

Middle Georgia State University  
Faculty Affairs Committee  
October 27, 2023

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(1) Call to Order

The Faculty Affairs Committee (the Committee) was called to order at 9:00am on Friday, October 27, 2023 on Microsoft Teams.

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(2) Roll Call

	Present	Not Present
x	Bufford	

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Chris Hornung reminded the Committee that in the previous meeting, the discussion around faculty summer salaries mainly focused on the number of students required for a course to make, including the possibility of using course or departmental averages to set this number and discrepancies between in-person and online courses.

- x Amanda Funches offered to take this discussion back to the Provost to review relevant numbers and options and noted that last summer's lowered requirements for lab courses will carry forward to this summer.
- x Hornung stressed the importance of considering departments beyond the hard sciences.
- x Funches added that the summer term must make money (and can impact the rest of the year if it does not) but recognized that campus presence is also important
- x Lanning highlighted the importance of considering students, too, some of whom are not suited to online courses but may feel pressured to take them because in-person classes may not make.

Luke Buffenmyer reminded the Committee of the discrepancy between summer pay and the pay for overload courses.

- x Funches noted that it is very common to have summer salaries set as a percentage of annual salaries and that the percentage used at MGA may change following full implementation of the CVIG study.
- x Buffenmyer highlighted that overload pay is significantly less than summer pay.
- x Hornung suggested addressing overload pay as a separate discussion, after he can research how other schools treat overload pay.
- x Rod McRae asked if the pay level for teaching an overload course is the same for all



Rebecca Lanning noted her support for McRae's concerns and asked if there were possible compromises, such as allowing a certain number of office hours.

- x Hornung suggested that the policy be even more vague, keeping the 8 hours requirement but allowing them to be conducted in a lab or studio, online, etc. to allow for more flexibility.
- x Dawn Fuller expressed her support for holding some office hours online, since most students want to meet via Teams and it gives faculty more flexibility.
- x McRae responded that what he likes about that language is that it highlights that the ways faculty connect with students varies. Some faculty members even answer calls from students in the evenings or on weekends. In practice, office hours extend beyond just the time faculty members sit at their desks in their offices, and that change would acknowledge this (especially for individuals who are not familiar with this side of faculty work).

Hornung shared the current language from the faculty handbook:

Faculty availability to students outside the regularly scheduled class hours is an essential

- x Hornung hesitated to require such a firm statement requiring on hours.
- x Fuller expressed a concern that if language requiring campus hours is removed, there will be an issue with faculty not being there and abusing the privilege.

Buffenmyer noted that he sees many faculty members teaching online courses now and asked if they are coming to campus to hold office hours.

- x Hornung responded that this is his understanding.
- x Buffenmyer

The ad hoc committee had three main proposals: First, one of McRae's former institutions had a program called Thank a Prof, where students could send in nice notes to faculty members (screened by the CETL to ensure they were actually kind). McRae confirmed that the CETL at MGA would have the resources to do oversee such a program. Lanning suggested that we extend this to Thank a Colleague, as well.

- x Rod McRae noted that the thank you notes would also be sent to faculty members' department chairs.
- x Hornung noted that it would be good to have this documentation for portfolios.

Lanning added that, second, the ad hoc committee recommended campus-wide gatherings for faculty members who have served similar length of time to celebrate and strengthen cohort bonds, and third, proposed more formal celebrations for promotion, and other honors and awards.

- x McRae also noted that the thank you notes would also be sent to faculty members' department chairs, and other honors and awards.

- x Dawn Fuller seconded the motion.
  - x The motion passed unanimously
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