

Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 12, 2019, 3:00-4:40 PM
Browning Hall Auditorium 160

I. Meeting called to order by Faculty Senate President, Gary Renz.

II. Presentation by Kelly-Kate Pease concerning Salary & Fringe Benefits Committee

K Pease said the Salary and Fringe Benefits committee is negotiating with the administration. K Pease reported on the results of the Salary & Fringe Benefits Committee survey results from fall 2018. 100 faculty assembly members responded to the survey. The top three items, in rank order of importance:

1. To maintain the current matching retirement rate
2. To increase full time faculty salaries
3. To increase adjunct salaries

III. University Update by President Stroble

President Stroble gave the following updates:

- There is now a spring convocation, so there are two convocations per academic year.
- There are updates on the steering committee portal showing the implementation teams' final reports or their progress
- The administration and faculty need to frequently continue their discourse with one another
- The Business Journal reached out to her to comment on the state of higher education, to which she responded
- The new Fall Homecoming weekend was a great success. She thanked everyone for coming to the basketball games and commented how she had never seen the stands so full.
- The Women's Foundation of St. Louis has recognized Webster University as a great workplace for women
- The annual Thanksgiving dinner was spread over two days due to the weather. She said that the Board of Trustees made donations to pay for this event.
- The Diversity & Inclusion Conference will be held February 26, 27, and 28, 2019. The meals will be free because there was a \$100,000.00 donation to subsidize the costs of the conference. The Board of Trustees also donated to this event.
- The President's office has cut its budget along with all other departments. She said the budgets for the President's office have been:

2017-2018	\$478,185
2018-2019	\$249,550
2019-2020	\$196,931

IV. Drop/Add & Tuition Refund Policy Change presentation by Beth Russell

B. Russell explained the purpose of the changes to the Drop/Add policy (see Attachment A). She said there are two major changes to the Drop/Add policy: 1) changing the drop periods from 2 weeks to 1 weeks; and 2) changing the timetable for tuition refunds. The changes will affect all of Webster domestic and global campuses, as well as online learning.

Another change will be attendance verification utilizing Starfish. This change will only affect the Webster Groves campus. This method of verification will reduce the number of manual adjustments for refunds and will align Webster with peer institution practices.

She stated they would like to implement these changes for the next catalog and reiterated that there are processes in place for all special circumstances and exceptions of students.

G. Renz told the Assembly that this appears to be an academic policy issue and thus should be voted on by the Senate, but not the Faculty Assembly. Provost Schuster said this change is an administrative policy issue and thus Senate approval is not required. G. Renz said the Senate would discuss this change at that week's Senate meeting.

T. Reilly asked Provost Schuster to provide the Senate a breakdown of how the Drop/Add changes will impact the student body and request figures to support these changes. He said he would provide this information.

V. Academic Program Review Committee update by Nancy Hellerud and Marty Steed

N. Hellerud and M. Steed discuss the status of the Academic Program Review (APR) committee. It has been almost one year since HLC visited Webster and APR committee has met three times to date. The committee is feeling a sense of urgency to move forward on its charge. The next meeting is February 18, 2019.

APR committee has decided that all programs will be reviewed, but due to the urgency, only the sustainability of small programs will be reviewed at this time in order to report to HLC in summer 2020. There are approximately 50 programs to be reviewed at this time. The reviews will start with departmental self-studies. This information will be shared and working groups will be formed. The results will be then sent to deans. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will data that supports the reviews.

VI. Updates by Provost Schuster

Provost Schuster reported that Webster is doing well addressing budgetary challenges this year. Though this year's graduate tuition revenues are lower than last year, there

has been \$6 million reduction in operating expenses compared with last year. Most of that reduction has been by eliminating travel and entertainment expenses and from turnover and retirements. A “position control” committee has limited the number of these positions that were filled.

Provost Schuster made several other announcements:

- Webster will be choosing a marketing firm to assist Webster later that week.
- Webster was awarded a National Science Foundation grant of \$120,000.
- The search for a new Dean of Leigh Gerding College of Fine Arts has start by forming a committee and retaining a search firm.
- The School of Business has gained accreditation.
- He and professional counseling faculty from Webster Groves recently went to South Carolina to meet with the CACREP accreditation team. The Counseling Department is waiting to hear regarding accreditation.

Provost Schuster answered the following questions:

1. Where are we in the budgeting process?

JS: The budget steering committee has a meeting this week and the budget must be completed by mid-March. This year, there was a continued slide in military and campuses and graduate enrollment. All departments are making 8-10% cuts. We need to start thinking of different ways to do things.

2. Some departments are experiencing random cuts, other departments have many holes in the department (in terms of replacing staff and faculty), and other departments are fully staffed. How do you explain these differences?

JS: Budget cuts are not associated with faculty positions. We will be looking at the number of students in departments to determine filling positions.

3. In some departments, many professors are retiring, leaving new professors to take over departments. Can new faculty be hired so the retiring professors have time to mentor the younger professors?

JS: I have signed off on many hiring of new faculty.

4. a) How much revenue do we anticipate from our new partnership with Uzbekistan to generate?

JS: There has not been much from this year because we got a late start. We anticipate that we will net around \$500,000.00 next year. All of our costs are instructional only.

- b) Should we expect more partnerships or mergers?

JS: Do you know something I don't know?

Meeting Adjourned: 4:40 p.m.

Attachment A

Drop/Add & Tuition Refund Policy Change

Policy Change (Effective June 1, 2019):

The Drop/Add period will end on the Friday of the first week of classes. (NOTE: The catalog language will change slightly with revisions in yellow: “Students may drop a course through Friday of the **first** week of an eight-week, nine-week or **semester** course.” The remainder of the policy language will remain the same.)

Refund Schedule Change (Effective June 1, 2019) (*):

	Date	16-Week Class	8 or 9-Week Class
Drop:	Week 1	100%	100%
Withdrawal:	Week 2	75%	75%
	Week 3	50%	50%
	Week 4	25%	25%

(*) Differing State regulations may require manual adjustments to the refund schedule.

Rationale for Changes:

- Classroom instruction can become quickly focused on the subject area with earlier resolution of class rosters.
- Faster resolution of enrollment will lead to better compliance with federal regulations for accurate financial aid distribution.
- Allows the implementation of the attendance verification survey through Starfish, now in pilot phase, to eliminate the paper “goldenrod” process effective Summer, 2019.
- Improves compliance with state regulations regarding refunds which will lead to a reduction in manual adjustments to student accounts.
- Aligns Webster University with peer institutions who already enforce a one week drop policy along with a tiered refund system.

Communication Schedule:

- February, 2019
 - Final Confirmation and begin notifications.
 - Update and rewrite catalog language. Update academic calendars.
 - Notify Bursar’s Office and Finance to update systems for new refund policy.
 - Notify Community (Directors, Students, Faculty, Etc.)
- March, 2019 – August 2019
 - Communication out to community in alignment with registration and term/semester start dates.

Updated: 2/6/2019