



COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY SYSTEM FACULTY

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

*Welcome to our Council of University System
Faculty Newsletter*



CUSF Chair Dr. Patricia Westerman

CUSF Mission:

“To strengthen higher education in the State of Maryland through shared governance.”

CUSF represents :

The interests of faculty across University System of Maryland,
Engages in activities to facilitate positive change,
Enhances awareness of concepts to encourage innovations across campuses and faculty, and
Informs the Board of Regents and the Chancellor on topics and concerns of faculty for teaching, learning, and related matters.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR:

- 1) Academic integrity
- 2) Faculty evaluation
- 3) BOR faculty award selections
- 4) Faculty salary report
- 5) Legislative activities

Spring 2019

During the spring semester of 2019, CUSF worked on various projects of interest to faculty and initiatives involving a number of experts in the field of higher education.

Some of our highlights included:

Shared governance is at the heart of CUSF. A survey of the USM institutions on the state of shared governance is conducted annually with assistance from campus faculty senate chairs. Upon completion, CUSF provides the results to the Chancellor. Some observations from this year’s survey responses included:

- Overall, shared governance is good, especially with regard to faculty–president relationships.
- Faculty have expressed concern about administrative bloat.
- Faculty seek greater involvement in budget and resource allocation discussions.
- Faculty seek input into upper-level hires, especially those within academic affairs units.
- Shared governance at the sub-unit level is not perceived to be as strong or as consistent as it is at the president level.
- Communication does not equal consultation.

CUSF, USM, and the William E. Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation of USM sponsored a March convening based on the work that CUSF has been undertaking on the topic of academic integrity.

The convening was entitled:

“Reframing Academic Integrity: Creating a Shared Institution Approach”

It was held with representatives from all of the institutions within USM.



Ms. Nancy O'Neill, Associate Director of the William E. Kirwan Center for Academic Innovations welcoming the attendees at the Convening

Dr. Patricia Westerman, CUSF Chair addressing the Convening



The day-long workshop focused on issues of academic integrity, including the existing landscape and possible next steps. Each institution had a number of representatives in attendance, and they were charged with working in this area at their home institutions in cooperation and coordination with the Kirwan Center and with USM. It was clear from the convening that this will be a long-term project with significant implications.

Evaluations of faculty by students is an ongoing topic in CUSF

The CUSF Faculty Affairs committee in late fall of 2018 provided an enlightening presentation on the relevant academic literature, including the research on bias. This committee continues to work on the topic of evaluations by students of faculty with a panel presentation in spring of 2019:

- Reviewing the different survey questions used by various USM Institutions and noting numerous recommendations were proposed by the committee including:
 - Course evaluations are somewhat improperly labeled as Student
 - Evaluations of Teaching should consider these as Student Perception Surveys.
- Consider how questions are posed on student surveys of faculty such as to ask questions on things that they can validly assess.
- Further discussion included:
 - The application of improper analyses to the survey results is problematic and methodologies used to summarize survey data should be reviewed to avoid arithmetically incorrect scores
 - Evaluations of teaching on campus must be based upon other data sources in addition to student surveys (e.g. course content, pedagogy, peer evaluation)
 - That increased awareness measures of bias be made available, such that inherent limitations and potential predispositions of student responses are acknowledged

Thanks to The College of Business at College Park for developing this prototypical evaluation instrument that includes peer review. It can potentially serve as a model for others.

Other CUSF Work

CUSF Faculty Affairs committee is involved in discussions regarding faculty workload. USM is currently in the process of proposing new policies system-wide, and CUSF has played an important role in the vetting process.

Fiscal concerns were another area of attention, specifically as it related to faculty compensation. USM has a stated target for faculty salaries: 85th percentile relative to peer institutions. A CUSF committee studied the issue, identified gaps, and submitted their report to the Chancellor and Board of Regents. Keeping salaries up to this standard was recognized as vitally important for keeping valued faculty and hiring new ones.

CUSF also kept tabs on bills proposed during the Maryland legislative session, with a major focus on changes in retiree prescription drug coverage. In the latter case, CUSF sent a joint letter with the Council of University System Staff (CUSS) to Governor Hogan and legislative leaders, and a bill was passed addressing this concern.

Dr. Jim Hundrieser Managing Director discussed disruptors affecting higher education. Some of these changes included differing business models, changing demographics of student populations, trends such as rising prices and decreasing enrollments, projections regarding the impact of digital technology and learning, increasing numbers of transfer students versus native students, scaffolding certificates and credentials, and the evolving job market.

Other speakers were invited to prepare faculty for the future of higher education. Dr. Cynthia Matuszek Assistant Professor, Computer Science & Engineering, University of Maryland Baltimore County spoke with CUSF on the impact of artificial intelligence and machine learning to higher education. Later Dr. Randy Bass Vice Provost for Education and Professor of English, Georgetown University spoke about emerging technologies and their effects on the future of academic education, learning conditions, faculty preparation , as to how we have to prepare to prepare our students.

As our 2018/2019 academic year comes to an end CUSF extends best wishes to Dr. Patricia Westerman who resigned as Chair in June 2019. She has accepted a new and challenging position as Towson University Assistant Provost Office of Academic Innovation. Dr. Westerman has been a positive force for CUSF and we wish her great success.

Moving forward Dr. Robert Kauffman, our newly elected Chair, will take the helm for the upcoming 2019-2020 year as we continue and look forward to working with CUSF's mission. Our initiatives will include among others:

- Shared Governance
- Faculty Evaluation
- CUSF Visibility throughout the System
- Academic Integrity
- Communication and Advocacy
- Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Work Faculty
- Students
- Legislative Issues



CUSF Chair 2019-2020
Dr. Robert Kauffman

Working with CUSF as an At-Large member and newly elected secretary for the coming year it is a privilege and pleasure to represent our USM Faculty with our spring newsletter.

Dr. Karen Clark
UMB School of Nursing
Universities at Shady Grove
CUSF Secretary (2019-2020)

