

CFR Meeting Minutes – Summary of the Fall Faculty Assembly meeting
26 September 2025
Zoom & VDEN 129
9:15 – 10:45AM

Guests: Sandra Haynes (Interim Chancellor)

Recording Secretary: Paul Bonamy

Recorder's note: This was the fall meeting of the Faculty Assembly, and as such was open to all member of the FA who wished to attend. FA, and CFR, members attended both via Zoom and in person.

The bulk of the discussion included Interim Chancellor Haynes and centered around three major topics:

- *The nature of The rpk GROUP's current project*
Faculty requested clarification on messaging and the group's direction after the 9/22/25 Town Hall presentation by Mike Daly. It appears to be the perception among faculty that The rpk Group (rpk) is engaged in a research project with the aim of answering specific questions (or providing specific administrative recommendations) for the Chancellor and others about WSU Vancouver. Many faculty work with (broadly) similar research efforts, and thus view rpk's activity through that lens. As a result, there are questions about what questions are being asked, how qualitative data is going to be gathered, etc.

It was clarified that rpk's work is, however, explicitly not doing research to generate a report or administrative recommendations. Instead, their role is to go through our existing data sources and organize information into a format that's actually ready to use. Insofar as rpk will be making any recommendations at all, they will be on how to organize our data, not on how to interpret or use it. [Recorder's note: this is why their plans look so odd from a research perspective. A lot is missing if one assumes they're doing a research project, but what they're actually doing is the sort of step zero, get all the data in the same format and repository, work that's required before we can ask research questions.]

- *Use of the rpk data, and how things played out in Tri-Cities*
The goal of this data organization is to be able to look at campus operations systematically for potential issues and opportunities. This is *not* an outright exercise in finding cost centers to eliminate. Some essential programs are necessarily expensive to run or too important to eliminate (i.e. Nursing), and being expensive is not a mark against them.

Most of the data being collected is teaching related, with qualitative data (we'll mostly gather ourselves) feeding in to understand it. Grants or research

expenditures are not a particular area of study, except insofar as they affect teaching. This effort is also not looking at individual workload, as that's part of the Provost's workload policy initiative (<https://provost.wsu.edu/workload-policy-task-force/>). The goal for rpk's data collection is to examine student experience and how students get the education they need.

Two examples were brought up from Tri-Cities' experience with this process:

- Review of the data found that many required classes had very low enrollment. Asking why these classes have so few students in them revealed that they were scheduled in a way that made it difficult for students to take the courses. Rearranging the schedule put classes at better times, reducing the number of sections required without causing huge sections. (Enrollment went up to about 20 students per class, from 2-3.) Thus, everyone wins: students get a better schedule, students and faculty retain small class sizes, and time is freed for other activities (It was acknowledged that this example resembles the UCORE scheduling changes we did last year. It's meant as an illustration of what happened in Tri-Cities, not a prediction of what we're necessarily looking for.)
- The Hospitality Business Management program was found not to be attracting students – it had had one major in the past seven years. This issue was brought to the faculty, who noted that Tri-Cities is not exactly a hotbed for hospitality outside of the wine industry. With only one dedicated HBM faculty member, the faculty decided to restructure to keep wine management, retain some of the courses in Hospitality Business Management (and the one faculty member), but close the major itself.

A copy of the data delivered by rpk to Tri-Cities will be made available on the 23rd. Vancouver's data will be made available to the units once it has been collected. Units will receive only their own data, not data from other units.

- *How a 1% budget cut at the state level translated to 10% for Vancouver*
The new biennial budget from the state not only included a 1% funding cut for the WSU system, it also shifted a number of costs to us, rather than having them covered by the state directly. As a result, the actual decrease in support was approximately 5%. This was also a rare occasion in which the state cut base funding to the University, rather than just cutting tuition support. So, we necessarily had to make up more than just a 1% cut. It was pointed out that Vancouver is not unique in taking a 10% cut. Everett also saw as a 10% cut, and Tri-Cities received a 7% cut.

Minutes for the September 12th meeting were passed by email vote.