 - Perceived disconnect between leadership's expectations for work quality with staff
 - Communication about workload expectations – desire for more frequent communication with clear "permission" to not do tasks given reduced workforce/time.
3. lack of shared sacrifice with faculty (8 out of 54 responses, 15%)
- Perception that the faculty are not contributing to Oregon Tech's "sacrifice"
 - Staff are taking the brunt of the financial burden while faculty are
 - Communication to the campus about what faculty's contribution to our budget challenges – similar to President Nagi's communication about staff furlough days off.

In response to *One concern I have about navigating the next few months is _____*,” four themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the

1. **Re-opening and Fall planning** (27 out of 57 responses, 45%)
- x Lack of planning [this may be an indicator of late survey timing]
 - x No training for faculty/staff on remote delivery

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Responding to the question *“One thing that excites me about the next months is _____,”* four themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the

1. **Opportunity for innovation and change** (15 out of 46 responses **32%**)
 - Opportunity to look at positions that may be obsolete, make significant changes if
 - Forced adaption to digital solutions and move toward being a tech campus
 - Finding ways to make higher ed more accessible to students
 - New systems and ways of doing things; creating new efficiencies through process
 - Opportunity for open dialogue about the future of Oregon Tech
2. **Interpersonal Connections when we come back to campus** (12 out of 46 responses **26%**)
 - Returning to campus
 - Ability to work directly with students and to share their college
 - Getting to see coworkers and staff members
 - Having somewhere to go outside the
3. **None, or inability to think of anything positive right now** (11 out of 46 responses **24%**)
 - Nothing to look forward to
 - Anxiety concerns over upcoming months
 - Too many unknowns to be positive
4. **Time off and fresh start** (8 out of 46 responses **17%**)
 - Nothing to look forward to
 - Anxiety concerns over upcoming months - shadows positivity
 - Too many unknowns to be positive

The narrative comments communicate that respondents experience the sacrifice that has been required by the university. Overall, comments point to a perception that senior leaders do not empathize with what is being asked of unclassified employees; morale is low.

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The Path Forward

When organizations experience change, Berneth [2004, Expanding our understanding of the change message, *Human Resource Development Review*, 3(1), 3652] recommends attending to 5 messages. When followers clearly understand the five messages, sustained change and employee engagement often follows. The five messages include:

<i>Message</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Question It Looks to Answer</i>	<i>What does this look like?</i>
Selfefficacy	Confidence in individual and group's ability to make the change succeed.	Can we do this? Will it work?	Remind followers of past success 1 replicate. "we were successful then, we will be now" "we've done it