

My name is Matthew Clay. I am an Associate Professor in Teacher Education and I have the honor of serving as Faculty Senate President for this academic year.

For those unfamiliar, faculty senate serves as a recommending body through the spirit of shared governance, particularly in supporting communication between the faculty body and university administration. In that role, we of course seek to amplify the voices of faculty, but are also very eager to collaborate with staff and students.

As we look ahead to this academic year, there are topics that I believe are reasonable to expect faculty senate to address or to which we will respond. Undoubtedly, policy and legislative changes coming out of Topeka related to tenure, workload, and as of yet unknown topics will require the attention of faculty senate in representing the questions and concerns of faculty to administration. Also, as is its purpose, faculty senate will aim to be a communication channel through which the questions, concerns, and opportunities of faculty can be brought forth.

In the absence of a clean bullet list of topics to address this year, I wish to offer three values which I hope can guide both faculty senate and might even be of value across our university community. The first of these is dialogue. Especially in an era where outside threats are growing and persistent, meaningful dialogue is essential to insuring we can work together as a campus community. The second value I wish to encourage is humility. Ultimately, I believe dialogue that has the potential to benefit our university requires the humility to admit the limitations of our own knowledge and experiences. As I am keenly aware of my own limitations entering this role, I want to seek to listen to and learn from others. Finally, I believe we must embrace vulnerability. At times this year we might experience uncertainty, fear, or even hurt. Although those experiences are never easy to share, in sharing we open up the potential for growth.

As we approach this academic year, I cannot imagine a group of folks with which I would rather face the inevitable challenges. For faculty, staff, students, and administration it is my intention to serve in this role toward the benefit of our institution and would encourage anyone that sees opportunities to please reach out.

Thank you.