
Collin College Faculty Council

June 19, 2020, 1:18, Zoom | Meeting called to order by President Kat Balch

Faculty Council Representatives for 2020 – 2021

Frisco Campus	McKinney Campus	Plano Campus	Technical Campus
Levi Bryant (2020 – 22)	Marlo Ballard (2020 – 21)	Hannah Adams (2019 – 21)	Tiffany Cartwright (2020 – 22)
Diana Gingo (2020 – 22)	Robert Brown (2020 – 22)	Lynn Jones (2020 – 22)	Lorena Rodriguez (2019 – 21)
Laura Hicks (2020 – 21)	Roberta Cravo (2020 – 22)	Bridgette Kirkpatrick (2020 – 22)	Wylie Campus
Suzanne Jones (2020 – 22)	Audra Heaslip (2020 – 22)	Tonya McMillion (2020 – 22)	Mike McConachie (2020 – 22)
Jason Morgan (2020 – 22)	Jason Snyder (2019 – 21)	Marta Moore (2020 – 22)	
Kim Nyman (2019 – 21)	Vijaya Velamakanni (2019 – 21)	Barbara Stern (2020 – 22)	
Sunita Rangarajan (2019 – 21)	Judi Wohead (2020 – 22)	Larry Stern (2019 – 21)	
Debra St. John (2019 – 21)		Dean Wallace (2020 – 21)	
		Roger Ward (2019 – 21)	
		Stephen Whitley (2018 – 20)	
Associate Faculty Representatives			
Bonnie Ford (2020 – 22) Not present	Melissa Kenfield (2020 – 22)	Patricia Coble (2020 – 22)	

Also in attendance were Dr. Kimberly Harris and Dr. Rebecca Orr.

New Business

Council discusses the letter regarding fall planning concerns, composed by Prof. Heaslip and signed/commented on by over 60 faculty at meeting time.

Faculty Council (FC) President reminded attendants that the current meeting was called in order to address general concerns held by faculty at large, as reported to her and other representatives. These concerns were listed in her email to all faculty dated June 17 and include:

- Communication (mixed and lack thereof) about fall course delivery methods
- Communication (lack thereof) between leadership and faculty
- Some Deans (but not all) have held zoom meetings with their faculty issuing what appears to be definitive information regarding fall planning
- Safety concerns regarding procedures for teaching face-to-face: social distancing, sanitation of classrooms, face masks, process after student or faculty test positive
- Accommodations for at-risk and protected groups

Council representatives expressed additional concerns via the chat feature:

- “Some Deans are merely informing faculty of fall plans and not accommodating any requests, other than to mention them up the chain”
- “Some Deans are still making plans, keeping faculty out of the conversation”
- “Communication may not be the biggest problem in fall planning, but rather an absence of faculty involvement in making decisions.” This last point was stressed by many representatives in the chat – FC at least should have been a major partner in discussions and decision-making.
- “Some ADs are communicating that classes must be converted to blended rather than online due to enrollment numbers counted per campus rather than towards district numbers”
- “At the very least, the College should assure that all faculty who want to teach online can do so and that all faculty who prefer to teach FTF have a safe opportunity to do so. Like UTD's model.”
- “face masks should be required indoors – there is precedent of other colleges requiring them.” Many faculty concurred on this point.
- no in person office hours.
- “faculty to be provided face shields.”
- Keeping a FTF component, while respecting social distancing, will necessarily imply a much higher exposure for faculty than students
- Why has Collin not sent a survey of faculty and students like other institutions have done?
- “Would quarantining count against sick leave?”
- “Will new faculty have some kind of coverage because they have no benefits for the first 90 days?”
- “Would a faculty member who is teaching on campus who contracts the virus be covered by Worker's Compensation?”

McKinney representatives indicated that their Dean said HR would consider family member situations when allowing accommodations but, since they are not required under the law, representatives suggest that faculty should apply for said accommodations in order to make HR aware of the issues and let the College decide how to act.

Prof. St. John has constituents who want to know whether they can be accommodated when it is not themselves who have a disability, but someone in their household. Another one of her constituents wants to know what happens to faculty who contract virus due to contact with students and then run out of sick time.

Prof. Barbara Stern has a constituent who wants to know if faculty can require masks in their own classes, and whether faculty will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE).

Prof. Larry Stern opines that FC should ultimately present recommendations, in the spirit of shared governance, rather than ask questions of administration regarding fall plans.

Several representatives mentioned concerns regarding lack of communication or requests for faculty input from administration. Several representatives also would like to make a decision to go online as soon as possible so that we can better prepare and not repeat the scramble that occurred last spring. Representatives express concerns about the workload and disruption of usual processes involved in holding face-to-face (FTF) classes under current pandemic conditions.

The Council agrees on a series of questions to ask of administrators about to join current meeting, as follows:

1. Will faculty be involved in fall planning before decisions are final?
2. Will faculty be able to adjust their classes according to their teaching style and health/safety concerns?
3. Will faculty be involved in decisions regarding procedures for FTF teaching?
4. Does administration have plans for the inevitability when a student/faculty test positive for Covid-19?
5. Will faculty be expected to sign a liability waiver?
6. Given that faculty have been receiving different messages from different administrators, when will the administration create a clear and unified message that will apply to all campuses?

Dr. Toni Jenkins joins the meeting at 2:05 pm and informs the Council that President Matkin was planning on joining as well but is away due to a family emergency. The Council Secretary

thanks Dr. Jenkins for joining the Council and informs her that the Council has six questions to ask of her.

1. Will faculty be involved in fall planning before decisions are final?

Dr. Jenkins wanted to provide some context: Nobody wanted things to go this way. When things changed in March, she was focused on communication across the district. She made an effort to communicate but does not know what happened in every single case. However, now she realizes that the situation did not end in May 15, it is continuing so the need for communication continues. She tried to respect the fact that May 15 through June 6 were not faculty contract days but now realizes that may have been a mistake.

Yes, Dr. Jenkins thinks we need to have more faculty involvement, and to this effect she has discussed with FC President the idea of creating a task force. Some things we don't have choices on and we will have to do regardless – guidelines that exist outside the college. Covid appears to be a moving target. A faculty taskforce, possibly subset of this group, should be created. FC can suggest a team.

2. Will faculty be able to adjust their classes according to their teaching style and health/safety concerns?

There are aspects of this that involve need for accommodation – we do have a process for requesting accommodations, it goes through HR and requires physician note.

Colleges and ISDs in the area are looking at three basic structures: fully FTF, fully online, blended. Collin is settling on a combination of all three, and faculty will have to offer all three modalities. Dr. Jenkins is interested on feedback from faculty on how their courses can be adjusted to the different structures. We need to have a discussion about these issues.

3. Will faculty be involved in decisions regarding procedures for FTF teaching?

There are things faculty should be involved in and things they would not want to be involved in. Administrators have been assessing every space on campus and discussing issues of social distancing, etc. In some areas social distancing will not be possible, so students may be required to wear masks in those areas. Everywhere else masks will be recommended but not required. This month's board meeting has an increase in purchasing request for PPE (over \$0.5 million) and UBM and D&A cleaning supplies. She's looked at whether schedule could be changed to have more cleaning time between classes - that does not seem feasible.

Several faculty brought up their own concerns regarding the college not requiring students to wear masks, as well as the fact that it would be so much simpler and cheaper to go fully online. Dr. Jenkins expressed the fact that there are many articles on both sides of the mask issue, and that Governor Abbot has not made it a requirement. Some representatives argued back that

science-based articles are only on one side of the mask issue, and that Governor Abbot is a politician and not a scientist.

Prof. West asked what is the argument against deciding to go fully online at this time. Dr. Jenkins responded that many students do not want to take online classes. She mentioned a Plano ISD survey where majority of parents preferred to send their children to school in the fall. She also mentioned how to handle Collin faculty that teach dual-credit in campuses which are holding FTF classes.

4. Does administration have plans for the inevitability when a student/faculty test positive for Covid-19?

Larry Stern brought up this question. Jenkins said they are working on the process.

5. Will faculty be expected to sign a waiver of any college liability

Dr. Jenkins has not heard anything about this issue.

6. Given that faculty have been receiving different message from different administrators, when will the administration create a clear and unified message that will apply to all campuses?

Dr. Jenkins is not sure that a clear and unified message is realistic because different campuses have different needs and situations. Issues like whether science labs are concentrated or spread throughout the campus, etc. Physical spaces within each campus have to be taken into consideration. A unified message will not work and she does not think that there will be one.

One representative brought up fear of losing their job if they get sick with Covid and run out of sick leave. Dr. Jenkins was shocked that faculty would feel insecure in their jobs under current leadership, and she asked whether other faculty felt the same way. Many representatives stated that this is a common concern among themselves and/or their colleagues. Dr. Jenkins expressed her shock at this fact.

Dr. Jenkins thinks that the constant mass communication that went on during spring should have kept going now in the summer. She now realizes that she has to have more communication with faculty. She looks forward to continuing to communicate with faculty from a problem-solving standpoint.

Prof. Rodriguez mentioned that fear of repercussions may come from faculty's different experiences with different deans and associate deans.

Prof. Larry Stern brought up one possible root for this fear, an email from President Matkin to the college community dated May 15 containing a COVID Recovery Plan document where the following is stated:

b) If you do not report to work as scheduled, the college will apply your available paid vacation hours and any other applicable paid leaves to your absences.

Once all such applicable paid leave is exhausted, the college will terminate your employment if you do not return to work by the date requested. Please also note that such an election by you not to return to work as requested may affect your eligibility for unemployment benefits under current state guidance.”

Dr. Jenkins responded that this particular statement was poorly written and was not meant to antagonize the faculty.

FC President Balch brings up a question regarding compensation for online templates being currently developed, and possibly going forward. Dr. Jenkins mentions that this is an unexpected expense, but she has sent Dr. Matkin a proposal for compensating this work with a low and high pay point, Dr. Matkin expressed preference for higher point. Compensation will be on a course by course basis. We will be getting more information soon.

Prof. Barbara Stern asks Dr. Jenkins what her takeaway is from this meeting. Dr. Jenkins responds that she takes away that there is a great deal of anxiety, justifiable in many cases. There is also a deep sense of commitment on the part of faculty, but the uncertainty of this whole situation brings out anxiety. Faculty care deeply about our and our colleagues' wellbeing. She thinks administration needs to do a better job of communicating. She will not make promises she cannot keep but she promises that she looks forwards to work with a faculty group on this issue.

Dr. Jenkins leaves the meeting and the Council continues the conversation.

Prof. Heaslip will be cleaning up document and then the Council, as a group, will decide whether to share it outside of Faculty Council and when.

The issue brought up by Prof. Harris regarding faculty loads getting decimated in the face of Covid is tabled at this time.

Motion to adjourn; second; meeting adjourned.