

CFR Meeting Minutes
31 January 2025
VCLS 14 & Zoom
9:15 – 10:45AM

Representatives Attending:

Bonamy, Drapela, Grigar (Chair), He, Olson, Pascoe, Reisz, Lohmann, Whelchel

Ex-officio members in attendance:

Dimitrov (Senator, TT), Sekhar (Past Chair), Solovitz (Senator, TT)

Recording Secretary: Paul Bonamy

Recorder's Note: This meeting was an open session to which all Faculty Assembly (FA) members were invited. The formal FA meeting required by CFR bylaws is planned for later in the semester.

The meeting focused on the related concerns of a) how faculty defines community and b) who we collectively think should be counted as a member of the FA for the purposes of voting and representation on CFR.

Before the bulk of the discussion there were a few brief announcements:

- Gunjan Gakhar has been elected to serve as a CT representative to Faculty Senate
- The *Know Your University* series will kick off on February 4th
- The Memo of Understanding between FACSEN and President Schulz was signed by him on the 30th and forwarded to Chancellor Netzhammer and other campus Chancellors
- The Provost's Workgroup Task Force is being finalized and should be announced soon
- An updated Event Planning Guide, with feedback from the faculty, is coming soon

Discussion commenced with a prompt provided to CFR by Obie Ford III, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

"WSU Vancouver currently has campus definitions for equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and justice. We are exploring a new campus definition for community. **What does community mean to you?** Feel free to share any words and/or associations that come to mind when you think of community on campus."

Several ideas came up repeated during discussion:

Community as a group sharing a common property. A community forms because its members share something in common. The mission of the university is to discover and

disseminate knowledge, which is a goal notionally shared by everyone here. As such, that shared mission can form a core for the university community.

Community members support one another. Communities give their members access to people with other viewpoints, expertise, resources, etc. This allows members to ask for help from one another, with the implicit or explicit expectation that they will help in the future.

Communication is essential. For a community to function, communication must flow freely among its members. Not only must information get where it needs to go, members must be confident that people are being truthful and that their fellows are listening to them. Without the ability to communicate, communities cannot support their members and fall apart.

Trust is the bedrock of a community. It's not enough to share a common goal, a community's members must be able to trust one another. Members need to know that everyone shares, if not the same goals, then at least compatible goals. It's not possible to ask for, or accept, aid if we cannot trust one another. Trust in community leaders is especially important, as leaders are uniquely positioned to support or thwart the overall vision of the community.

Communities value their members. Each member of a community is unique, and a community must value them as individuals rather than interchangeable cogs. This includes respectful behavior toward other members, celebration of achievements, and recognition and support of individual and (sub-)group needs.

Communities include and exclude. If a community is defined by a shared property, then those who do not share the property are not part of the community. When faced with insiders or outsiders who would harm community members, the community expresses its values in who it chooses to support.

What is the purpose of this prompt and the search for a definition of community? In light of Federal activity, are we looking to replace our existing DEI language with "community"? Are we trying to define community in the abstract? Are we considering the sort of community we want on campus? Is this meant to account for students, staff, and other community members, or will that be synthesized later? Is this only in the context of the campus itself, or does it include our place in Salmon Creek / Vancouver / SW Washington / et cetera?

Discussion of community dovetails with the discussion of who should be part of the Faculty Assembly for the purposes of voting and representation via CFR:

The Faculty Senate does not include adjuncts in the ranks it supports. The notional rationale for this is that adjuncts don't have the same reasons to be invested in the

campus(es) as full-time faculty. Meeting attendees responded by pointing out that adjuncts are essential to the success of many programs, and some have been here longer than more reliably than full-time faculty.

There is general agreement among attendees that adjuncts are faculty, and someone should be looking out for their needs. The issue then becomes how they should be represented within the FA.

Logistically, letting adjuncts vote in FA election would be a little tricky, but manageable. CFR would simply need to update the rolls every semester to track current adjuncts. At present (spring 2025), campus demographics include 100 TT faculty, 48 CT faculty, 12 Lecturer faculty, and 68 adjunct faculty. *A query was raised as to whether representation for temporary and fulltime faculty should be the same.*

It was suggested that *adjuncts could elect their own representative(s) to CFR.* This has attendant complications: adjuncts do not have a contractual Service component, so serving as a rep would be unpaid labor unless a stipend could be arranged. Adjunct contracts are typically per semester, while CFR seats are two-year commitments. Adjuncts would be the only faculty group in CFR represented by appointment type rather than college.

Toward the end of the meeting, *discussion focused on the administrative response to activity at the federal level, or rather, the lack thereof.* One attendee summed the issue up succinctly as “I would like to see the campus and university taking a strong and explicit stance for the groups within our community that are under attack at the moment, especially undocumented people, and trans, non-binary [individuals].”

University email communications have been largely vague, leaving faculty without clear guidance unless we’re willing to dig into the website. A summary in email would have been much preferred to vagueness and a link. *Grigar is putting together a two-page handout summarizing available information with clear guidance.* Once it has been cleared by the Chancellor and VCAA it will be distributed to faculty. [Recorder’s note: A copy is available with this document.]

Respectfully submitted by Paul Bonamy, Recording Secretary