



ADVISORY COUNCIL OF FACULTY
Meeting Minutes and Report – Thursday, February 6, 2020
Location: Lew McManus Conference Room, Building One,
Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV

#	STATUS			NAME	INSTITUTION
	Present	Phone	Regrets		
1			x	Mike Lilly	Bluefield State College
2	x			Todd Cimino-Johnson	Blue Ridge CTC
3			x	Mike Ditchen, <i>Webmaster</i>	Bridge Valley CTC
4	x			Joseph Allen, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Concord University
5			x	Shirley Murphy	Eastern WV CTC
6	x			Harry Baxter, <i>Legislative Coordinator</i>	Fairmont State University
7	x			Marjorie Stewart (alt. for Kevin Evans)	Glenville State College
8	x			Amine Oudghiri-Otmani	Marshall University
9	x			Katie Hopkins	Mountwest CTC
10	x			Karen Carter	New River CTC
11			x	Amy Cunningham, <i>Chair</i>	Pierpont CTC
12			x	Tom Sydow	Potomac State College of WVU
13	x			Max Guirguis, <i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Shepherd University
14	x			Charles Puckett	Southern WV CTC
15	x			Sylvia Senften	West Liberty University
16	x			Kathy Herrington	WV Northern Community College
17			x	Celia McLay	WV School of Osteopathic Med.
18	x			Barbara Ladner	WV State University
19	x			Roy Nutter	West Virginia University
20			x	Gary Thompson	WVU at Parkersburg
21	x			Asad Davari	WVU Institute of Tech.
				GUESTS	
				Dave Hauser (alt. for Roy Nutter)	
				Marybeth Beller (alt. for Amine Oudghiri-Otmani)	
	Present	Phone	Regrets		

The Advisory Council of Faculty (ACF) met with legislators at the State Capitol on February 6, 2020 to advocate for continued support of higher education in West Virginia.

ACF Legislative Coordinator, Harry Baxter, set up advance appointments with the following legislators:

- ❑ Senator Patricia Rucker, Chair of the Senate Education Committee
- ❑ Delegate Joe Ellington, Chair of the House Education Committee
- ❑ Delegate Eric Householder, Chair of the House Finance Committee
- ❑ Senator Mitch Carmichael, Senate President
- ❑ Delegate Paul Espinosa, House Majority Whip
- ❑ Senator Craig Blair, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee

Sen. Blair, who is still recuperating from a serious traffic accident, cancelled the meeting the day before. The other five meetings were held as scheduled.

The central issue that dominated all the discussions was funding. ACF members took turns informing the legislators about the effects of several years of budget cuts on their respective institutions. The reported negative effects of decreased funding included higher tuition, personnel loss, larger class sizes, elimination of academic programs, greater teaching loads, reductions in tutoring and advising services, increases in drop-out rates, and rising student debt.

The legislators commended the faculty representatives for surviving, even thriving, under stressful fiscal conditions. They went on to assure the group that no cuts to higher education funding were being contemplated by the governor or the legislature for the next fiscal year. One legislator added that if a budget cut is proposed for higher education, it will not exceed one percent.

There was some discussion of the proposed elimination of the business and inventory tax, which accounts for over \$200 million in state revenue annually. The concern the ACF expressed was that if a portion of this tax revenue is used to

fund K-12 education, then higher education funding might be cut to backfill the K-12 budget. The legislators said that if this ballot measure is approved, the tax would be phased out over a period of five to seven years, so the state should be able to absorb the fiscal impact without any major disruption. Further, the anticipated business that would come to West Virginia from eliminating the tax should offset any temporary reduction in state revenue. It should be noted that the proposed constitutional amendment must clear both legislative chambers by a two-thirds vote before it goes on the November ballot for a statewide vote.

The ACF inquired about the progress made in developing a funding formula for higher education. The legislators said that this is still a work in progress and that the legislature is unlikely to pass something this session, as college and university officials are still working with the HEPC on a comprehensive formula. At least two legislators have indicated that whatever formula the HEPC ultimately settles on, it must be performance-based and acceptable to the “big schools” in the state.

On a separate note, it seems that the legislative leadership is not keen on moving forward the “campus carry” bill this session, although this was not explicitly stated. The obvious reason is that the same legislators who have thwarted the bill last year are still in office. It is highly likely that a similar gun bill will be reintroduced next year when a new legislature convenes and committee membership changes.

Between legislative visits, the ACF held a brief meeting. Other than reflecting on the earlier meetings with legislators, there were two key issues on the agenda:

1. Discussion of how to divide up the four tasks currently performed by outgoing webmaster Michael Ditchen: 1) designing the ACF brochure, 2) maintaining the ACF website, 3) managing the ACF Listserv, and 4) organizing the annual Great Teachers Seminar. With no volunteers coming forward, the discussion was tabled to the next ACF meeting, when Michael Ditchen could speak to the duties and responsibilities that go along with each task.

2. Discussion of an invitation by Del. Ellington (Education Chair) to put together a plan or statement detailing the basic math and writing skills that high school graduates should possess to be ready for college. The aim of the plan is to reduce the need for remedial and co-requisite coursework in college. Developing a thorough list of expectations for incoming freshmen may entail working with high school officials and possibly the Superintendent's Office. One ACF rep suggested forming a work group to brainstorm, but no conclusive decision was reached.

The meeting had to be cut short to go to the next scheduled appointment.

Respectfully submitted,

Max Guirguis, PhD

Professor of Political Science

Co-Chair, Department of Political Science, Global Studies, & Geography

Shepherd University

Shepherdstown, WV