

## Faculty Senate Meeting

12 January 2024



Senators present: Peter Whiting, Erin Reynolds, Jessica Mason, Nick Rhew, Todd Schroer, Rob Dickes, Chad Tew (Alternate for Brandon Fields), Jiaying Liu, Susan Ely, Shane White, Sri Dandotkar (Alternate At-Large), Shannon Pritchard, Marilyn Ostendorf (Alternate for Ashley Carter), Guoyuan Huang

Additional attendees: Dr. Shelly Blunt, Dr. Brian Crose, Rachel Getz, Dr. Jason Hardgrave, Steve Bridges, Sarah Will

Held in BEC Boardroom

- Called to order: 2:30 pm
- Note: Faculty Senate Chair Kyle Mara was absent and Vice Chair Nick Rhew led the meeting.
- Minutes from 1 December were accepted as submitted.
- No Senate Chair report was given.
- Provost Report from Shelly:
  - Four candidates for the Executive Director – Office of Institutional Analytics position came to campus for interviews. The search committee will continue the evaluation and selection process with these four candidates.
  - A new search for the Executive Director for Student Academic Success is launching as the fall search failed to produce a viable candidate.
  - Spring kick-off meeting had approximately 10 workshops offered, which were well attended overall. Based on the feedback, additional workshops in certain areas will continue during the Spring semester.
  - The annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. luncheon will take place on Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - USI will host its first opera (Ruth) on January 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - USI is hosting multiple accreditation site visits this spring, including engineering and nursing.
  - A team of people is working on a Lily Foundation proposal for college/university and community partnerships – the USI project proposal will be centered around mental health needs within the region.
  - Update from Jason Hardgrave – the concurrent personnel review policy ad hoc committee addressing charge 2023-11 will be meeting next Thursday (1/18/24).
- New Business:
- Vice Chair Rhew noted that the discussion regarding the new Academic Calendar was moved to the next Senate meeting.
- The Director of Online Learning, Dr. Brian Crose, provided updates to the Senate detailing the goals for the Online Learning department. He focused on existing opportunities for improvement that are currently being pursued by the Online Learning department, initiatives for future adoption of new technologies, updates on personnel

changes and noted upcoming Listening Sessions to receive feedback from faculty and staff. A more detailed accounting of this report can be found in the attached notes.

- Vice President Steve Bridges and Executive Director of Human Resources, Sarah Will, discussed the process for selecting the new benefits options and provided information about how the process impacted the Open Enrollment period for employees to select new healthcare packages. It was noted that USI works with a third party to help select potential healthcare providers and that a review of potential options is conducted annually. Anthem was evaluated as part of this process, which includes the evaluation of multiple criteria including disruption to services or changes in benefits. It was also noted that United Healthcare has been the provider of retiree benefits since 2021. Senators were able to ask questions of VP Bridges and Executive Director Will. It was noted that additional communication about the process and timeline would be helpful for future changes.
- Charge 2024\_1\_ Emergency Closing or Inclement Weather Policy Modification:
  - Questions and concerns about the inclement weather policy as it impacts online courses of graduate, accelerated and other programs was brought forward. The charge requested that the Faculty Senate endorse the proposed change in language to the policy.
  - Discussion was held about how the proposed language could also impact clinical experiences, off-campus learning, internships for credit or other learning experiences. It was noted that there is inconsistency across campus as to how these courses are coded in Banner. More flexible language was discussed, which the Provost agreed to present to the committee.
  - A motion was made to endorse the policy change after more flexible language is selected by the committee.
  - The motion was seconded and it passed unanimously.
- Next Meeting: January 26, 2024
- Meeting adjourned with no additional business to consider: 3:57pm

## **Introduction**

### **My Vision for Online Learning**

- Collaborate and partner with faculty
- Increase student engagement
- Increase learner opportunities
- Be innovative
- Make the learner experience transformational and not transactional

### **Online Learning Updates**

- Sam's role
- Larissa's role

### **Online Initiatives**

- Increase access to OCPD
- Explore new tools and technology for online courses (more on that in a moment)
  - Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Simulations, Adaptive Learning
- Better meet the needs of our faculty
- OER in partnership with the Library
- Resources for faculty teaching online for the first time or have not taught online recently
- Student Website Revision

### **Listening Sessions**

- Feedback from Fall Survey
  - Training
  - More ways to generate engagement between faculty and students
  - Increase efficiencies using Bb
- Small group listening sessions
- Qualtrics form with open-ended questions
- Voicethread to leave comments (only VT administrators can see your comments, not public)
- One-on-one meetings, if desired
- Feel free to reach out to me directly

# CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

## Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

**Name:** Michael Dixon (Optional)

**Date of Submission:** 3 January 2024

**Name of Faculty Senate Representative:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.**

**1. Charge Title:**

Emergency Closings or Inclement Weather Policy Modification

**2. Background:**

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

Campus closings necessitate the cancellation of face-to-face classes held on campus, but do not have the same impact on online/hybrid courses, as the latter are not impacted by a campus closure. Moreover, the loss of even one instructional day has a significantly adverse impact on all courses, but especially those delivered in an accelerated format. The loss of a single instructional day can limit students' ability to meet all stated course objectives. This situation prompted the university's Council of Graduate Program Directors and Chairs to approve unanimously a proposed revision to the current Emergency Closings or Inclement Weather policy. This policy has been considered and endorsed by the Provost's Council and President's Council in fall 2023.

**3. Action Requested and Desired Result:**

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

Faculty Senate endorsement of the proposed revision is the desired outcome.

**4. Potential Resources:**

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

The proposed Emergency Closings or Inclement Weather policy is attached.

**Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:**

**5. Senate Comments:**

**6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:**

**7. Action Taken by the Administration:**

# Emergency Closings or Inclement Weather

Date

2/17

Item

D.12

[On-campus](#) classes and special events at the University of Southern Indiana are rarely cancelled or delayed, and seldom are University offices closed. When conditions warrant, USI may delay [on-campus](#) classes and/or opening the University, cancel [on-campus](#) classes (but University offices remain open) or close the University. [In the event of a campus closure, all online and hybrid classes \(.NO1, .NC1, .ND1, .NR1, .NS1, T01, .A01, .AS1\) will be held asynchronously, unless announced otherwise. Library, IT, and other on-campus support services will not be available when campus is closed.](#)

When the main campus is closed, all [on-campus](#) events (including those sponsored by off-campus organizations) are cancelled. Announcements about individual department or program activities will not be made.

## A. Announcement of Delays, Cancellations or [Campus](#) Closings

Information on [on-campus](#) class delays, cancellations or University closings is announced and conveyed in several ways. USI employees and students are encouraged to be familiar with the following ways to receive information.

- A RAVE Alert (email, text message and voice message options) email is automatically sent to employees and students via their USI account. However, preferred email addresses, phone and mobile phone numbers to receive voice alerts and text messages may be added. RAVEAlert accounts can be managed and tested by logging on to myUSI and clicking the RAVEAlert icon.
- Information is posted to the USI homepage at [www.usi.edu](http://www.usi.edu). This will be a primary source for announcements. As available, additional information about facility hours, food service, Rice Library, Recreational Fitness and Wellness Center, transportation and other resources will be posted at [www.usi.edu/emergency](http://www.usi.edu/emergency).
- Dial 812-464-8600 to reach USI's main switchboard. An emergency message may be recorded when there are no operators available.
- Radio and television stations and local newspapers receive delay, cancellation or closing announcements.
- Social media sites, including Facebook and ~~Twitter~~ will carry updates.

Preparedness initiatives offer simple steps to plan for emergencies. They include prepare, make a plan, and be informed. Make a plan today of how you will connect with announcements about cancellations, delayed openings and closings, manage your RAVEAlert options (if you have not already done so), check the emergency preparedness webpage at [www.usi.edu/emergency](http://www.usi.edu/emergency) for more details, and keep this information handy.

## B. Information for Faculty and Staff

When [on-campus](#) classes are cancelled or delayed but the University remains open, employees are expected to report to work as usual.

[In the event of a delayed opening or campus closure, online and hybrid classes will meet asynchronously, unless announced otherwise. All examinations or similar assignments must be](#)

postponed to accommodate any faculty or students, who may be without internet access due to the inclement weather.

Additionally, the University recognizes that many students may be affected by inclement weather where they live while the weather on campus does not warrant closure. In this event, faculty must accommodate student absences when a student documents that the absence was the result of inclement weather at the student's location.

In the event of delayed opening or campus closure, non-essential personnel should not report to work without the approval of their supervisor. Supervisors/managers of employees who still report to work have the authority to tell the employee to return home. If you are unsure of your status as either essential or non-essential, check with your supervisor/manager.

Essential personnel are required to report to work in the event of any cancellation, delayed opening or campus closing. Essential personnel are those vital to the operation of the facility, whose absence from duty could endanger the safety and well-being of the campus population and/or physical plant. Essential personnel are determined by their department heads based upon the incident, job function and level of operations to be sustained.

At the beginning of each semester, faculty and students should discuss plans for communicating class status related to University closing, class cancellation or delayed opening.

For information about leave or compensation, contact Human Resources at 812-464-1815.