



COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY SYSTEM FACULTY

Regents Report September 16 2022

The Council on University System Faculty will have its first General Body Meeting on September 21, 2022. The Executive Committee has met twice over the past month, and have settled on a rough strategic plan for the year, which is summarized below. We have also taken steps to integrate our work more closely with that of university faculty senates than we have done in years past. In past years we have held just two faculty senate chairs meetings. We plan to have up to six meetings this year (via zoom) and will decide how many based on the response of the faculty senate chairs themselves. As April's report to this board from Elizabeth Brunn summarized "All members have since emailed me and Vice chair, Dr. Aerian Tatum, about the idea of having CUSF increase the number of meetings." This change is both in accord with our by-laws and seems to be of interest to most members. This will also strengthen faculty governance across the USM system, allowing senate chairs to communicate their concerns more effectively, and likewise allowing CUSF to communicate surveys and requests for feedback more comprehensively.

Executive Committee

The executive committee has met and deliberated on a strategic plan for the year. Other issues might well arise as well, but we have raised the following concerns

1. How do we increase Faculty governance?
Currently the role seems to be very limited in the decisions that count, especially financial.
 - Note that we (CUSF) also meet with the chairs of the faculty senates at all universities.
 - How do we make sure that we interact with all of the different councils and that they know about our initiatives? There was a problem last year with COVID Committee report.
2. How can we improve faculty morale and mental health
3. How do we address faculty/graduate student **collective bargaining** This will definitely be an issue again this year. Possibly appoint joint committee of faculty, staff, and student councils, as in 2010?
4. LIBRARIES are central to knowledge sharing on all our campuses, but are facing crises: How can USM support them?
 - Our libraries now spend far too much on journal access (for profit companies have copyrights) – not enough for books. Increasingly becoming a crisis even in terms of journal access.

- One solution that could be ideal in terms of increasing access to the knowledge produced on our campuses—but also would be possibly be costly for libraries and universities is President Biden’s [Initiative on OPEN ACCESS](#) by 2026.
 - Redesigning libraries to be (following suggestions of Adriene Lim, chair of USM Library Council) scholarly innovation hubs.
5. State laws that need to be reconsidered: Should all university’s be required to purchase prisoner-made furniture?
- This is not a system rule, but a state law.
 - Does the law need to be revised?
 - How do the prisoners feel?
 - Do we need a small working group?
6. What should USM emphasize and support? What would we (CUSF) like to see more of from USM and the Board of Regents?
- Less focus on “BRANDING” which is shallow—and more on deeper quality that empowers the faculty to be more involved and that funds the faculty and departments (and tenure track lines). See e.g. article in Chronicle of higher education from (July 11, 2022).
 - More focus on the common good. There is a fund for projects that take university innovations private. But what about a fund that encourages university innovations that help the common good, that enable access to crucial innovation, to tools and information and resources—that is open access? See this new US government
 - How can we think about workforce needs & common good, especially with regard to
 - HEALTHCARE (nurses & doctors etc.)
 - TEACHERS (we lost 5500 in Maryland last year, and we need many more—not less—because of new state funding). THERE is some funding for universities and for students who choose to become teachers in the Blueprint for Maryland).
 - How can we address national concerns about keeping tuition and fees (and room & board) affordable?
 - How can we help to keep student costs manageable (and direct student support up, in terms of the USM system?)
 - How can we keep administrative costs down?
 - How can USM help with student retention and recruitment?

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair, Council of University System Faculty