

## **Executive Committee (XC) Report to the University of Louisville Faculty Senate**

April 3, 2024

### Meeting(s) Report

The faculty senate executive committee met once in March (Wednesday, 03.27) during our regularly scheduled meeting time from 3:00-5:00 PM. The meeting minutes from February (02.21 and 02.28), were unanimously approved at the meeting on March 27, 2024. At the meeting, the executive committee reports and standing committee reports were presented as information, the details are recorded in the meeting minutes. No motions were made at the XC meeting. There are no committee action items.

### **Discussion Items & Guest Reports:**

#### **1. March 27, 2024 Meeting.** Discussion Items:

- a. Research Strategic Plan. Professor Cynthia Logsdon (Director, Research Academic Programs, Office of the Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation) presented the completion timeline, outline, guiding principles, and overall strategic themes for the Research Strategic Plan to solicit feedback. The timeline is in the stakeholder engagement phase. Questions raised for discussion: What does it mean for UofL to be a Metropolitan Research University? How are we unique? Terms/phrases raised were “positive defiance,” “social justice,” and “economic mobility,” in addition to questions of how we best determine our competitive intelligence and areas of excellence. This led to consideration of the need for a model funding paradigm or talent inventory.
- b. Blackboard Ultra. Vice President Kelvin Thompson (Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning), Associate Dean Regina Roebuck (College of Arts and Sciences) and Professor Edna Ross (Psychological and Brain Sciences) discussed the imminent switch to Blackboard Ultra course view as Blackboard Learn/Classic course view will phase out. Roebuck and Ross presented university-wide evidence that the new LMS is “not ready for primetime” given beta-testing experiences in large lecture courses that use the current Classic course view tools that are no longer available in Blackboard Ultra. Thompson reported that the Ultra interface/functionality is designed to be more student- and faculty-friendly. He assured the XC that the most common features are still available; however, less used features will eventually phase out. The new platform is more streamline, agile, and responsive to high volume user needs, with a roadmap that allows flexibility, an “incidents” threshold to trigger change(s), and rolling updates, monthly. After extensive discussion, Senator Michael Cunningham suggested that the campus-wide switch for Fall 2024 be postponed for one-year. Faculty Senate Chair Eugene Mueller suggested a compromise that large lecture courses with issues are allowed to “opt-out” for one-year until problems are addressed. Thompson reported that he will discuss both options with the Delphi Center staff and report back to the Faculty Senate.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Dr. Sherri L. Wallace, Vice Chair