

## Minutes

The Faculty Senate met October 6, 2020, via Zoom, due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements. A recording of the Zoom session can be found at this link: [https://youtu.be/IBT2oYGpQ\\_c](https://youtu.be/IBT2oYGpQ_c)

### Attendance/Quorum (0:17)

President Don McDonnell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. All Senators or alternates were present except Tracey Coon and Jherime Kellermann.

### Approval of Minutes (3:32)

Minutes of the June 2, 2020 meeting were approved, with minor changes.

### Report of the University President – Dr. Nagi Naganathan (5:07)

- Dr. Naganathan thanked the faculty for helping to get the academic year off to a good start.
- He said that students have expressed interest in being able to continue to take classes on campus, and that only 3% of the students on the Klamath Falls campus are taking all remote courses this term.
- Students have been very happy with their on-campus experience so far this term.
- Dr. Naganathan encouraged faculty and staff to remember that our current difficulties will not be over simply because 2020 is over, and implores us to think about the future.
- While other universities are seeing significant enrollment decreases, we are holding steady.
- Thanked classified and unclassified staff for helping us handle our finances.
- For the current fiscal year, the final decision on funding from HECC is still pending. Regardless of the decision, though, Dr. Naganathan believes the funding situation will be “manageable” this year.
- There is concern over the new state funding model that has been proposed. It’s possible that Oregon Tech could lose up to \$6 million under this model. Dr. Naganathan will continue to lobby HECC on our behalf.
- There will be a Town Hall on 10/27.
- Dr. Naganathan then offered to answer any questions:
  - Christopher Syrnyk asked whether the proposed funding model is still an outcomes-based model, or if it is something entirely different.
    - Dr. Naganathan said that the model is still performance-based, but some of the funding is based on our mission, and this is what’s being affected negatively: under the new model, we would no longer get preferential treatment for some of our programs that have large expenses.
- End of report.

## Reports of Officers

### Report of the President – Don McDonnell (13:30)

- Don welcomed everyone back for the first meeting of the new academic year.
- He said that “Our current routine is that we don’t have a routine.” In the face of the difficulties that we are all facing, we should continue to connect with our colleagues and look for unity rather than division. To this end, he will be sending out an email tomorrow to all faculty, urging them to connect with their senators.
  - Something we should work on as senators is reaching out to our constituents more regularly.
- Upcoming meetings:
  - Don will be meeting with Erin Foley tomorrow.
    - He will be requesting that we get more regular updates on COVID-19 information (either daily or weekly updates).

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- He will also be talking to Erin about the Testing Center cuts.
  - Tanya Cody's staff is happy to work with faculty, but they are extremely short-staffed. They were looking to add 1.5 FTE, and instead they've lost 1.5 FTE.
- Will be meeting with Dr. Mott on Thursday.
  - They'll be discussing FOAC.
  - They'll also be discussing the Testing Center.
  - Don is also going to request that our Online staff furlough on different days, so one of them will always be available for faculty.
- Will meet with Drs. Naganathan and Mott on 10/13. They will discuss:
  - FOAC
  - The Testing Center
  - COVID-19 federal funds and furloughs
  - COVID-19's impact on our budget
- Don thanked the negotiating team and the leaders in our union.
  - He urged us to not get angry, but to instead work as a unified group to make a difference.
- Regarding Senate standing committees:
  - Apologized for the delay in getting committees assigned and said that the hope is that next year we'll have committees assigned before we leave in June.
  - The committees for this year are listed on pages 6 and 7 of the October packet.
  - Will be looking to make sure that Teshome Jiru (currently listed as a member of Faculty Appeals) is tenured.
  - Sean Sloan has been added to RPT.
  - If you know anyone who wants to be on FCC this year, there is still one open spot.
- Thanked Academic Standards for their work on their recommendations for how to reconfigure Faculty Senate after a union contract is reached.
- Don met with Mark Neupert, who is now working with the department of Grants and Sponsored Projects. Contact Mark for help with developing grants and/or sponsored projects.
- Encouraged any faculty member that's on a committee to share the committee's discussions and work with their colleagues across the university, and to seek input from others outside the committee.
- End of report.

### Report of the Vice President – Christopher Syrnyk (23:45)

- Christopher thanked the facilities staff for their efforts toward campus beautification.
- He also thanked ITS for their help with technological problems as the term began.
- Reminder to senators (and to other faculty) that the Elections Committee is looking for candidates for the IFS Representative position. Any nominations should be sent in by 10/7.
- End of report.

### Report of the ASOIT Delegate – Mason Wichmann (25:12)

- ASOIT is looking to create a subcommittee to empower other students aside from just ASOIT members to be able to make decisions and provide input.
- Looking for ways to improve and expand ASOIT's media presence.
- End of report.

## Reports of Standing Committees

### Faculty Rank Promotion & Tenure (RPT) – Monica Breedlove (26:45)

- Committee just received its charges, so they have not yet met.
- RPT's main charge is to review the promotion policies for TT as well as NTT faculty.
  - Because we have no policy for NTT promotion, and these matters are currently under negotiation, Monica asked if RPT should even take on this charge, or if it is instead a matter for OT-AAUP.

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- Cristina Negoita said that TT and NTT promotion policies have been proposed as articles during the negotiation process. The administration has argued that these articles are permissive, which means they do not have to bargain them.
  - OT-AAUP proposed the articles again recently “as references to current policy,” but they have not heard back from the administration yet.
- Don asked if it would be useful for members of RPT and the OT-AAUP team to meet with SenEx to discuss the scope and purpose of this charge further.
  - The conversation will continue outside of Faculty Senate meeting time.
- End of report.

### Faculty Welfare – Yasha Rohwer (31:08)

- The committee has received its charges but has not met yet. Yasha anticipates having more information at next month’s meeting.
- End of report.

### Faculty Compensation (FCC) – Sean Sloan (31:33)

- The committee has received their charges and has extended an invitation to the Provost and HR to participate in the committee as *ex officio* members.
  - The Provost responded by pointing out that she is constrained from discussing certain topics with FCC due to the ongoing union negotiations.
    - Sean requested discussion on the idea that FCC’s purview should be widened to make it a more useful resource for faculty *and* administration.
      - Mark Clark said that the procedures currently outlined by policy with regard to FCC already allow for what Sean is suggesting.
      - Don raised the question of what faculty can and can’t discuss with administration currently. He suggested that FCC put together a report around Sean’s request and include it in the next packet so we can have further discussion in November.
      - To Sean’s concern about not being legally able to share information with the administration, Mark suggested that FCC go ahead and carry out the salary study without direct cooperation with administration.
- End of report.

### Academic Standards – Addie Clark (38:45)

- The committee has received its charges but has not met yet.
- Addie asked if anyone had questions about the report that came out of Academic Standards’ work last year.
  - Don asked if the committee’s assumption that Welfare, RPT, and FCC would no longer exist post-CBA was based on other universities’ experiences, or something else.
    - Addie said that she has the data on this, but cannot recall it exactly at the moment. She believed that the assumption mostly came from the fact that, post-CBA, these committees will “have their hands tied” by the new contract and thus simply won’t have a meaningful role to play going forward.
- End of report.

### Reports of Special or Ad Hoc Committee

- Currently, there are no Special or Ad Hoc committees.

### Unfinished Business

- Currently, there is no unfinished business.

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### New Business

#### Sean Sloan (41:50)

- Sean said he has concerns with rank, promotion, and tenure: more specifically, that many members of promotion and tenure committees still evaluate candidates based on the old “three legs of a stool” (teaching, leadership, and scholarship) model when that doesn’t match the job descriptions of some faculty that we have been hiring over the last decade.
  - He argued, that, for example, our current policy wouldn’t allow for a faculty member who was hyper-focused on research to be successful, even if that faculty’s research positively affected and raised the profile of the university.
    - Sean recommended that we move from the “three legs of a stool” model to “a filling the bucket mentality.”
      - This would also help us to reemphasize the importance of quality teaching to the tenure and promotion processes, since we market ourselves as a “teaching university.”
  - Sean would like to see RPT charged in a way that will help them address this issue.
    - Monica stated that RPT already has a charge that contains this concern, so they will be working on it in the future.

### Open Floor

#### Yasha Rohwer (46:15)

- Yasha said that he has received complaints from his constituents about Board of Trustees member Kelley Minty-Morris’s recent decision to attend a mask-less, non-socially-distanced event. He asked that SenEx consider writing a resolution to condemn this behavior.
  - Mark Clark spoke in support of Yasha.

#### Cristina Negoita (47:20)

- Cristina spoke to remind RPT that there are also librarian policies around promotion and tenure to consider.
  - Monica responded that Iris is on RPT to help the committee to better address these things.

#### Addie Clark (48:00)

- Addie provided a statement from some of her constituents, regarding concerns they have about how “reopening” plans are being handled. The full text of this statement has been included below as **Appendix A (pgs. 9-10)**.

#### Monica Breedlove (54:45)

- Monica brought up the case of the faculty member who was denied tenure relinquishment and argued that this faculty member should be given an answer as to why their request was denied.
  - Don said that this is something he intends to discuss with Dr. Naganathan and Dr. Mott on 10/13.
  - Yasha volunteered that Welfare received a charge to look into this incident.

#### Kyle Chapman (56:30)

- Kyle is concerned by the rumor that faculty will not be notified if students in their classes test positive for COVID-19 unless it is known for certain that that instructor has been put in danger of infection.
  - Christopher agreed with Kyle, and added the concern that while contact tracing has been mentioned as an option, it doesn’t seem to have been implemented yet.
  - Addie expressed concerns that providing the information that Kyle is looking for might cause a HIPAA violation.
    - Kyle responded that this wouldn’t be a HIPAA violation.
  - Paula Russell said that we are currently following established risk management guidelines, and according to those guidelines, we wouldn’t need to inform faculty about their students’ status unless we know that they are in direct danger of infection.

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- Andria Fultz had a question regarding the discussions of student/instructor quarantining that were held in the summer versus how this has actually been implemented thus far during fall term.
- Dr. Mott spoke to provide Erin Foley's response to Kyle's original concern: essentially, the county health department is only interested in informing people who have 1) been closer than six feet to the infected person and 2) been within that range for at least fifteen minutes. If you don't meet those criteria, you are not notified.
  - Cristina asked how students who might be affected are informed.
    - Dr. Mott wasn't sure of the answer, but suggested that Cristina reach out to Erin to find out.
- Don said he will bring up this concern with Erin Foley when he meets with her tomorrow.
  - Cristina suggested that he also bring up the possibility that COVID-19 is airborne and that we need to adjust our guidelines to address that.

### Report of the Provost – Dr. Joanna Mott (1:08:05)

- Dr. Mott began her report by saying that she would send her report on to the SenEx Secretary. As of the writing of these minutes, that report has not yet been received, and so is not included in the Appendices below.
- She thanked all the faculty for doing the work necessary to get the term off to a good start.
- Some students have had concerns about faculty and/or other students not wearing masks in buildings or during class sessions; Dr. Mott assured the Senate that these complaints are being taken very seriously.
  - Dr. Mott stated that we should feel empowered to remove students who do not obey the mask mandate from our classrooms.
  - She also said that a frequent cause of students' issues with mask-wearing has been their taking off their mask to drink or eat, and then not replacing it afterward. It is possible, then, that new recommendations will be introduced in the future banning food and drink entirely from classrooms to avoid this issue.
- Winter term planning is underway, and currently the plan is to duplicate what we're doing this term.
  - Dr. Mott said that students feel largely positive about this state of affairs and have been handling it well.
- The statewide Provosts' Council is meeting weekly currently.
  - There is focus currently by HECC on increasing access and equity. In particular, they want to improve the transfer process.
    - There is a study group working on this problem, which includes Wendy Ivie.
      - This group is looking into the possibility of some common course numbering, as well as potential for GenEd revision.
- Budgets have been loaded and are available. If there are questions, reach out to Ken Sartain.
- Staff are still furloughing at either 20% or 40%. This means continually reduced and limited services.
- Regarding requests for equipment and/or new positions: Dr. Mott said that information about these will go out to departments soon.
- Regarding enrollment, Dr. Mott said that we'll either be flat, or down very slightly.
  - This year's budget was originally put together on the assumption of a 1% enrollment increase, so if these numbers hold, we will be down \$350,000.
- Dr. Mott described the new (potential) HECC funding model as being "a major concern for us."
- Retention efforts are looking promising. Thanks to advisors for contributing to retention efforts.
  - Advising & Retention Office has come up with plans to focus on freshmen and transfer students this term to increase the amount of students who return in the winter.
  - This year, we had 84% of the transfer students from last year return (up from 81.4% the year before).
  - Freshman retained stayed flat at 75.8%.
  - Overall, we almost made it to 80% retention across these two groups (79.6%), and these groups are crucial to getting funding via the model.
- We are hiring Embedded Advising Coordinators for each College. These are not new positions, but replacements for earlier positions that were discontinued.
- Dr. Mott then took questions. (1:19:30)
  - Addie asked to clarify if the moratorium on food and drink in the classroom applied to instructors, too.
    - Dr. Mott said no, this would not include faculty.

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- Cristina asked why the Vice President of Senate is no longer included in meetings department chairs' meetings (what, she says, used to be Academic Council).
    - Dr. Mott clarified that Academic Council meetings will still be held. The chairs' meetings were separate and done on an ad hoc basis. When chairs meet, that information should be disseminated by chairs to their departments.
      - Cristina asked why the Vice President was left out of these discussions and requested that they be included in the future.
  - Kyle asked if it would be possible to hold a workshop for faculty who are preparing portfolios for promotion and/or tenure this year. Typically, this workshop is held during Convocation, but it was not this year.
    - Dr. Mott agreed that this should happen.
    - Christopher offered to pass his notes from last year's session on to Monica so that she could prepare a workshop through RPT. Alternately, he could just make them available publicly to whoever wants to see them.
  - Andria had constituents ask if they are able to defer going up for tenure and/or promotion for a year because of COVID-19.
    - Dr. Mott said that this is something she can't comment on because of the current negotiations, but that it is something that administration's bargaining team is alright with.
  - Cristina asked for clarification on how student evaluation numbers are being used during COVID-19.
    - Dr. Mott said that the evaluations were processed in the spring but were not used on APEs. They were looked at only in terms of student issues and concerns. Deans and chairs did not look at them. For fall, the evaluations will be treated as usual (in theory, though this is part of the current bargaining).
  - Terri asked Dr. Mott what it was that she learned about student preferences and feedback based on the spring's qualitative evaluation questions.
    - Dr. Mott hasn't looked at this information in a long time, but brought up a few things:
      - Students get frustrated by slow response times from faculty.
        - Terri made the point that faculty email loads have increased substantially over the spring and fall terms, adding to communication delays.
      - Generally, there was more satisfaction with synchronous classes than asynchronous classes.
    - Andria stated that students also get frustrated by having courses that just redirect them to Pearson instead of providing them with original content.
    - Addie added a suggestion that we should inform students about email/message response times, since "within twenty-four hours" might be reasonable but "within an hour" may not be.
      - Christopher spoke in support of Addie's comment.
- End of report.

### Report of the President's Council Delegate – Don McDonnell (1:36:26)

- President's Council has not yet met, so there is no report.

### Report of the Association of Oregon Faculties (AOF) Representative (1:36:35)

- There is currently no AOF Representative, so no report.

### Report of the Inter-institutional Faculty Senate (IFS) Representative – Mark Clark (1:36:45)

- IFS has not met yet, so no report.

### Report of the Fiscal Operations Advisory Council (FOAC) Representative – Christopher Syrynk (1:37:05)

- FOAC has not yet met, so no report.

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### Report of the Administrative Council Delegate – Brenda Campbell (1:37:20)

- Brenda has forwarded her report to the SenEx Secretary, and it has been included here as **Appendix B (pgs. 11-17)**.
- Held elections in June to select new officers:
  - Co-chairs: Zach Jones and Jolyn Dahlvig
  - Secretary: Sarah Matchett
  - Communications: Becky Burkeen
  - Representative to Senate: Brenda Campbell
  - FOAC Representative: Jolyn Dahlvig
  - Welcome and Welfare Working Group Chair: Sarah Moore
  - Special Development Working Group Chair: Nyesia Driver
- Sent out a “pulse check” survey in July, and got 82 responses out of 139 unclassified staff. Brenda offered to provide the full survey results if that would be helpful.
  - Staff were concerned about furloughing, and three things in particular:
    - Furloughs causing personal financial hardship.
    - Furloughs making it hard to deliver essential services.
    - “Lack of shared sacrifice” with the university faculty.
  - Staff were also concerned about reopening/fall planning, workload, workplace insecurity, childcare, and generally low morale and uncertainty. Brenda reiterated that these survey results are from July.
  - Staff also reported feeling optimistic about Oregon Tech’s ability to meet these challenges.
  - Goals for the future:
    - Support and advocate for unclassified staff.
    - Work to increase effective communication across campus.
    - Work to improve staff morale.
    - Team with HR to provide more professional development opportunities for unclassified staff.
  - After establishing the above goals, an ad hoc group brainstormed some ways in which these goals could be accomplished. The list generated by this group was forwarded to Dr. Naganathan.
- Andria made a statement in support of furloughed staff.
  - Don seconded this sentiment.
    - Brenda suggested that we pass on this sentiment to the support staff that we work with directly.
- End of report.

### Adjournment

Don McDonnell adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ben Bunting, Secretary

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### Appendix A – Addie Clark’s Summarizing Her Constituents’ Pedagogical Concerns

This statement was prepared on behalf of several of my constituents based on the first two weeks of classes. As we begin setting the Winter term schedule, we urge the administration to allow faculty to make decisions regarding scheduling of classes in the modality that best suits pedagogical practices and content areas, not strictly based on “level” of class. As the content experts in their field, and through years of experience, faculty possess knowledge of the best ways to teach courses and should be allowed to teach in the modality that will best serve students in the current crisis. By forcing faculty to teach all 100 and 200 level classes in person and all 300 and 400 level classes remotely (with exceptions only for those faculty with medical concerns), there has been no consideration for whether this is the best practice for the content and the students. Personally, I am only teaching 100 and 200 level classes this term. I am in a classroom for 3-6 hours a day teaching the best I can. However, I am doing so without being able to utilize many of the tools I know work best for students to understand my content areas due to physical distancing requirements, cleaning requirements, and concerns for my health and safety as well as the safety and health of my students. I know students are struggling with the concepts I am teaching...as another colleague put it: “I can see that they are struggling when we work a problem in class, but I am unable to walk up and look closely at their individual papers to see where they might be going wrong. Instead I just work the problem out on the board for everyone. This has resulted in some of the students not even trying to complete the problem on their own which we know is a pedagogically valuable experience.”

I have had several discussions with faculty of 100 and 200 level students who would have preferred some online or hybrid model (and faculty of 300 and 400 level classes who would prefer to see students face to face) to be able to teach in the ways we have found students learn our content best. I was remote teaching for the past week due to concerns that I was ill (thankfully, my test came back negative). During this time, I was able to do what is typically a group activity via Zoom using breakout rooms. My counterpart who teaches the same class had to do it in person and the students struggled without someone to bounce ideas off of in the classroom because physical distancing prohibited them from working together. Another faculty member whose proven pedagogy requires group work is struggling with in person “lectures” because any sort of group work causes students to “inch their chairs closer together” in a classroom where 6’ apart is already more like 5’ due to the “COVID capacity” of the room and how many students were allowed to register. In both these instances, if faculty were allowed to say they wanted to teach in a remote or hybrid model, it would allow students to do active learning in groups via Zoom breakout rooms. **Research conducted by Oregon Tech faculty has found that time interacting on a class topic drops precipitously as the amount of distance between students increases (this particular study found that they only interacted 20% of the time when 4 ft apart...)**

Most importantly, it would give these students an opportunity to work together and begin forming the bonds of friendships that will last a lifetime (or at least through their programs over the next 4 years). I have witnessed personally as well as hearing from others, the students aren’t getting to know each other in the in-person classes because they have to sit so far apart, they don’t talk to each other before class. One student even expressed that they didn’t think they were supposed to get to know their classmates due to all the restrictions. Not to mention the struggle several faculty are currently facing to develop any rapport with students in the classroom when we can’t get close to them, see their whole face, or learn their names (something I always accomplished through the handing back of papers), or simply by having a line of students at the end of a class who have questions they want to ask you. When we can both improve student health and improve learning by allowing flexibility and instructor discretion, it makes sense to do so, especially based on this recent experience.

While we acknowledge that several faculty (myself included) went with an asynchronous model in spring 2020 to the chagrin of students and administrators, we were doing the best we could do on the timelines we had to make decisions while also balancing family, anxieties, and other commitments that were thrown into disarray due to COVID-19. In the over 200 days since spring break 2020, we have attended trainings, collaborated with others in our fields, purchased new and better tools with our own personal funds, and we’re prepared. We all know more now and to assume faculty would make the same decisions going forward is incorrect. I spent my summer thinking about spring term and how I would do it all differently in the event I had to teach online again this year and the things I came up with I honestly think would go better for student success and pride in my work if I were



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able to teach remotely. If it is a concern that faculty will once again take the asynchronous route, require any remote or hybrid class to be offered synchronously. I have no doubt that when students were polled and indicated they wanted in-person classes or nothing, they were longing for what we are all longing for – the conditions of any term previous to Spring 2020.

We Respectfully ask the administrators to consider that faculty know what it best for the students to receive a quality “hands-on” education (the pride of Oregon Tech). In these unprecedented times, give us the ability to make those choices. I believe one of my constituents put it best when he said: “I wouldn't have been making these cases even a few weeks ago, but this is shaped deeply by my experience teaching these past few weeks.” Thank you.

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### Appendix B – Brenda Campbell’s Admin Council Representative Report (PDF)

1. After the June elections for vacant Admin Council seats, new leadership was elected to serve for the upcoming AY
  - a. Co-Chairs: Zach Jones and Jolyn Dahlvig
  - c. Secretary: Sarah Matchett
  - d. Communications Coordinator: Becky Burkeen
  - e. Non-voting representative to Faculty Senate: Brenda Campbell
  - f. Representative to (Fiscal Operations Advisory Committee (FOAC): Jolyn Dahlvig
  - g. Welcome & Welfare Working Group Chair: Sarah Moore
  - h. Professional Development Working Group Chair: Nyesia Driver
  
2. Pulse check survey sent to all unclassified staff in July
  - a. 82 out of 139 unclassified staff completed the survey
  - b. An executive summary was presented to unclassified staff at the September meeting and was presented to Dr. Nagi as well. Admin Council is happy to provide this document to the Senate, if you think that would be helpful.
  - c. Several highlights:
    - i. In response to a question regarding concerns about furloughs, three themes emerged: concern about the personal financial ramifications of the furloughs, the impact of the furloughs on their ability to provide essential services to faculty, staff and students; and staff felt that there was a lack of shared sacrifice with the University faculty.
    - ii. Four themes emerged from a question regarding concerns for the next few months including the re-opening and fall planning, workload and workplace insecurity, childcare and work flexibility especially if K-12 is remote and campus is in-person as well as a generally low morale and uncertainty.
    - iii. At the same time, the survey indicated that administrative staff feel optimistic about Oregon Tech’s ability to overcome recent challenges and obtain outcomes that are important to the mission. Additionally, the survey indicated that staff see the current challenges as an opportunity for innovation and change and look forward to the interpersonal connections they value when OIT returns to the new normal.
  
3. Admin Council met for a strategic planning session in August and established the following goals for AY 20-21 based on the survey results:
  - a. Represent and advocate for unclassified staff desires/needs
  - b. Increase effective communication across campus
  - c. Improve unclassified staff morale
  - d. Partner with OHR to provide ongoing professional development for staff
  
4. An Ad Hoc group was formed from Admin Council leadership to formulate concrete plans to address the first three strategic goals. Per Dr. Nagi’s request, Admin Council forwarded a set of tangible recommendations to him for implementation to help improve campus communication as well as staff morale.

Respectfully Submitted,



Brenda Campbell Administrative  
Council delegate

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TO: President Naganathan and the Senior Leadership Team

FROM: Administrative Council 2020-2021

Zach Jones and Jolyn Dahlgvig, Co-Chairs

DATE: August 21, 2020

RE: Unclassified Staff “Pulse Check” Survey Executive Summary

In late June, Administrative Council put together a brief survey to understand how unclassified staff perceived change because of COVID-19. Through an iterative editing process, the survey was finalized in early July. On July 21, Becky Burkeen (via Sandi Hanan) emailed an invitation to complete the Qualtrics survey to all Oregon Tech unclassified staff members; a follow-up email was sent July 28.

Eighty-two out of 139 unclassified staff completed the survey. To maintain confidentiality, the data could not be disaggregated by department or division.

### Quantitative Data

Respondents rated their confidence in Oregon Tech on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The majority of responses range from 2 (disagree) to 4 (agree). The average/mean is indicated below. The two highest scored elements are: “Oregon Tech will be able to overcome recent challenges” and “In general, Oregon Tech can obtain outcomes that are important to the mission” with the lowest marks relating to furloughs – “I am confident Oregon Tech can achieve essential work given furloughs.”

Respondents show a lack of consensus regarding Q1, Q2, Q4, Q7. These questions focus on unclassified staff’s ability to achieve essential work given furloughs, Oregon Tech’s ability to accomplish difficult tasks, Oregon Tech’s ability to develop a successful reopening plan, and staff perceptions around how Oregon Tech compares to other institutions in the regions in terms of doing things well. It is important to note that questions Q1, Q2, Q4 utilize first-person pronoun “I” language in the formulation of the statement. This suggests that there may be a perceptual mismatch between what individual unclassified employees believe Oregon Tech can accomplish and what Oregon Tech as an institution can accomplish.

		Mean	SD	Variance	n
1	I am confident Oregon Tech can achieve essential work given furloughs.	2.95	1.11	1.24	82
2	When facing difficult tasks, I am certain Oregon Tech will accomplish them.	2.99	0.96	0.91	82
3	Oregon Tech will be able to overcome recent challenges.	3.45	0.89	0.78	82
4	I am confident that Oregon Tech will develop an effective reopening plan.	2.98	1.10	1.22	82
5	In general, Oregon Tech can obtain outcomes that are important to the mission.	3.45	0.80	0.64	82
6	I believe Oregon Tech can succeed at almost any endeavor to which we set our mind.	3.07	0.99	0.97	82
7	Compared to other universities in the region, Oregon Tech can do most things very well.	2.99	1.09	1.18	82
8	Even when things are tough, Oregon Tech can perform quite well.	3.30	0.91	0.82	82

Phrasing questions about departments vs. the university, the results trended more positive which suggests department efficacy to achieve beneficial outcomes. As new initiatives emerge, building on the relational strength of departments may be insightful. Leveraging positive department relationships may help improve institution-wide communication and staff morale concerns, etc.

#		Mean	SD	Variance	n
1	My department will be able to achieve essential work given furloughs.	3.42	1.07	1.15	79
2	When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that my department will accomplish them.	4.00	0.74	0.55	80
3	In general, I think that my department can obtain outcomes that are important to the university.	4.17	0.88	0.77	80
4	I believe my department can succeed at almost any endeavor to which we set our mind.	3.98	0.84	0.70	80
5	My department will be able to successfully overcome recent challenges.	3.85	0.81	0.65	80
6	I am confident that my department can develop an effective reopening plan.	3.67	0.98	0.97	80
7	Compared to other universities in the region, my department can do most things very well.	3.63	1.03	1.07	79
8	Even when things are tough, my department can perform quite well.	3.99	0.87	0.76	78

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In terms of reopening the Oregon Tech campus, respondents scored “I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to Oregon Tech leadership” the lowest at 3.05. Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they will abide by physical distancing and face covering expectations and will take virus precautions seriously.

#		Mean	SD	Variance	n
1	I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to Oregon Tech leadership.	3.05	1.23	1.52	79
2	I feel comfortable communicating concerns or making suggestions about COVID-19 to my supervisor.	3.92	1.07	1.14	80
3	My colleagues are taking the COVID-19 virus precautions seriously.	4.04	0.86	0.75	79
4	I am taking COVID-19 virus precautions seriously.	4.49	0.79	0.62	80
5	There are leaders/role models at Oregon Tech that provide a positive example in terms of COVID-19 precautions.	3.52	1.02	1.05	80
6	Systems are in place to enable physical distancing at Oregon Tech.	3.10	1.13	1.28	79
7	I will practice physical distancing while on-campus.	4.63	0.66	0.43	79
8	I will wear a face covering when physical distancing is not feasible.	4.71	0.58	0.33	79

### Open-Ended Responses

Sarah Moore, Zach Jones, and Harmony Stobaugh analyzed the three open-ended questions yielding rich qualitative data.

In response to “*One concern I have about furloughs is \_\_\_\_\_*,” three themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the theme.

**1. personal financial concerns** (19 out of 54 comments, 35%)

- Concerns around when furloughs will end
- Loss of vacation benefit
- UI/federal benefit payment issues
- Non-continuance of the CARES Act benefit
- Concerns about the number of furlough days to take by the end of December and financial implications
- Staff attrition if people need to seek different employment
- Insecurity about providing for family
- Communication about budget concerns- desire for more frequent communication and empathy for difficulty furlough cause

**2. supervisor workplace expectations and student access to services** (27 out of 54 responses, 50%), and

- Departmental staffing shortages; compounding work for those who remain
- Unable to perform/provide essential services to students and the Oregon Tech community
- Maintaining 40-hour work week while furloughing 20-40 percent –long days or working Sat/Sun
- Lack of clear expectations from supervisors about workload – what is not getting done with

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a reduction in workforce?

- Less services to students - delays in service
- Perceived disconnect between leadership’s expectations for work quality with staff expectations
- Communication about workload expectations – desire for more frequent communication with clear “permission” to not do tasks given reduced workforce/time.

### **3. lack of shared sacrifice with faculty** (8 out of 54 responses, 15 %).

- Perception that the faculty are not contributing to Oregon Tech’s “shared sacrifice”
- Staff are taking the brunt of the financial burden while faculty are not
- Communication to the campus about what faculty’s contribution to our budget challenges – similar to President Nagi’s communication about staff furloughs and lay-offs.

In response to “*One concern I have about navigating the next few months is \_\_\_\_\_*,” four themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the theme.

### **1. Re-opening and Fall planning** (27 out of 57 responses, 45%)

- Lack of planning [this may be an indicator of late July survey timing]
- No training for faculty/staff on remote delivery of courses or services
- Perception of senior leadership placing Oregon Tech’s financial health over student/staff health
- Spread of COVID-19 from having in person classes/re-opening too soon (17 of 25 responses, 68%)
- No clear communication about class format or reopening plans and mixed messages - forums communicate “still working on it” without tangible answers
- Staff perceptions regarding a perceived lack of transparency from senior leadership

□

### **2. Workload and Workplace Insecurity** (14 out of 57 responses, 25%)

- High expectation for work output/quality of work with less hours to accomplish same high standards
- Impacts on quality of work being produced
- Increased work demands when students return while still on furlough
- Perceived little support or understanding from senior leadership
- Will there be more layoffs? Ongoing fear of what’s next.
- Increased/ sustained furloughs w/o federal aid
- Financial concerns for the university as a whole
- No employment protections for Unclassified staff

### **3. Childcare and Work Flexibility** (8 out of 57 responses, 14%)

- Childcare concerns if K-12 are remote and campus is in person
- Will the university be flexible with those who have children?
- Will some employees still be able to work remotely?

### **4. Low Morale and Uncertainty** (10 out of 47 responses, 17%)

- Negative morale across campus
- Pessimism about Oregon Tech’s future
- Uncertainty about the future
- Difficulty staying connected to colleagues and information while working remotely
- Where is the shared sacrifice?

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Responding to the question “*One thing that excites me about the next months is \_\_\_\_\_,*” four themes emerged. The theme is bolded, with examples provided as bullet points to expound on the theme.

- 1. Opportunity for innovation and change** (15 out of 46 responses, 32%)
  - Opportunity to look at positions that may be obsolete, make significant changes if needed
  - Forced adaption to digital solutions and move toward being a tech savvy campus
  - Finding ways to make higher ed more accessible to more students
  - New systems and ways of doing things; creating new efficiencies through process reviews
  - Opportunity for open dialogue about the future of Oregon Tech
- 2. Interpersonal Connections when we come back to campus** (12 out of 46 responses, 26%)
  - Returning to campus
  - Ability to work directly with students and to share their joy in college
  - Getting to see co-workers and staff members
  - Having somewhere to go outside the home
- 3. None, or inability to think of anything positive right now** (11 out of 46 responses, 24%)
  - Nothing to look forward to
  - Anxiety concerns over upcoming months
  - Too many unknowns to be positive
- 4. Time off and fresh start** (8 out of 46 responses, 17%)
  - Nothing to look forward to
  - Anxiety concerns over upcoming months over-shadows positivity
  - Too many unknowns to be positive

The narrative comments communicate that respondents experience the sacrifice that has been required by the university. Overall, comments point to a perception that senior leaders do not empathize with what is being asked of unclassified employees; morale is low.

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### The Path Forward

When organizations experience change, Berneth [2004, Expanding our understanding of the change message, *Human Resource Development Review*, 3(1), 36-52] recommends attending to 5 messages. When followers clearly understand the five messages, sustained change and employee engagement often follows. The five messages include:

<i>Message</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Question It Looks to Answer</i>	<i>What does this look like?</i>
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	Confidence in individual and group's ability to make the change succeed.	Can we do this? Will it work?	Remind followers of past success to replicate. "we were successful then, we will be now" "we've done it before, we can do it again"
<b>Principal support</b>	Key organizational leaders support this change; not the latest fad, but something all levels can be committed to.	Is management walking the talk? Do org leaders believe in this change?	Key leaders reiterating talking points in various settings; align reward systems with desired outcomes to indicate systemic/long-lasting change.
<b>Discrepancy</b>	A gap between the current state and an ideal state; make a compelling case for why change is necessary/compelling vision for the "new" state or way of being.	Why change?	Paint a positive and realistic picture of what will happen when we all join together.
<b>Appropriateness</b>	The correct reaction to fix the gap identified by the discrepancy.	Why this change? Will what is being asked get us to the new/desired state?	Connect steps today that will lead to vision for the future. "it's hard right now, but in 5 years we will see XXX"
<b>Personal valence</b>	Clarifies the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of the change	What is in it for me? How do my personal goals/values connect with what is being asked of me?	Connect the future vision with personal values or practical opportunities (e.g., advancement pathway, opportunity to learn new skills).

Given the positive connection and efficacy in departments highlighted in the quantitative data, department leaders may be a communication asset. Could senior leaders empower department leaders to facilitate information flow/attend to the 5 messages? Are there low-cost ways to reward staff for sustaining excellence during furloughs? (e.g., a frozen turkey at Thanksgiving, an extra few days of vacation over the winter holiday, an Oregon Tech shirt to recognize employee's hard work + further identification with campus, no-cost recognition from senior leaders/thank you emails for specific contributions).

In times of change, organizational leadership research finds going "above and beyond" or high Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) leads to successful change initiatives. Employees rise to OCB when there is a shared purpose (clear vision/goals) + social support (positive relationships) + voice (I can contribute) = or motivates "above and beyond" behaviors. Considering this, empowering work groups or committees to tackle goals may be helpful; people tend to support what they help create and relational work groups may expand/continue to build positive connections across campus. As "Champions" for the strategic plan pillars are chosen, the participative process could yield positive results both practically and as a motivator for ongoing employee contributions. Additionally, devoting time to building positive relationships between colleagues may be a pathway to greater productivity (e.g., facilitating opportunities for employees to know one another).