Slevitch called the meeting to order with the following members present: Barker, Boileau, Crick, Daglaris, Eisenberg, Emerson, Fathepure, Fitzgerald, Gardner, Glenn, Hildebrand, Hoff, Jadeja, Joshi, Knapp, Lawson, McGlynn, McMaughan, Olsen, Parkison, Perkins, Pranger, Yates, Yough and Warren and Weiser.

Also present: Alexander, H., Baker, S., Compton, JJ, DeSilva, U., Francisco, C., Hawkins, C., Horton, M., Hurlbut, R., Ivey, T., Johnson, C., Jones, S., Krishnan, G., Kuwitzky, C., Lacombe, V., Manning-Ouellette, A., Mendez, J., Misener, T., Morgan, M., Nicklas, G., Ormsbee, C., Peek, G., Raja, R., Sewell., K., Terry, P., Thomason, K., Walker, E., Whitham, M. and Wray, K.

Absent: Gonzalez, Haley, and Riley.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Special Reports:

Dr. Melanie Morgan/Ms. Elizabeth Walker – Grad College ………………………………

Chris Ormsbee – ITLE, Meazure Learning……………………………………………...…

Interim President’s Report and Comments on matters of interest to the faculty – Jim Hess……...

Provost’s report on Recommendations made by the Faculty Council and Comments on matters of interest to the Faculty – Provost Mendez……………………………….…

Vice-Presidents’ Reports and Comments on matters of interest to the faculty…………………...

Faculty Council Chair’s Report……………………………………………………………………

Reports of Liaison Representatives

Emeriti…………………………………………………………………………………….

Staff Advisory Council……………………………………………………………………

Graduate Council.…………………………………………………………………………

Student Government Association…………………………………………………………

Graduate and Professional Student Government Association…………………………….

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

Academic Standards and Policies ……………………………………….………………...

Access and Community Impact ……………………………………………………………

Athletic, Health and Wellness ………..………………………………….………………..

Budget …………………………………………………………………….…………….....

Campus Facilities, Safety and Security ………………………………….……………...…

Career Track…………..………………………………………………….………………..

Faculty ………………………………………………………………….…………………

Long-Range Planning and Information Technology ………………….……………...……

Research ……………………………………………………………….………………...…

Retirement and Fringe Benefits ……………………………………….……………...……

Rules and Procedures ………………………………………………….……………...……

Student Affairs and Learning Resources …………………………….…………………....

Slevitch welcomed everyone to the meeting. Slevitch established that a quorum was present and brought the meeting to order. Slevitch deviated from the agenda a little bit. She wanted to express our deepest sympathies to those who have been affected by the wildfires. She knows that quite a few faculty and staff lost their homes or their homes were damaged. She wants everyone to know that we are here for them. There have been efforts to help in some colleges. Slevitch stated they have spoken to administration and hope to establish a centralized support system to offer help. If you have been impacted or know someone who has been affected, please reach out to Faculty Council and we will do our best to help. Slevitch moved to the agenda items. Slevitch asked those present to sign the attendance sheet. Slevitch asked everyone on Zoom to please put their name in the chat so their attendance can be recorded. Slevitch asked anyone who has a question to raise their hand or type their question in the chat. Please direct your questions to Perkins who is watching the chat. He will then communicate the questions to the group. Slevitch reminded everyone to please set their microphones to mute. Slevitch stated the first item of business was the approval of the March 11, 2025 minutes. These were electronically distributed and are available on the Faculty Council website. Slevitch asked for corrections or objections to the approval of the minutes. Seeing none, stated the minutes are approved. Slevitch stated the second item of business is adoption of the agenda which was also electronically distributed and is also available on the Faculty Council website. Slevitch asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. Seeing none, Slevitch asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Yough moved and Yates seconded the motion. Slevitch stated that it had been moved and seconded to adopt the agenda. Slevitch asked those in favor to say “Aye”, those on zoom to enter their vote in the chat. Those opposed do the same. Motion passed and the agenda was adopted. Slevitch stated we have two special reports today and introduced Dr. Melanie Morgan and Ms. Elizabeth Walker.

**Special Reports:**

1. **Dr. Melanie Morgan and Ms. Elizabeth Walker – Grad College**

Dr. Morgan began with an overview of what's been happening in the Grad College this year since she joined OSU. For those of you who I haven't had a chance to talk to. I'm just going to give you an overview of what's happening or what I wanted to have accomplished when I got here. The first thing that I really hoped to accomplish was addressing stipends, but because we were adopting a new budget model and expecting a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), it wasn't the best time to do that. It is on my agenda for next year. I know that was high on all of your agendas and wanted to let you know that it wasn’t ignored. The thing that we've really been focusing on this year is becoming more efficient. A big bureaucratic college, like the Grad College, is often slow and inefficient in places. We’re trying to identify where we could get expediency, and we have identified several places. One is in matriculation. The interesting problem or opportunity that we've had is that our grad population is growing, and as we've grown our staff in the Grad College hasn't. This led to this bottleneck in terms of advancing plans of study, clearing students for degrees. It's too cumbersome for us to manage with the staff that we have. We have hired someone new who will be joining us next week, so that will help. But the thing that we really need to do is to bring in new technology. We've been working all year with IT and the registrar to build what we think we need to have. We will be getting rid of our current POS technology soon. Our fingers are crossed that something new is on the horizon. Things haven't gone as smoothly or as quickly as we'd hoped. But things are happening. This new software hopefully will be able to improve everything from the POS initiation from the students and to helping faculty sign off in a more expedient manner. Same thing with admissions. We are experiencing an increase of about 20% every year of new applications. Again, we have the same number of staff that we've always had, and it takes longer to process more and more of these applications. The applications are getting more complex as well, which has slowed us down. One of the changes that we've made our I-20s are no longer processed by the Graduate College. We've turned this over to the experts so we can be faster on that end. The growth is fantastic. I hope that we continue to experience it. We're really looking at things where we can maybe segment admission. We have online programs where we know students are qualified more quickly by what their GPA is and what courses they've taken. The admission process is easier for them versus students who are coming to a residential PhD program where the faculty really have to hunker down and review applications as well as decide who they can fund. This is a more cumbersome, slow process. Can we bifurcate those so that we can speed this group along and continue with our normal process for this group? We're looking at all these things to try to gain some efficiencies there as well.

One area where I think that we've had success is with the grad faculty status process. We've cleaned up our database. We have a new system for you to put those requests in, and hopefully that has improved. You've probably had Carol reach out to you and ask for additional information to help with updating this process. This is the first win that I think we've had this year that I'm excited about. The other thing that I want to bring to your attention before I open it up for questions and turn it over to my colleague is we have mentoring workshops. We have been developing these for a couple of semesters, and they are finally able to launch. In fact, the first one is right now over in the General Academic Building. It is sold out. Faculty are really interested in improving their mentoring. I'm really excited about that. We have another one on April 16th which is about conflict with your mentee. It's a great one. When we experience those challenges, it's hard for faculty members to deal with that. This will give you some tools in your toolbox to help navigate those kinds of issues. The third workshop I'm really excited about because it takes a mentor and a mentee, brings them into the room together, and they can create compacts and agreements on what that relationship will look like. They can pave pathways to success for that relationship. These are all ongoing.

Morgan opened the floor for questions that are not ISS related. She is deferring those to Walker. She has more expertise in those areas. Hoff asked if Morgan could tell us a little bit more about the growth of the graduate student body, and are they from TA, RA or self-paid? Morgan stated it's a variety and she does not have the data on how they're funded. I can tell you that at OSU we have 3,921 students. In Tulsa there are 386. And at the Center for Health Sciences (CHS), where we are seeing our biggest growth, there are 1,679. I've peeked at the summer data that's rolling in very, very early and I can tell you that CHS is experiencing growth again of an unprecedented nature. They're about 30% of our graduate population. We have implemented models that our students who have been in industry are relating to. I think it's a place where we can all look at those programs and see what we can do here at OSU to have that sort of growth if this is something that your program is ready for. Yough wanted to express appreciation to the Graduate College. He was in a situation in terms of funding our students where we were not able to promise them funding until they could pass the GTA Exam. I think we made that known to the faculty and staff over in the Graduate College. Within 48 hours a pilot test got scheduled for the spring, so we could get those offer letters out. Yough wants to express his appreciation. Morgan stated, “Thank you”. We were happy that we were able to figure out a solution. Morgan stated if you have frustrations like this, and we don't know about it, we can't help. But if you come to us, we are very solution oriented. We want to try to find ways to support our students in unique ways, so don't fester on it. Come and talk to me, or to Carol, or Rebecca or Matt, and we'll try to solve it if we can. Slevitch stated a question that Faculty Council originally received is how do the current federal funding cuts and policies impact admissions of graduate students and their funding. Morgan stated we haven't seen anything impact admissions. We've had a couple of faculty who were wary initially. They said I have some offers out. I'm a little bit worried that I may have to cut them. That has not happened. The faculty member who was most worried, emailed last week and said, “I’m all good to go with funding”. Moran stated there have been some programs that have lost their funding, one very recently. Just today we got some information on how we can use what funding's left, and we will support those students and figure out how to be able to do that. The Provost’s and the VPR’s offices and the Graduate College home departments are all pulling together to try to figure out how to solve this.

Eisenberg asked if there are projections on where you think this may go. This is going to be very precise data which he imagines Morgan doesn’t have. Do we have a sense of projections of where those numbers might go? Eisenberg assumes it will be mostly contained to the Stillwater campus. Based on what Morgan just said, what kind of numbers we would be looking at in terms of a hit to the budget revenues in terms of the Federal funding being cut. Morgan stated that VPR Sewell would be more of an expert to speak about this area. What Morgan’s main concern when this all came out was pulling the data to see how many of our students were federally funded. We did pull that when all of this happened. This was on our radar. Morgan is always thinking about the students and how to keep them funded. That was her concern.

Morgan turned the floor over to Elizabeth Walker. Walker has been a great partner and brings loads of expertise. Morgan stated her willingness to help our students is unsurpassed.

Walker stated she was asked to talk about what is happening with student immigration records. Walker stated since the new Government administration came into place in the United States, it is generally known that it will be harder for students to get visa appointments at US Consulates and Embassies abroad. Even if they can get visa appointments, it may be more challenging for them to secure a visa. Whether they are a newly admitted student or a continuing student they should be more prepared with more answers, more documentation, when they go to their visa appointment and when they're going to enter the US. If you or they need guidance and support on what type of documentation they should carry, what kind of questions they should be ready to answer, feel free to reach out to me or to my office for advice. What's been happening recently to some of our current students, within the past three weeks we have seen eight of our students have their immigration status terminated by the US Government. This is something that's happening nationwide at many universities. You may have seen it on the news or heard about it on different communication channels in higher education. Walker stated before a student comes here, they must get admitted by OSU. They send an immigration document by our office. They are issued an immigration document; they must secure a visa at a US Consulate or Embassy abroad. This is their ticket to get in the US. Once they get into the US they report to us, and we manage their electronic immigration record. One student of the eight who have had their records terminated did get notified that their visa has been revoked. That doesn't impact their status in the US. But all eight of these students: 1 two weeks ago, 5 last week and 2 today. What they are doing is auto-canceling their electronic immigration record. For one of these students, they cited political activity as the reason. For the other seven they said it was due to some criminal activity. What we've learned by talking to the students is, it has been anything from a previous arrest, whether they have resolved the issue or not, to a speeding ticket. The action that our office is taking is reaching out to the students, telling them this has happened, talking to them about their immigration-related options and guiding and supporting them with what they want to do. Walker stated that regardless of their immigration status, they can still complete their degree at OSU. Walker stated the types of actions that they can take regarding their immigration status is; do nothing. Stay here and keep studying and hope they don't get a visit by the law enforcement branch of the US Government called ICE. We can assist them in applying for reinstatement of their immigration status. They can also seek the help of an immigration attorney and go to court and fight this action, or they can choose to return to their home country. In the case of returning to their home country if they are a graduate student Dean Morgan's willing to work with them to see if they can complete their program online. Walker stated of these students we've seen so far, one is an undergraduate, 4 are PhD students and 3 are Masters students. The programs they are in are Chemistry, Hospitality Management, Entomology, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Environmental Science. We are reaching out to the students and to their departments to see if they have funding. We are reaching out to HR to see if they have funding. Once their immigration record is canceled, they should no longer be working on or off campus. Walker said comparatively, I don't know how many students at other universities in Oklahoma have been impacted yet. But we do know at the university I was at previously; we have 2,000 foreign students here. They have 9,000. They had 32 students’ records canceled or terminated last week we had 8. Texas Tech has had 6. We are actively keeping an eye on their records, checking every day to see if we have any more students impacted. Walker cannot say how long this will go on, or how many students’ records will be affected at this point.

Walker opened the floor for questions. Knapp stated as a point of clarification, you said that once a student's record has been removed, they no longer have the ability to work either on or off campus. How would they potentially then stay here and complete their degree. Walker gave the following example, let's say I'm the student. If I'm enrolled in a degree program here, I can go to class. I can study and I can get a degree. But if I have an assistantship, a teaching assistantship, research assistantship where I'm getting a stipend, and my tuition and fees are covered, I will no longer be eligible to have an assistantship. The student couldn't continue to receive a stipend for the rest of the semester. Walker stated how that impacts the student’s tuition and fees at this point in the semester would be between them and their academic department. Knapp stated it's challenging. Walker replied yes. Hoff stated another issue could be students who do have a valid visa and want to visit their family. When they come back, even though they have a valid visa, there may be unpredictable complications when they try to enter the country. Hoff asked if there is an advisory that students probably should not travel because of the risk even when holding valid visa, the risk is just too big. This is Hoff is hearing from students. I'm not going to travel because the risk is too big. I'm not going to go to an international conference or to my family. The risk is too big. Is there an official travel advisory coming? Walker stated we don't have an official travel advisory. I would say at this point if a student is maintaining their immigration status, and they have a valid visa, I would not tell them to not travel home or to a conference. She would advise them on a case-by-case basis, considering where they're from, where they're going and if they have a valid visa. If they've been maintaining status and they have a valid visa Walker would say they need to carry more documentation, be more prepared. I wouldn't tell them to be afraid and not travel. Hoff asked if they have a visa and a speeding ticket. Walker responded that if it were me and I had a visa and a speeding ticket, that might be an extra layer of risk that I would not want to take. Eisenberg how many of the non-American population at large been advised about this? Walker stated that since the new Government administration came into being there's a page on the White House website where they put all of the new executive orders and proclamations. We're watching that, we're summarizing those, and we're putting summaries on our website of things that will impact our student population. We are not making an announcement at this point, telling all international students, hey, this is happening. Hey, it could happen to you -- because we don't want to incite widespread fear and panic. We're dealing with them on a case-by-case basis at this moment. Eisenberg stated that brings me to my second question. Let's say they decide to fight this in court, but they no longer have money to fight this in court. Is there pro bono help with legal people to work with them in court for the students who are affected. Walker has not found any pro bono attorneys yet. We know some reputable immigration attorneys in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana, that we are referring students to. We have been able to secure a free appointment for the student. If the student wants to take this to court, I don't know of any attorneys that are doing this pro bono. The student may have to pay the attorney. Eisenberg said if they're not getting paid and now, we're asking them individually to take on another burden of cost that becomes even more difficult for those students. Walker stated absolutely.

Knapp stated that beyond the cohort of current students, we're experiencing challenges with this in terms of recruiting new students. His understanding is that they have really increased the burden of students getting into the country. And it's affecting our ability to reliably recruit students here, especially international students. We have a large cohort of international students. They're ending up being delayed to the point where it's really having a significant impact on our recruitment. Knapp asked if there was any additional advice on how to navigate this. Walker stated that she is not currently involved in the recruiting effort. I know Dean Morgan is, and Dr. Kluver, my boss, is. Walker stated that in terms of where she sits, once they get admitted, the sooner they can get the immigration document the better, because the sooner they get the document the sooner they can try to schedule a visa appointment. If their visa expired within the past 12 months, current students are having to sit for a face-to-face visa appointment. Getting a visa appointment is more competitive and getting a visa is more competitive. The sooner they get admitted the better. The sooner they get the immigration document the better, so they can try to secure that visa appointment. Something we are going to be piloting soon is visa preparation services like mock visa appointments and visa denial appointments to try to guide and support them through those things. This is where we can help the students.

Eisenberg asked if there is a plan to keep track of where it's been more difficult to get visas moving forward. Let's say, it might be easy to get an appointment in France versus South Africa could be very hard. Can we keep track of this on your end so you can make adjustments to all types of admissions, recruitment and processes? Walker said a good place to keep track of the visa process in different countries, and visa availability, would be on the Department of State website. There are countries in general where it may be harder to get a visa. Eisenberg understands the Department of State is going to keep their general waitlist times. But for OSU faculty, is there a way for us to figure out together where is it more difficult? We as a director of graduate studies can advise students from certain countries that it's actually going to take you more like 9 months as we track this data moving forward not just this year, but in years to come. Walker said this is not something we're doing right now, but that is an effort we can make to provide that information to the Graduate College, etc., so that faculty can consider where it is more difficult to get a visa, or where there are visa delays. Walker said there are some countries that even before this current issue or the current challenges students who hold passports from certain countries can expect something called administrative processing. So, for example, if a student holds a passport from Iran, it's all politics, the relationship between the US and a given country, they can expect visa delays. They can expect administrative processing, which means their visa might be delayed 6 months to a year. Walker stated that this is a moving target or situation based upon the political situation between the US and a given country. Walker stated that this is information we can try to provide on what the trends are with a given country, and what could be expected if you're wanting a specific student to come for a given semester.

Lacombe asked if there is a targeted country currently where visas are removed? And do we know if you are a student from that country, you're potentially more likely to have your visa revoked. Walker stated that the students who were having their visas revoked 2 weeks ago were students who were accused of being participants in political activities, such as social media posts, protests, etc. This past week it was students who have been involved in criminal activity. The countries that the students are coming from, that we have had terminations so far are mostly India, China, Saudi Arabia and I believe we have one African student. Walker can't say it's just like one specific country. This is what we've seen so far.

Provost Mendez wanted to jump in real quick on just one or two recommendations. I know our desire is to help all of our students. I get that. I'm a faculty member, but we need to lean on the resources of ISS. You and other faculty members should not give this advice to your students. Please send them to ISS. That will maintain a consistent message. They are up to date daily. Elizabeth already told you how they're tracking everything, how current they are. Please do not give advice to your students. Please send them to ISS. That is what that office is for. Also, please do not give legal advice to your students unless you are a practicing lawyer. Thank you.

Slevitch asked if the advice to faculty members is to send your student to ISS. Mendez stated yes. They will point them in the right directions. They will have a consistent message. They will have the most up-to-date information. Instead of all of us doing this. Thank you. Hoff stated we do our best internally, but we can also have a voice to the external world. Hoff thinks one of the amazing things about the US that he himself has benefited from tremendously is its openness. The US is a sponge for talent from all over the world, and he knows that brings complications, too, but it also brings great opportunities. Hoff worries that this trend puts that at risk, and I don't know how we can, as a group, verbalize that. Slevitch understands but we can control what we can control here. We can express our feelings and concerns with voting or things that are also relevant. Slevitch thanked Walker and Dr. Morgan for their report. Slevitch introduced Chris Ormsbee.

1. **Chris Ormsbee – ITLE Meazure Learning**

Ormsbee said thank you all for having her at our meeting. She wanted to give us an update on Meazure Learning and presented the following PowerPoint.



Ormsbee stated we switched our online proctoring tool last fall. We were asked to do an RFP in the spring of 24 by the A and M Regents to see if we could get the best deal possible. We created a committee that represented the campus. It also included OSU-OKC members as well as OSU-IT and Tulsa campus folks. One of the things that's unique here at OSU is we needed to have two options. We needed to have an automated system. And we've been using that since the pandemic, because it's inexpensive and easy to use. And we needed what we call a live option, because we have faculty who give paper/pencil exams. So statistics, math department, I think some chemistry courses do paper/pencil, and you can't do those through automated systems. We also needed a student pay option, because most institutions have a campus license where they just pay for it then they bill that through fees. We do a direct bill. What we needed to have was a through process. We are billed, and then we turn around and bill the student’s bursar accounts. A lot of proctoring solutions students pay with a credit card. The problem with that at the time is scholarship students don't get reimbursed if they use a credit card. Athletes couldn't get reimbursed if they used a credit card, so the best way to use that was to run it through the bursar, which is very unique. I think we might be one of the few institutions that does that. We had some unique challenges. We did the RFP. We looked at I think it was six proctoring tools. Meazure Learning was the one that we ended up choosing. Meazure Learning is a new company. They purchased Proctor U, which has been on this campus for a long time, started in Spears, and it's the live piece of proctoring, and Examity, which was the one we were currently using. It had the automated and live process. It's now Meazure Learning. We implemented that in the fall. We had some challenges right away. I'd love to say it all went smoothly. But you know, with technology it never goes as smoothly as you'd like. One was that Canvas updated their privacy settings and proctoring solutions couldn't use it anymore. And they didn't tell anybody. We spent two weeks trying to figure out why we couldn't integrate Meazure Learning. We were able to finally do that, but it delayed us about six weeks in implementing it. We didn't really get Meazure implemented until mid-September. This was a real challenge.

Once we got that resolved, we did quite a bit of training. I think we had six zoom trainings for faculty throughout September. We also did communications only to faculty who are teaching online. I pulled those lists from an e-print and you probably got an email from me that said, “Here's what's going on”. We created website resources as well as our teaching tips on Tuesdays. I hope you read that. It's a great resource. We put information in there as well. We've tried to provide ongoing support. We've done that as well at the beginning of spring. As I said, we've had some challenges. Up till now we've done more than 13,000 exams. So, we use it a lot. Here's our current usage. I just want to share this. Our biggest challenge has been Live+ and it's been a big problem. We've been really, really unhappy with it. We started out with about 30% technology problems or other kinds of issues. And now we're at about 21%, which is good. But what we did was try to push as many people as we could into the automated or the Record+ program because it doesn't have any problems. If you look at it, our Record+ technology issues are less than 1%. It's really good. The average across the country is 10%. We're pleased with Record+, but we're still working on Live+. And the issues that we continue to experience are human issues. We're dealing with a human, a person, a proctor. A proctor doesn't follow the instructions that the faculty member used. The student gets materials they weren't supposed to have. The proctor doesn't show up for the meeting time. That's a problem. The other challenges we've had are student problems. Students don’t test their computer and make sure that they can run the browser and the browser takes a lot of memory. If they're going to use their phone, they're probably going to have some problems. Believe it or not students use their phones for tests. I saw some data the other day that 90% of students use their phones for their homework. Phones might not be able to manage that. Students need to test their technology. They need to make sure they have the bandwidth for the Internet. One of the problems one of my colleagues was talking about was a student couldn't get the test rolling at home, but they were at home and using the Internet, and their family was watching the movies, somebody's on the computer playing a game. And there's just not enough bandwidth to support all that's happening. We've tried to work on some of those issues. Other issues that we've had are things like faculty, not setting up the test correctly. When you're only using it three times a semester it's not real easy for you and each time probably feels like the first time. It's easy to make mistakes and we felt like the process is fairly complicated.

We've tried to provide resources to faculty. We do a lot of individual support to faculty, particularly with those live ones where you have some very specific guidance for what students can and cannot do and how they're going to get their materials and then load those materials. Students don't always follow instructions. We've had that challenge where a student goes in to take the test. They didn't follow instructions for how to sign up. They don't use their OSU email. They're not in the right place to take their tests. Some of these are growing pains to some extent, but they're also things that sometimes don't go away because we don't test that frequently. It's not like they're in it every day. We're working on these to try to ensure that we provide enough resources for students and faculty. Lastly, we've struggled with consistency or what I'd call poor technical support from Meazure Learning. We get mostly anecdotal information from students and faculty who've been frustrated and having problems with their technology. They call Meazure Learning and Meazure Learning says, oh, it's Canvas. And it's not Canvas. It's Meazure Learning. This is a challenge. We provide this feedback to Meazure Learning. This is something we are working on.

Here's where we are, we've been encouraging faculty, if you can, to use Record+ instead of Live+. The reason for that is, you don't really gain anything from a human proctoring your exam. I think people think, oh, this will make it very, very safe and secure. But the fact is that if you use Live+ and the student cheats, or they think they cheat, and the proctor says, don't do that. They still let you finish the test, even though they think you cheated. If you use Record+, it will flag it, and they go back and watch the video. We have somebody who goes back and watches every video beginning to end. They flag any areas that they think were cheating, you still got to finish the test. So instead of $24 for a live person, that's not really providing you with any more security, we can use the Record+ at $6, and we have lots fewer problems. We really encourage it unless it's a paper pencil exam that you use Record+ because your students are going to have a much better experience. They're going to have fewer problems. They don't have issues of scheduling and all that sort of thing. We've really pushed that. As I showed from the user data, we've actually flipped our usage from Live+ being a very small portion of what we're doing, and Record+ being the bigger part which I appreciate. I also think it'll put pressure on Meazure Learning to improve their technical support.

We do meet with Meazure Learning pretty regularly and provide feedback. Whenever we hear about issues, we talk to them about it. We're continuing to have that conversation with them. We have discussed how we can make sure that faculty and students are getting information about how to use Meazure Learning successfully. We have the web page. We're going to do more communications. If you're teaching online, you will be getting more emails from me. You're probably going to get some more as we try to make sure that you know about our resources and that you can share those with students. Sometimes the resources that are made by the vendor aren't as easy for students to deal with. So, we're going to probably build some more that we think students will be able to use. I don't communicate directly with students. I want the faculty to do that primarily, because I don't know which online classes are using Meazure Learning. So I don't want to send a message to all the online students because it will create more confusion. We really want faculty to be the lead on this. I mean, if you're going to use a technology you probably need to make sure you know it better than your students. But we're going to continue to provide training and make sure our resources are available. We're also going to consider a different vendor. It's not my favorite thing to do to change technologies on faculty quickly. I don't think you like that, either. You say I just learned that now you're changing it. We're going to do another RFP in the fall. I don't know if that means we'll change from Meazure Learning. But we're going to do another one and see if there's something different out there, or if maybe it'll move Meazure to do a better job. We've had a year where I'd say that in general it's been pretty good, but we've also had a lot of challenges with Live+. And the last place you want to have technology problems is when a student's taking a test. We're going to have some new conversations about that this fall.

Ormsbee opened the floor for questions. Knapp stated that feedback he has heard from faculty members, he does not use the system himself, is there was a lot of frustration with the timing of the launch. After the school year had already started, faculty were not apprised that this was coming or given the chance to try and get up to speed on it. They're already in the middle of their course and trying to learn a new system. I would suggest we do not go down that road. Ormsbee stated we're going to do the RFP in the fall. And again, we wouldn't make a change until summer, because we must align with the fiscal year. The challenge is, when do you do that? Because you have summer classes, but your fiscal year is July 1. In the middle of summer. You don't want to have students start with one tool switch to another one in the middle of a summer class. The other challenge we had last year was we had a contract issue with Meazure Learning. I wasn't willing to sign a five-year contract, and they were dragging their feet because they wanted a five-year contract. I didn't sign a five-year contract. I signed a one plus one plus one plus one, because I didn't want to get trapped in a five-year contract which technology vendors want. They want a three-year contract or a five-year contract, and I was just unwilling to do that, so that drug it into late July. Then we ran into the technology problems with Canvas. It was one of those bad luck all the way around. But you're right. We were late. It was absolutely late. Slevitch has one comment that came out of the Executive meeting that we had last week. It appears that faculty would really be interested in having a brown bag type of conversations about usage of AI, and how it can be used to basically make us as faculty more efficient. We can share that information, and I know IT has been putting pieces of information that's been really useful. Something that would happen on a regular basis, and we could again exchange ideas and information. Ormsbee stated they have been doing a monthly AI chat all year. It's on our teaching tips and on our events page. We are going to continue that we're going to continue to provide training. We have a self-paced AI module. It's on our website that's been there for months that faculty can use. In every one of our teaching tips we always have an AI tip. But you're right. We need to do more, and we'll continue to do that. Everybody's busy. I know it. But if you do anything on Tuesday, read teaching tips.

Slevitch thanked Ormsbee and introduced Interim President Hess.

**President’s report and comments on matters of interest to the Faculty – Interim President Jim Hess**

Thank you for the opportunity to be with my fellow faculty members. I always like to remind everyone that I'm a faculty member first. I'm still teaching this semester. Got a couple of PhD students that are going to get hooded in a few weeks here. I'm really proud of that and I'm anxious to finish up all my classes as all of you are as well.

I want to start off by introducing someone that you may have already met. Chris Kuwitzky is the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). I've known Chris for a long time, and we're lucky to have you, Chris. Blessed is actually a better word. Chris brings a wealth of experiences in higher education finance. I'm a finance guy so he and I are always of one mind about everything. That's helpful. Thank you for joining us, Chris. It's been our great honor to have you.

I wanted to talk about a couple things. I know you have a lot of things on your agenda, so I'd like to make a few brief comments and then open it up for Q and A of things that you'd like to talk about. We decided to extend our search for the Vice President for Student Affairs. It was felt that we might get a different pool if the position were described as reporting directly to the President. Dr. Mendez has done a great job and Amber Manning-Ouellette. Thank you for standing in the gap for us. We're greatly appreciative of it. We're going to extend the search and redescribe the position. Not much. A couple sentences about where the reporting line is. I believe it was felt in the aggregate of our search committee and myself, as well, that we might get a different pool. I met with the search committee this morning. Thank you for the opportunity. Martin Baker, our search consultant, will start to communicate with a pool of candidates that we can all be proud of. This process will be going on over the next couple of months. I really think it's important that we spend the time and energy to get the right person for the student experience here. I beg your indulgence and patience as we go through that process. But I think it'll be worthwhile.

I wanted to talk about a more contemporary issue about this opportunity for our concert series these next few days. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, to be exact and tell you a couple of things that are important. The folks who are responsible for coordinating the event have spent a great deal of time focusing on public safety. The number of folks keeping an eye on things will be significantly greater than you've seen, and maybe events in the past. But this is our first time out for one of these events, and so we want to make sure that our public safety aspects of that event are appropriately staffed. With people arriving each day at 8 o'clock in the morning for tailgating and social activities. It's important that we stay on top of public safety and noise. One of the questions that I received is why are we bothering to have class if we're going to have all these people on our campus? My judgment was this, we are an academic institution. That's what we do, and I appreciate the opportunity for us to bring people to campus, for a concert and for everybody to have a good time. But that's not what our primary mission is. Our primary mission is instruction, research, and extension. And so, I did not feel it appropriate to ask you all and students who rely on you so heavily to not be engaged in the primary mission of the institution. I did receive a couple of emails that were less than flattering about that decision. But I think it was the right thing to do. I made it as a faculty member. Some of our academic facilities are relatively close to where some of the social activity will be going on. We want everybody to have a good time and all that, within reason, and the noise levels need to be appropriately managed. People were concerned about a month ago about whether or not the weather would be a problem. I can assure you now that it's not going to be. And here's how I know. Because I forced the promoter to buy an insurance policy to protect our ticket sales if it rained. You can be assured we'll have beautiful weather because we're insured. If we were not insured it would have probably been rained out. But our ticket sales for our degree of profitability on the event are the primary thing that we need to protect. The promoter was very, very helpful in helping us acquire an insurance policy. Here's how the insurance policy works. It's a rolling insurance policy, so that we can apply it for any night that it rains. If it rains any of the four nights, we can apply that policy to any of those nights. The policy would cover what our greatest ticket sales were for any of the four nights. It is a great policy. I don't think we're going to need it. A good time will be had by all is what they say at the Chamber of Commerce. I had the opportunity to meet with the mayor and the city manager, and they're greatly excited by OSU sponsoring this event because it has a huge economic impact on the city from restaurants, gas, hotels, and people purchasing things. It's a huge boost for our community. Notwithstanding that there may be some minor points of frustration for us, but acceptable points of frustration. Starting Thursday, we'll have the opportunity to attend the concert and participate in this great experiment. Here's a couple of things that are relatively easy questions to answer, and they come up all the time. What about the turf on the stadium? We're going to have chairs out there. Is it going to damage the turf? You all remember when they were redoing some of the seating. They put all the flooring on the turf during that renovation about a year ago and that will be on the turf so that the chairs that are inside the bowl of the stadium will not be sitting on the turf. They're going to be sitting on a synthetic floor so that we won't have the opportunity to damage the turf. The promoters are responsible for returning the condition of the facility in which they found it. There's a squaring up process at the end of all this to say, here's our expenses. Here's some things you're responsible for and balancing all that up to make sure the university's interests are financially protected. So that's enough about that.

Our legislative efforts are ongoing. We feel relatively good about where we are on our legislative requests and had the opportunity to testify for lack of a better word in a couple of public hearings last week. We feel really good about where we are Legislatively speaking. Our animal teaching hospital is still in the House's budget. There's only one complicating factor in all of this, and that is a tax cut. A tax cut in the middle of all this is one of the variables in the funding mechanisms related to some of our legislative requests. The Legislature tells me they're going to try to adjourn early. I've heard that for the last 44 years. The last Friday in May is what the constitution of Oklahoma says about when the legislature must go sign and die. The next 45 days are absolutely critical. I'm often asked, how can I help? And here's how folks can help, not just Payne County but folks all across this State. When I advocate for something, it's different than when a regular citizen who's not a paid employee of Oklahoma State University advocates for something. It's received differently. Our State representative in Payne County and our State Senator are very supportive. Folks that you know, outside this legislative district, if they would call their Senator and State representative to support the legislative request of Oklahoma State University this would be greatly appreciated. I have other things I could report on, but I really want to give you all an opportunity to ask me questions.

Emerson asked what's the expected profits from the concert. We sold about $20 million dollars worth of tickets. Of course, the artists have to be paid. The promoter has to be paid. The concessionaires have to be paid. If I were guessing, I would say about $2.5 million. I think it's going to end up being close to that. Eisenberg asked if there is an allocation that's been already decided upon with that money in terms of where the general funding goes. Or is that a long-term discussion. This is an event to support the athletic programs of Oklahoma State University. I'm told the event was designed originally to support our athletic efforts. As you all know, we now live in a world where the financing of athletics is becoming challenging. Whether we believe in NIL revenue sharing, and all those things doesn't really matter anymore. We all might have different opinions about it, but it's the world we live in. This particular activity was designed to be able to support that activity. Knapp appreciates sharing this information with us. To his knowledge, we as faculty have not received any information on the logistics of this event. I also appreciate your principled stand about our mission as a university. Knapp asked if there is an intent to advertise to the faculty what the logistics are in terms of parking, and we work in a part of campus directly next to the stadium. There's a bunch of accommodations I think a number of us are going to have to make. It would be helpful to know those. Hess believes they've designed a couple of emails that have been sent. And Megan Horton can speak to this if she'd like. Slevitch stated several emails regarding parking have been sent. Knapp stated he was sorry he missed them. Hortin stated there is a few websites with information as well. If you look at the campus safety website. There's information. Horton stated athletics has one as well. Horton said to search in your email. There's maps and links and all kinds of things. Knapp assumes the whole stadium parking lot is blocked off. Horton stated yes, there are lots that they sold, but also one important note is tailgating is located north of the stadium. There is a very controlled location you can see on the map. It will not be the simple tailgating that you see on a game day. They have very specific areas. Lawson stated he has several faculty members texting me. If I don't ask this, I'm going to hear about it. Lawson stated he thinks there is support for the idea of having classes on Thursday and Friday. But is there a possibility of having some flexibility for faculty to adjust if needed. Instead of saying, if it's a face-to-face class you must have it face-to-face. Is there a way to adjust the course to address what's going to happen on those days? Hess stated I'm a faculty member and I make accommodations all the time for my students. Every week I make accommodations for my students. The short answer is. Yes, I think one of the things that I don't want anybody to feel ever from me is anything that is an executive order. Special conditions require special circumstances, and I'm a big believer in making accommodations to be helpful to students.

Eisenberg wanted to ask an unrelated question on the legislative affairs. Is there a legislative affairs person or grassroots effort that exists that we can hook into to spread these ideas. Hess stated that next Wednesday is Capital Cowboys. It's OSU’s presence at the State Capitol. Our higher education day in general is Tuesday, but that will be for all Higher Ed institutions in the State. You'll see a lot of people there on Tuesday from different institutions across this state. The short answer is that Wednesday is a great opportunity to go lobby or persuade because we don't have lobbyists. Capital Cowboys is a great opportunity. However, we also have folks who are legislative liaisons, and those folks work in the Board Office. The person's name is Steve Thompson. Hoff stated I've been learning a little bit more. I still only know very little about the history of the dust bowl. The striking thing I learned was the harder it got, the more important it was for people to stick together and help each other. Hoff thinks OSU has been spared the worst as far uncertainties about the higher education system. But my question is, are there efforts of universities in the US to communicate, to see how we can help each other, and by coming together we can help the whole higher education system. Hess stated that there are several national organizations, at administrative level, faculty level, and institutional level for us to communicate with one another, collaborate with one another and focus on common issues. The truth is, while we are all dealing with unique circumstances that you heard about earlier this afternoon, we're not the only ones. Hess doesn't know of a single institution that isn't experiencing the same issues as we are, whether it be related to international students or financing mechanisms. Just to be clear in our state, both institutions at the R1 level have the same problems. We are colleagues and do a lot of work with them. If you look at the enrollment of the two R1 institutions in this state, the funding follows those institutions. The two-year schools and the regional colleges have done much better in terms of per student funding. Theirs have gone up, and the reason it's gone up is because their enrollment has gone down and their funding has stayed the same. That's the condition. Whereas at our institution and with our colleagues down the turnpike, our enrollment has grown while our revenue has stayed the same. So, the amount you can spend per student is decreasing every year. I'm not making any disparaging comments about any other school. I'm just telling you what the financial reality is, which is enrollment at other schools continues to decline, but their funding stays the same. Our enrollment is growing, and our funding is staying the same.

Hess stated that our Chancellor is painfully aware of these circumstances and has done a great job of communicating with our legislative partners that we are in a much different space than the other institutions are. This leads to a persuasive argument at some point in time of shouldn't funding follow enrollment. It's described in a whole lot of different ways but the reality is should funding follow enrollment growth. What typically happens is the state regions have a formula. All the money comes from the legislature. If it’s new money, it must be new money, it goes through a formula. Then the State Region's formula funnels it out to each institution. This formula only applies if it's new funding and I suspect you all can't remember the last time there was new funding related to operations of our higher education institutions. In the event that new funds were available, that's when the balancing act and the balancing of the books will occur. It would require new funding to be available. We have been blessed to be able to build a lot of new structures on our campus. But the funding to operate those facilities is not forthcoming. While we have been blessed greatly with the ability to have new facilities, the money to operate those facilities must come from within this institution. That's a challenge, because we have so many great needs right now.

Hess thanked the Budget Committee member for the great job on a faculty compression study about that need and how much it would take to address this need. It would take a few concerts. We have a lot of pressing needs on faculty salaries and benefits. The self-funded insurance plan is a challenge that we're working on. We have all these big challenges (faculty compression issues, self-funded insurance) and I encourage you not to think about all of them at one time because it's overwhelming. Hess encouraged everyone to think about it incrementally because all progress is made incrementally at any institution of higher education.

Hess stated the first cowgirl, Angela, has taken on mental health and wellness of our faculty, staff and students as her initiative. She's a real warrior. She's passionate about mental well-being.

Knapp wanted to follow up on budgetary issues. Some of Hess’s earliest comments were that tuition waivers were a matter of major concern and Hess mentioned the idea of a major capital campaign potentially to offset some of those costs. Is it your sense that's a realistic goal within the time that you're an Interim President? Hess stated I'm reminded of that expression about the best time to plant a tree. One is 20 years ago, and the other is today. I feel the same way about capital campaigns for scholarships. We need to have a scholarship endowment at this institution of about $1.5 billion dollars. On an average earnings year that would bring you a minimum of about $75 million a year but it might be more. Conservatively, it is about $75 million a year. This year we're going to spend $108 million dollars on waivers. Dream with me, if you replaced $75 million dollars of our waiver program with cash and that was a cash infusion to us of $75 million dollars. All these other problems and challenges would be swallowed whole with $75 million dollars in new money annually. Hess stated the OSU Foundation is in what they call the quiet phase of their capital campaign. They're not quite ready to launch, and what the quiet phase means is talking to a lot of donors about what our needs are and getting them primed for an ask. This is ongoing as we speak. Hess tries to call on several donors a week, some by phone, some in person. Here's my personal thought, to a student who needs the money I don't think they care who the President of the University is. They have a financial need. And we have one, too. I think that in our long-term best interest I'll continue to work on it. Regardless of my status. I think it's important that we focus on raising scholarship money. It's my number one priority for fundraising. I think it will change the face of this institution forever. I think it enables us to tackle all the challenges that we're currently facing. Let's say we raised $1.5 or $2 billion dollars. It takes a year of earnings, so the sooner we start the better.

Slevitch thanked Dr. Hess for the updates and introduced Provost Mendez.

**Provost’s report on recommendations made by the Faculty Council and comments on matters of interest to the faculty – Provost Mendez:**

Mendez stated that there is one recommendation on the sheet. This is the recommendation about the salary survey done by the Budget Committee. I plan to take this to our senior leadership meeting on Wednesday. Mendez spoke with President Hess, and with the Faculty Council Executive team and just want to make a clarification. The recommendation says that OSU would implement these changes to the salary structure. What I'm asking for is your guidance to me that really what we're trying to do is take it to the Administration to have a discussion about this. We've just gotten from the President where we are in the budget situation right now. To be able to have the executive team vote on implementing this at this point in time probably would not get a unanimous vote. It would not be supported by senior leadership at this point. But what we want to do is take a recommendation to be able to explore this, to put this into place in a plan being developed as the budget climate changes. Mendez did want to take that to your consideration. Mendez asked Lawson, the Budget Committee chair, if he is comfortable that this is what we discuss with senior leadership or is it a recommendation that this is implemented at this point in time. Lawson stated I don't think we really set a timeline as far as implementation. Mendez stated that gives us a little bit of interpretation. Eisenberg stated our apologies for the ambiguous wording. Mendez stated it was very direct wording but what she’s asking for is a little ambiguity in how she interprets it. Eisenberg stated he thinks the goal was to have a discussion to begin the conversation, which is what we'd always intended. Mendez stated perfect. That is what she thinks the exec team interpreted as well but she just wanted to be clear. She didn't come back with some sort of no vote on something that would be unsatisfactory and again she does think there's a lot of support for this.

Mendez gave a couple of brief updates. You might be hearing some of this from your deans. We've given the Deans a little bit of an overview that the President has given as well on the budget climate. We have not put any specific budget planning models in place as of today, but we are having those discussions with the Deans. As we do this, different Deans will have different recommendations. Mendez stated one college she asked what faculty hiring is occurring between now and the start of the fall and then asking for what the faculty hiring will look like for the next academic year. The Deans are preparing those. Some Deans have said that they are going to pause on some of the current hiring. That wasn't a directive from the Provosts office or administration. It was tell me what you've got right now. Tell me what's upcoming. Let's have discussions on filling mission critical type positions but also being able to anticipate some further budget discussions. We want to give ourselves some of that flexibility. Deans might be contacting faculty regarding workload policies. They're working with their department heads trying to understand workload policies across departments. What is the workload policy for each faculty member. What is their percentage effort, how many courses they're teaching, course releases that they've been given, overload assignments that they've taken on to get a holistic view of our teaching needs across the institution. That is really all that is for, that's what the Deans have been told that it is for. Mendez is trying to get a sense of what our workload policies look like, where we have them, where we don't, how we're translating workload policies into percent effort so we can have some further discussions about that. If you're wondering what's going on, why am I being asked about this. What does this mean? It's just to get a view of where it is. I've got some departments that have workload policies and others who don't. Some colleges are developing them, and I thought it'd be good to see that kind of collectively across all the departments, colleges, and where we could provide some guidance. If you hear any of those discussions, that's where that's coming from.

Mendez’s last comment is, it is RPT time for me which means any free minute the next 2 months is spent reading all the promotion, tenure and reappointment portfolios. I just want to thank you. Thank you all for the work you're doing. I'm one college in, but it's only about 30 out of 170, so it feels good to say I'm one college in out of six. I'm ahead of pace compared to last year, but there's a lot, but every time I read them, I'm impressed by the work being done. Mendez opened the floor for questions.

Perkins asked if the deans are on the same page in terms of allowing a certain amount of flexibility with students on Thursday and Friday? Mendez stated no, I think our message was, we're still having classes, and Jim, giving kind of a wink on that is probably how I would have explained it, too. I think some eans are saying “We are having classes”, and others are more, “whatever's unsaid is unsaid”. Mendez did not provide additional guidance but stated that is the guidance I would go with.

Knapp provided a comment on the workload piece. This is something the Faculty Committee and to some extent the Career Track Faculty Committee have been grappling with. Knapp thinks there is a collective sense that this is a very challenging policy to reevaluate with the addition of anomaly 850 Career Track faculty with very disparate job titles and job assignments. To try and come up with a uniform sort of umbrella, of how you develop this policy. Knapp stated we put this on the back burner for quite some time, Mendez stated it's worth having some discussions. Knapp stated it desperately needs to be revised. Knapp said it started to become clear that it was going to be unrealistic to fairly capture the breadth of time that we have to try and bring it over the finish line. Mendez stated as I read the RPT files, I can tell you, percent effort is all over the place. Mendez stated while I think that it is fine in many situations, if I have someone that is 70% teaching 30% research and then in the same department, someone, 75% teaching 25% research. What's the difference there in terms of courses. Those are, I think, the types of things that we want to start. What does that mean? If you're teaching 70%, or 75% or 65%, or 90% within a department, if it's so skewed that makes it really challenging, not just in assigning courses, but for evaluation at RPT time for committees to be looking at that.

Mendez thinks we can probably get some guidelines potentially. My Senior Vice Provost mathematician could tell you in his world one class is 12.5%, and that is what his department does. And I'm telling you that it is very clean. Now, there's some variation in how large of a class it is, or where a grad seminar fits, but 12.5% is kind of a nice clean number to work with. That means that everyone in their faculty percentages have at least the same increment, not this 70% or 75%. Mendez asked how do you measure 5%? That's not a class that 5% difference. Mendez thinks we could get some discussions going. She was talking about it with Dr. Sewell today. It's a heavy lift. I don't know where we'll get, but I do think we want to start the conversations. Knapp stated it needs to be done. There's no question about it. Knapp said beyond establishing umbrella at the university level, getting all the units to adopt that in a realistic way. Knapp said there's got to be a mechanism in which to make it work. Mendez stated once we have that she thinks we can have the Faculty Council committees start having some of those discussions. Mendez stated it's a big enough lift that it would not come out of the Provost’s office down. It's going to be lots of discussions and trying to have that understanding and knowing that it's not going to be as concrete as maybe we think it could be. There's got to be flexibility. The first step will be assessing where we are with all of this. Hoff said particularly about the creative part and the research part. Let's say you just wrote *War and Peace*. How many months the effort was that? Or you proved an incredibly important theorem. There is no month for that, right? Hoff stated our most important stuff is very difficult to certify. Mendez agrees. Hoff said this makes it even harder and asked if Mendez can point him in the right direction. How I should think more productively about this. Slevitch stated she thinks it's a big question again. Slevitch said I'm sorry for intervening, because it's a big topic and I need to make sure that we are staying on time. Mendez stated it is big, but we will have the conversations. Slevitch said those questions should be discussed with the Faculty Committee.

**Vice Presidents’ Reports and Comments on matters of interest to the faculty:**

None

**Faculty Council Chair’s Report:**

Slevitch passed the baton as council Chair to our Vice Chair, Stephen Perkins, to report on the recent election results. Perkins stated at the end of March Faculty Council held elections and are the results from the elections and our incoming officers and representatives. We want to express our appreciation to everyone who volunteered to run for Faculty Council. We know people are obviously very busy but really appreciate everybody.

Stepping up for Vice Chair next year will be Dr. Heather Yates. She's a Professor in Construction Engineering Technology. Dr. Yates will be joining the other officers. College of Arts and Sciences. We'll have Dr. Joe Haley, Professor in the Department of Physics; Dr. Erika Lutter, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics; Dr. Aihua Xie, Professor in the Department of Physics. From the Center for Health Sciences we have Dr. Eric Harp, Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology. From the College of Education and Human Sciences we have Dr. Jill Joyce, Associate Professor of Nutritional Sciences. From the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology we have Dr. Virginia Charter, who is the Dale Janes, Endowed Associate Professor in Fire Protection and Safety. From the Ferguson College of Agriculture we have Dr. Hannah Shear, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics. From OSU-OKC will have Dr. Joe Bennett, Director of the Fire Science Program at OSU-OKC. From the Spear School of Business, Dr. Rui Du, Assistant Professor of Economics. These are our incoming officers and representatives. At our next meeting we will thank those who are departing. Slevitch stated one housekeeping issue is that committee reports are due before the May meeting for chair committees. Please make sure that reports are submitted. Slevitch encouraged the committee chairs to make sure to save all the relevant documents on one drive so the next years committees will have something to work with and we can ensure the continuity. Slevitch stated that several surveys from various committees are coming up so be on the lookout for those. The committee preference survey will come out in May.

**Report of Liaison Representatives:**

* 1. Emeriti – Tom Royer

Carolyn Gang opened the March Evening dinner. Dr. Jim Hess, Interim OSU president spoke about the latest OSU happenings. We also heard from Chancelor Sean Burrage from the Higher Regents, who provided us with many updates about the future of higher education. We will host President Emeritus Burns Hargis for our next Monday Night Dinner on April 7. Our May 5 Monday Evening Dinner will host Professor Kevin Wagner, and Our June 2 Evening Dinner will host Senior Vice Provost Chris Francisco. We welcomed three new members to our group. Our upcoming 2005 Emeriti Association Directory will be coming out soon. We recognized the obituary for Naomi Von Guten.

* 1. Staff Advisory Council – Sam Morse – No Report
  2. Graduate Council – Veronique Lacombe

*The following Academic Program Committee (APC) items* were reviewed and approved at the March Graduate Faculty Council

*• New Programs:*

* Data Science, MS (Engineering)

­ Data Science, MS (Computer Science)

­ Data Science, MS (Math/Statistics)

*• Program modifications, through an APC Expedited Review:*

* Forensic Sciences: Forensic Document Examination, MS
* Environmental Science: Environmental Management Professional Science Masters, MS
* Design and Merchandising: Apparel Design and Textile Science, MS
* Electrical Engineering, PhD

*Graduate Faculty* **-** 60 new or renewal applications were reviewed and approved at the level of Full or Associate 1-3 by the Subject Matter Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6., as well as by the Graduate Council.

*Mentoring Workshops* – As part of Graduate Education Month, the Graduate College is hosting three mentoring workshops – two for graduate faculty and one for both graduate faculty and graduate students.

* Mentoring & Effective Communication: Towards Aligning Expectations, April 8, 3:00 PM, GAB, room B-09
* Mentor-Mentee Conflict: When Expectations Are/Become Unaligned, April 16, 3:00 PM, GAB, room B-09
* Mentor-Mentee Compacts: Processes to Align Expectations, April 22, 3:00 PM, GAB, room B-09

[*Graduate College Matriculation Office Hours*](https://grad.okstate.edu/portal/matric-office-hours)*:* Graduate coordinators, faculty and staff are welcome to drop in to get their matriculation questions answered.

*Upcoming deadlines*

* 3 Minute Teach Finalcompetition, Student Union Theater on Tuesday, April 15 at 3:30 PM.
* Oops-Proof Your Data: Security and Backup 101, Thursday, April 17 from 3:00 to 4:00 PM via [Zoom](https://okstate.libcal.com/event/14088359)
* The Research Ecosystem: Dysfunction and Reform, Thursday, May 1 from 3:00 to 4:00 PM via [Zoom](https://okstate.libcal.com/event/14088379)
* Graduate Commencement Friday, May 9 @ 4:30 PM.
  1. Student Government Association – Sam Hiltz
  2. Graduate & Professional Student Government Association – Marcia Sun

**GPSGA Stole Ceremony and GPSGA Stoles Checkout Process**

* During the March General Assembly, GPSGA hosted a stole ceremony to recognize the service of current board members to the graduate and professional and to inspire engagement in the upcoming elections.
* The GPSGA Stole honors the service and leadership of our current and former GPSGA representatives, liaisons, and officers by recognizing their contributions to the graduate and professional student community. It celebrates their commitment and impact during their academic journey at OSU!
* The GPSGA Graduation Stole Checkout Process is now open for Spring 2025 commencement. Current and former GPSGA representatives, liaisons, and officers are eligible to borrow a stole for commencement. Stoles must be returned after graduation commencement. GPSGA Stoles may also be purchased for $40.

**GPSGA Funding Opportunities**

* **GPSGA Travel Awards**: Applications are due by **March 31, 2025**.
* **Research Materials Grant**: The reimbursement application is currently open, with a due date of April 30.
* **Collaborative Event through Co-sponsorship Funding** 
  + GPSGA co-sponsored a **Business Seminar** organized by the Chemical Engineering Graduate Student Association featuring **Dr. Trost**, who shared his inspiring journey from engineer to inventor to entrepreneur.

**University Committee Updates**

**-Student Activity Fee Allocation Process (AFAP)**

* **Group I Allocation**:  
  Coordination is underway to finalize the committee (7 members in accordance with policy), in collaboration with the SGA AFAP Chair and advisor. Hearings and allocations are anticipated to be completed before April 14, 2025.
* **Group II Allocation (Feb–April 2025)**:  
  Hearings and presentations are ongoing.
  + Meetings includes: Orientation, Presentation Rounds, and Final Allocation Meeting
  + Final allocations will conclude in April 2025.

**Graduate Education Month & Undergraduate Research Support**  
In celebration of Graduate Education Month in April, GPSGA is participating in the OSU Undergraduate Research Symposium to highlight mentorship and the importance of graduate education.

* **OSU’s 4th Undergraduate Research Symposium**: April 22, 2025
* **Feedback Provider Training**: April 17 at 3:30 PM in GAB B-09
* Sign-up and session schedule available online.
* Over **70 more feedback providers** are still needed across all disciplines.

**Graduate College Program Updates Reminders Shared with the Graduate Student Community:**

* **360° Critical Skills for Career Success Program**
  + Platform updates have temporarily paused new submissions.
  + Previous submissions are retained.
  + Students nearing eligibility for the **Graduate Dean’s Medallion** should contact **gradcareersuccess@okstate.edu** by **April 15**.
  + Students are encouraged to maintain personal records of their activities during this transition.
* **Doctoral Candidacy Celebration**
  + Rescheduled to **April 1 at 3 PM**; program begins at 3:30 PM.

**GPSGA Phoenix Awards**  
The nomination period has closed. Evaluations are underway, and recipients will be announced following the review. Awardees will be invited to the **Graduate College and GPSGA Awards Ceremony** on **April 30**.

**Community Engagement Opportunity** – Participation in Into the Streets **–** GPSGA has created a volunteer group for Into the Streets on March 28 and take place on April 6, offering representatives and liaisons a chance to serve the Stillwater community and make up for one missed General Assembly meeting to remain in good standing.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**a. Academic Standards and Policies: Mike Yough – No Report**

**b. Access and Community Impact: Ravi Jadeja – No Report**

**c. Athletics: Aric Warren, Dr. Todd Meisner – Update**

Warren provided a brief update on our committee's work. We had been working this year on trying to gauge faculty and their thoughts and feelings on whether their mental health needs are being addressed on campus: if there's adequate resources, if they feel there's an appropriate level of support for faculty and staff with regard to mental health needs and challenges. Secondly, if faculty feel they're prepared to recognize any kinds of challenges or crises in the classroom with their students. There are resources available on campus now, in many locations. There is training available for faculty. But one thing we wanted to help raise awareness within all the colleges on campus and departments was the need for this, and to gauge where we're at as a campus with meeting these needs for our faculty and staff and our students. With that, we've been looking at a survey. The survey is called the Healthy Mind Survey. With us today is one of our liaison members, Todd Meisner from Wellness. He's done a lot of work collecting a lot of good data on campus and nationally. Todd is going to share with us a little bit about that data to kind of help share and demonstrate the need for this moving forward. The committee's been discussing when we're going to be launching the survey for faculty, and we understand the end of the year is very busy, and there's a lot of surveys from a lot of committees going around. We are targeting midfall. That way we can capture new incoming hires to campus. We're sharing some of this information now. The committee will be resharing some of this information again early fall before the launch of this important information. So, Todd, I'll turn it over to you. Meisner presented the following PowerPoint:



I'll be very, very quick, I promise. But I wanted to highlight just the known trends that have been around for a long time. It's not been surprising that mental health has been a major issue. This is a chart of since 2,008. And this is national college health data that's collected on a national level. And as you can see the prevalence of at least one mental illness diagnosis is around 44% nationally. That's a lot better than one in four and we're getting closer and closer to one out of every two. What you see here is the results from cohort assessments for our campus. This is relative to students, and I'll relate them quickly. But from Fall 2016, through the fall of 2024, as you can expect, and you wouldn't be surprised by a 39% increase in the overall prevalence of mental health, of self-reporting a diagnosis of mental health after Covid. It's a huge jump. Right now, as a campus, and you can see how we compare nationally well within the margin of error. Nationally speaking we're looking at 46% currently. We do a representative sampling, so this is not something where we're getting six students to respond and then we're assuming that represents campus. These are from samples that exceed 1,000 students responding. From the data alone, an interesting predictor or association that currently exists has to do with that self-reporting and mental health diagnosis, if you're controlling for gender minority status, financial need, and first gen status, on average, those students are achieving a cumulative GPA .22 points lower than students who don't. That's where the linkage is to the retention issues and persistence issues with a lot of students, because the greatest predictor of both those variables is GPA performance in the classroom. This is a big deal from so many different levels.

The thing that I want to really highlight is that research is awash with examples demonstrating the value and impact and overall importance of faculty interaction with students. It’s critical and you can't harp on that enough, but you know how well prepared I know anecdotally a lot of faculty might say, that's not my job, I don't feel comfortable, I'm not a counselor, I don't have time, or I'm overwhelmed. At the end of the day in order to address a comprehensive issue we have to look at it from a systems approach perspective where every part affects the other. It's not specifically student mental health, and mental illness that is the only problem. We have faculty that are struggling with mental illness. We have faculty who have staff or have their own children that are affected by mental illness that's affecting them that's affecting their place in the classroom. Getting a sense on how well prepared do our faculty feel in being able to provide support for students. These are some of the outputs that would come from the healthy mind study.

This is the national data summary. 60% of faculty feel that they are comfortable having conversations with students about mental health. Mental health problems are significantly worse. Perception is 60% for sure. Yes, and have a good idea how to recognize a student is in emotional distress. It's about split half and half and supporting students in mental and emotional distress that takes a toll on a faculty member. If there's an issue with a student there are those senses of connection with students that are real that has an impact that transcends more than just that one student. It affects the whole system essentially that they're engaged in. And you're looking at about 20% currently. What we're seeking to do is do this survey on our campus to gauge where we are now, as we seek to continue to build momentum and processes and interventions and ways to improve everybody's sense of place and ability to be a part of a system approach to mental health. Where everybody recognizes their specific role because the mental health issues for our campus are not going to be addressed if we just focus on students, it just won't work. It must be all inclusive and without the engagement of the faculty and our staff and our students we're not able to fully address that issue honestly. When you look at it from the standpoint of faculty and staff reporting depression and anxiety diagnosis, we did a survey of faculty and staff back in 2022 just looking at anxiety and depression. Once again, you see comparisons with national data versus OSU data just for your reference point. We're looking at roughly, one in three faculty and staff are reporting this.

Interestingly enough, the trend is that generally, you might have a mental illness or mental condition, whether or not you're getting treated for it is a whole other question. We all know that men are much worse at following through on that than women. That's no surprise. We also have an issue of do we have enough resources? Do we have appropriate resources to address the needs of our employee base. We know we live in a desert when it comes to mental health providers. This isn't a unique Stillwater thing. This is a massive statewide issue. We see these impacts in our families. We see these impacts in our classrooms. We see these impacts among colleagues. We all can think of people that have been touched by this issue. Are we comprehensively addressing this in a coordinated way. This is the great question that I continue to want to seek answers to and find that support network so that we can make it happen. To put it in context, if we're estimating that we have 5,000 full-time employees (FTE), that would mean at 32% that's roughly 1,600 that have reported either a diagnosis of depression or anxiety. If we further, we look at 21%, that's 336 people that have a mental illness or might have a mental illness diagnosis that aren't currently seeking care. When you look at the individual numbers, and then you start factoring in the implications on our self-insurance plan you really start to get an idea that these are real issues that are going to impact us in more than just whether or not a student is successful. There are so many different issues that this brings up. Having a coordinated effort is critical. Work and family about 39% and 44% of faculty and staff report this negatively impacts work performance. We talk a lot about efficiency which we should, but how efficient we can be is to some degree dependent on how well we are. Are we taking care of ourselves? Are we able to? This is a stressful environment? We all can acknowledge that. For parents, this is data from the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey which is 9th graders to 12th graders. These are our future students within the State. I'm very interested in understanding and finding resources for, because that's the future of our enrollment. Many of us have children in our own orbit that will eventually come to OSU or enter higher education in general. Are we stemming the tide? We're looking at four in ten 9th graders who have persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness. 29% report poor mental health. Two in ten seriously considered suicide and one in ten have attempted suicide. The trend continues to go up. Our goal is to try to launch this survey at an appropriate time on campus. We would prefer to do it system wide, because this is not just a Stillwater issue within the OSU system. This is an OSU issue and higher education issue. We're looking at the faculty and staff specifically and getting a sense of baseline and then starting to develop strategies about how we move this forward. We've already got several things underway. We have several initiatives already actively happening now. Having a coordinated effort, getting more buy-in, finding solutions where a faculty member may say they have so many other things on their plate, and need to get tenure. We're not incentivizing development around being prepared to support students’ mental health. Is there a way to factor this in? At the same time those are the questions to ask. How do we get more people to be a part of that circle of support. We're looking to do this in the fall. We want to work with the Faculty Council to identify an appropriate time. We have identified the funding to do this survey. This is through our Mental Health fund that we have through donations. Any collaborators on it will always be welcome.

Meisner opened the floor to questions. Hildebrand asked if there is any part of the semester or the year when these rates might be higher. Is it at the beginning of the semester. When they come back to campus do they feel disconnected from family? Meisner asked if this is from the student perspective. Hildebrand stated yes. Meisner stated it's very temporal. It starts to peak at the six-week grades. That's when some of our kids are getting a reality check that they weren't paying attention. It goes back down, and then it comes back up again towards finals. It goes higher after the holidays because they had to endure their families. We all laugh but families can be stressful over the holidays. We have that big kind of depressive slide that happens after the holidays. It's very normal. It's very predictable. There are seasonal issues with a level of predictability to it. Slevitch stated seeing mental health it might be a good idea to include items that would also be related to faculty and student wellness. Including that as part of that survey might be helpful. Meisner stated we collect a lot of data every two years. We do a survey of all students so we're getting data on the students. We're not getting very much or very little data on our faculty and staff. Slevitch stated we do have some anecdotal evidence and having a more comprehensive perspective will definitely be a benefit.

Slevitch thanked Meisner and stated we definitely look forward to having this survey this fall.

**d. Budget: Brad Lawson – No Report**

**e. Campus Facilities, Safety, and Security: Patrick Daglaris – No Report**

**f. Career Track: Jennifer Glenn – No Report**

**g. Faculty: James Knapp – No Report**

**h. Long-Range Planning and Information Technology: Melanie Boileau – Update**

Boileau stated that a link to a survey on the use of AI in higher education was sent last week. The committee is looking for feedback on the survey before sending it out to all faculty on all OSU campuses. The survey is ten questions. There are questions about which college you are in, and they are trying to make it anonymous. Boileau asked if there was any specific feedback about the survey, how we can make it better before sending it out to everyone. The plan is to have the survey results presented to the Faculty Council at the May meeting. Slevitch asked Council members to send feedback to Boileau personally. Perkins asked everyone to email their suggestions to Boileau and they will discuss them as a committee.

**i. Research: Wouter Hoff – No Report**

**j. Retirement & Fringe Benefits: Mark Weiser – Update/Recommendation**

Weiser reviewed the recommendation to implement parallel changes to the faculty sick leave policy to match the recently approved changes made to the staff sick leave policy. Weiser stated that the major change is that mental care is now explicitly defined as among the items you can use sick leave for. Foster children are now explicitly in the policy as a family member for whom you can use sick leave to care for. Weiser stated that over a year ago there was an announcement made about accrued sick leave being usable toward OSU retirement. This is now in the policy. None of these are substantive changes because they are already being implemented locally. Getting this codified in the university policy could be important in the future. Weiser asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, Slevitch asked for a motion to accept the recommendation. Yough moved and Eisenberg seconded the motion. Slevitch called for a vote. Motion passed.

**k. Rules and Procedures: Christopher Crick – No Report**

**l. Student Affairs and Learning Resources: Heather Yates – No Report**

**Unfinished Business** – None

**New Business** –

Slevitch asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Faculty Council is Tuesday, May 13, 2025 in room **126 ITLE**.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Crick, Secretary