

Council of Faculty Representatives

Approved meeting minutes

Friday, February 16, 2024

Present: Praveen Sekhar (Chair), Dene Grigar (Vice Chair), Paul Bonamy, Yijun He, Kristin Lesseig, Sam Lohmann, Kelsey Pascoe, Samantha Reisz, Aaron Whelchel.

Recorder: Lohmann

Visitors: Members of RFO at Tri-Cities

Discussion Items

1. Committee Reports
 - a. Research and Graduate Education committee (Lesseig):
 - i. Salary bumps for graduate student workers go into effect May 1, 2024. This applies to any graduate student receiving hourly summer wages, but this does not apply to summer teaching (those changes will go into effect summer 2025).
 - ii. Office of Research and Graduate Education is working on a number of templates to assist faculty. Most have to do with creating explicit contracts regarding work expectations and clarifying policies. For example, advisors may need to clearly distinguish work a student does for pay (as RA) vs work they are doing as part of degree (as part of 800 credits).
 - b. The President's Commission on the Status of Women is promoting the WSU-UI Women's Leadership Summit in Moscow, ID on 02 April 2024:
<https://news.wsu.edu/announcements/date-set-for-the-2024-womens-leadership-conference/> (Drapela).
 - c. The Accessibility Council's next meeting is 4/20 at 1pm. (Drapela).
 - d. The Faculty Senate Ad-Hoc Committee on Salary Steps is continuing to meet, research, and draft the April 2024 report (Drapela).
 - e. Student Technology Fee Committee (Bonamy): All requests approved this year. Highlights include:
 - i. More laptops for the loaner laptop program
 - ii. Replacing the library's public workstations (which were purchased in 2015)
 - iii. Library switching to free printing for students. The library currently charges \$0.04/page black and white and \$0.35/page color (although the fees have been suspended this year as a pilot program) and requires a Cougar Card to use the system. All students receive \$2 in printing credit via the STF (Since money is all internal, actual cost is much lower than \$2/student). Switching to free printing removes the logistical issues with Cougar Cards and helps students who might have trouble finding enough money to stock their cards

- lower stress, more equitable. Printing costs will still be covered by the same amount the library has traditionally requested.
 - iv. A new electronic reader board for VSCI.
 - v. Replacing the projectors in FSC. Current projectors are outdated and will need expensive bulbs soon. New projectors are the same laser projectors used elsewhere on campus.
 - vi. Funding VIT's Wifi Modernization effort. This means replacing all wireless access points on campus, plus back-end controllers. Current system will hit end of life soon. New system will be more capable, and use the same tech being deployed in the life sciences building. VIT and the campus will be responsible for ongoing license costs. STF funded first half of this project last year, with the understanding that the campus would fund the other half. Request for remaining funds was approved by STF this year, with the understanding that other funding avenues should also be pursued
2. Discussion of anonymous "Time for a Change" letter on the loss of prestige at the university.
 - a. Grigar has written a response and sent it to faculty senate; she proposes a response from the campus. Grigar will draft a more general message.
 - b. The letter appears to blame branch campuses for problems in Pullman, and shows ignorance of research activity on other campuses
 - c. The letter is dated February 2023 but appears to be from 2024; it was distributed to a small group of faculty, then shared with faculty senate
 3. Discussion of open letter from Pullman CAS unit directors to Provost Chilton regarding ASE union negotiations in January, which appears to have been drafted and sent without consulting CAS unit directors at other campuses.