

May 5, 2023

President Mason, Provost Arensdorf: Thank You!

Good afternoon to all of the members of the Fort Hays State Community here with us today.

I have been honored to be your faculty senate president this year. I have taken this role seriously and made every effort to discharge this obligation faithfully and judiciously. I have advocated on behalf of FHSU as a whole during the monthly KBOR meetings, I have represented FHSU faculty at the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents, and I have advocated for faculty with our administration internally, and with the Board of Regents in Topeka. I am proud of the work we have accomplished together in the Senate this year.

And it has been a full year in the Senate. In the spirit of Shared Governance, with Provost Arensdorf and President Mason, the Senate and its standing committees have:

- Approved more than 50 courses and 4 programs, including new courses, significant course changes, minor course changes, new programs, new minors, and FHSU CORE courses,
- Held open meetings to gather information and ask questions on the CAHSS reorganization, and answer any lingering questions about the general education proposal,
- Reached out to technology leaders on campus in order to increase communication about various updates and information regarding technology related items to faculty
- Approved a letter of support for some incredible students, in order to demonstrate Senate support for their project of relocating a polling station to the FHSU campus to increase voting availability for FHSU students,
- Worked with members of the Virtual Student Senate to aid their projects in a number of ways,
- Continually updated faculty and worked carefully to solicit faculty feedback on matters relating to the rpk report and KBOR decisions related to program duplication and program review
- Approved a graduate advising tool in conjunction with the Graduate Council
- Passed a new general education framework, as well as revised CORE outcomes and guideline documents related to the new general education framework

One of the most difficult and important things the Senate accomplished this year was the passage of a new general education framework proposal, developed by what was informally referred to as the Group of 6. I want to thank these individuals for their tireless, and often thankless, work. They took on a significant burden in addition to their other duties, and delivered a proposal that was both consistent with the new general education policies required by the KBOR, and that preserved a great deal of the spirit of the in-house general education framework developed by countless members of FHSU over a period of 7 years, and passed in prior years by the Faculty Senate. Let us extend to C.D. Clark, Matt Smalley, Tanya Smith, Ginger Loggins, Robyn Hartman, and Linda Feldstein our gratitude and our sincere thanks for all of their work on this arduous task.

We elected a new Faculty Senate President, Elodie Jones; elected a new Faculty Senate Secretary, Anita Walters; and elected a new Faculty Senate Vice President, Shane Schartz. They will all serve the FHSU community well during the next academic year.

This year, we received reports from Jeni McRay, Interim Assistant Provost of Internationalization and Strategic Initiatives; Angela Pool-Funai, Dean of the Graduate School; Brent Goertzen, Tiger Leaders; Donnette Noble and Brittney Squire, co-chairs of Goal 5 of the University Strategic Plan; Madison Albers and Grace McCord, Student Co-Coordinator of the American Democracy Project; Christopher Olds, Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force; and a report of the Faculty Morale Survey findings by Jian Sun of the Docking Institute, among others.

For the first time to my knowledge, the Senate received a detailed report on the budget by Wesley Wintch, Vice President of Administration and Finance. I want to thank Wesley for sharing this information with us, and for being an excellent road trip companion during all of our trips to KBOR in Topeka.

For their work, I would like to extend my thanks to the standing committees of Faculty Senate and their chairs; Christopher Olds, Shane Schartz, Gary Brinker, Vinod Srivastava, Justin Greenleaf, and Lori Kniffin. In the same vein, I want to thank the officers of the Senate who were instrumental in the smooth and successful running of the senate this year, Secretary Ginger Loggins, and Vice President Elodie Jones.

I am proud to have worked constructively and forthrightly with our administrative leaders, President Tisa Mason and Provost Jill Arensdorf. I am also proud to have worked closely with other leaders of shared governance groups on campus for the benefit of all – this includes Ryan Stanley, SGA President, Bob Duffy, Staff Senate President, and Janett Naylor-Tincknell, AAUP President.

I opened this year from a passage from the Havamal, a source of old Norse wisdom. In the same spirit, I'd like to close my report today with some wisdom from another cultural and philosophical tradition. In a passage of Book 15 of the *Analects* (15.6), or the *Lunyu*, of Confucius, or Kongzi, his student Zizhang asks the Master how he can *xing*, or get by in the world. Zizhang here is thinking about being successful, getting promoted, securing external rewards, receiving the adulation of his peers, etc. In characteristic fashion, Confucius gives Zizhang the following advice. "In your speech, be dutiful and trustworthy, and in your conduct be sincere and respectful. In this way, you will get by in the world, even if you find yourself far from home." In my time as president, I have tried to incorporate this Confucian advice.

Thank you all for your time today. Have a wonderful summer.