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Governor

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**Cassie Motz**  
Chair

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Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 26, 2024

**TO:** Maryland Higher Education Commission

**FROM:** Patricia Westerman, PhD, Chair, Faculty Advisory Council

**SUBJECT:** Faculty Advisory Council 2023-24 Annual Report

### Introduction

The Faculty Advisory Council (“the Council”) is established under Education Article §11-106. The Council is expected to advise the Maryland Higher Education Commission (“the Commission”) and the Secretary of Higher Education (“the Secretary”) in the development and implementation of policies affecting higher education in Maryland and advise the Commission and the Secretary on matters of concern to faculty in Maryland.

The Council is comprised of full-time faculty<sup>1</sup> from each higher education institution that has its headquarters and primary campus in Maryland. A current roster of representatives is provided at the end of this report.

The Council meets monthly throughout the academic year (a meeting schedule is provided at the end of this report) to discuss a variety of topics, share relevant campus-based information, highlight best practices, and consider recommendations. A summary of the topics discussed and relevant recommendations from the 2023-24 academic year are provided below.

### Active Assailant and Campus Safety

In light of the events at Morgan and Bowie during the Fall 2023 semester, the council representatives felt it important and timely to discuss campus safety policies and procedures. Maryland law requires annually “...each public institution of higher education shall complete at least one active shooter drill (Education Article §15–123).”

The Council discussed campus safety concerns over several meetings and reported on the training they are aware of at their institutions. Campuses vary in the training provided to faculty and the larger campus community. For example, sometimes the trainings are limited to campus safety personnel and may not include faculty. Other times, trainings are specific to the needs of

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<sup>1</sup> (as defined in COMAR 13B.02.02.03)

faculty, such as ensuring a safe classroom should there be an active assailant on campus. Council representatives vary on their individual knowledge of campus protocol should there be a safety issue while they are on campus (e.g., calling 911 before or after calling campus safety).

In light of these discussions, the Council offers the following recommendations:

- Expand faculty professional development to include campus safety topics (e.g., at the time of onboarding for new faculty; devoted training for adjunct faculty). Ensure faculty are aware of campus safety protocols.
- Include faculty in existing training opportunities and/or have stand-alone training for faculty. When drills are performed, faculty (or faculty representatives, such as department chairs) should be invited to attend, participate, or observe.
- Create or expand avenues/mechanisms for faculty to share concerns regarding safety on campus.
- Ensure there is access to mental health resources and other debriefing opportunities after a campus safety incident occurs.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has proliferated significantly in the past 18 months and higher education is no exception. AI is the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Most AI uses specific machine learning algorithms to create content. Some examples of AI are:

- Gamma AI: this tool can help create PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and other educational materials for use in the classroom
- ChatGPT: this tool can generate human-like dialogue based on user input
- Hello History: this tool allows users to chat with a famous historical figure
- Natural Reader: this tool will dictate a written document to the user
- Imagine Art: this tool will create art based on the descriptions a user enters

Council representatives had several discussions regarding the use AI in higher education, both in terms of educational utility and research utility. The discussions can be summarized into 3 themes: institutional policies, discipline-specific issues, and faculty training.

#### *Institutional Policies*

Council representatives discussed specific plagiarism and academic dishonesty policies that address the use of AI. There is variability between and within campuses on using language that specifically addresses AI in the context of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. For example, some campuses have now incorporated language in course catalogs that are institution-wide while other campuses have allowed individual schools, departments, or courses to provide appropriate flexibility as AI becomes more prevalent in the workforce.

#### *Discipline-specific Approaches*

On that note, Council representatives discussed the importance of teaching students how to use and engage with AI as a means of “information literacy” and a digital learning and production tool. Council representatives note that it is important to teach students the distinction of ethical and non-ethical uses of AI.

### *Faculty Training*

Council representatives discussed the variability between campuses on professional development opportunities for faculty. Some institutions have institution-wide “task forces” that aim to create and revise appropriate policies related to AI. Other institutions have provided information and training sessions covering the use of AI in the classroom.

Additionally, there was a panel presentation and discussion at the December meeting titled “Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education: Managing and Leveraging AI for Teaching and Learning.” Panel presenters (non-Council members) included:

- Lethia Jackson (Professor, Technology & Security, Bowie State University)
- Stephanie Dashiell (Professor, English; Academic Coordinator of Developmental English, Prince George’s Community College)
- Kelly Elkins, Professor (Chemistry, Towson University)

The panel discussion centered on the topics listed above. Additionally, the panel discussion highlighted some of the ethical issues that exist in AI. For example, there are significant concerns about what data (and about whom) AI uses to generate information. Similarly, there are ethical issues about AI’s use and dissemination of copyrighted work. Attributing new work is important when that becomes part of the public domain upon which AI can draw. Moreover, the panel discussion noted that exposing more students to the technology and understanding how it works is important to address the digital divide in higher education. In a democratic approach, students and teachers should work together to identify code and algorithms that are representative. Students need to be included in the conversations.

In light of these discussions, the Council offers the following recommendations:

- Create a statewide repository of resources hosted on the Commission’s website.
- Increase faculty training specific to (a) AI and IRB-related research and (b) AI and its connection to research/grant writing for faculty.
- Coordinate training and professional development efforts regarding teaching with AI with the University System of Maryland’s Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation (e.g., professional development opportunities<sup>2</sup>, curricular and pedagogical development, the use of AI for student assessment, etc).

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<sup>2</sup> Incorporating Generative AI into Learning Experiences Virtual Showcase (April 26, 2024):  
<https://www.usmd.edu/cai/incorporating-generative-ai-learning-experiences-virtual-showcase>

## Use of Student Course Evaluations

The Council spent time discussing the various uses of student course evaluations (SETs) to assess teaching performance, which may impact hiring, rehiring, promotion, and tenure opportunities. A presentation, policy brief (developed by a sub-group of Council members; the policy brief is included at the end of this report), and discussion highlights the biases and inaccuracies that can come from SETs. These biases disproportionately affect women and historically excluded groups, and can contribute to pay gaps. Moreover, with the shift to digital SETs, response rates from students have declined leading to incomplete and potentially skewed data. Finally, SETs have been found to be an unreliable metric for assessing student learning and, therefore, teaching effectiveness.

The Council generally provides a recommendation that SETs be used for professional development and growth opportunities rather than professional advancement or evaluation. The Council offers the following specific recommendations in an effort to ensure fair and unbiased faculty evaluations, contributing to equitable pay and opportunities for all faculty members:

- SETs should not be the singular or primary metric to evaluate teaching effectiveness, instructional proficiency, or student learning.
- The degree to which SETs are used to evaluate faculty teaching should be explicitly stated within the institution's faculty handbook or similar governing guidelines that describe how hiring, promotion, and compensation decisions are made.
- The Commission, in consultation with community partners and stakeholders, should publish a set of best practices and suggested guidelines for using SETs to minimize potential bias and harm to higher education faculty in Maryland.

## Faculty Requirement for Academic Programs

Per COMAR 13B.02.03.11.F<sup>3</sup>, an academic program must have at least 50% of the courses taught by full-time faculty, except in circumstances determined by the Secretary. The Council discussed specific considerations in which an academic program may get an exception to this requirement. The Council recognizes the importance of adjunct faculty, particularly adjunct faculty who are active in the appropriate workforce domain. At the same time, the Council recognizes the importance of maintaining high-quality academic rigor for the benefit of students and ensuring students have regular access to faculty. Regardless of the proportion of full-time to adjunct faculty, the Council prioritizes that the program must maintain high-quality education and ensure that the program can flourish with appropriate faculty expertise and experience.

The Council does not provide an explicit recommendation on this topic. However, there is general consensus that (a) the current regulation is appropriate and that (b) the following be factors to consider when an exemption is requested:

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<sup>3</sup> COMAR 13B. 02.03.11.F: "Adjunct and part-time faculty are an important and necessary component of some programs. Except in circumstances to be determined by the Secretary, at least 50 percent of the total semester credit hours within the proposed program shall be taught by full-time faculty."

- The type of program (i.e., undergraduate v graduate; e.g., an undergraduate program without full-time faculty may disadvantage students academically)
- The motivation for requesting an exemption (e.g., the salaries for adjunct faculty is often significantly lower than full-time faculty - this should not be a motivation for making the request for exemption)
- Access to advising services (e.g., programs that predominately have adjunct faculty as advisors may impact students academically)
- Assurance that the program will be managed by a full-time faculty or staff member
- Length of exception
  - New programs may need an exception as they work to hire full-time faculty
  - Potential trial period with Commission oversight
- Demonstration of academic program coherence and community
  - Adjunct faculty, due to the part-time nature of teaching, may not be as connected to the day-to-day institutional community opportunities
  - Ensuring all program faculty will participate in curriculum design and revisions

### **Time outside the Classroom**

The Council discussed the variability in expectations of students' time outside of the classroom to be successful in any given course (e.g., time reading materials in preparation for a class, completing homework assignments, studying and preparing for exams and other assessments, preparing written work, etc.). There is variability depending on the discipline and nature of the course (e.g., courses with laboratory curricula; internship or clinical experience courses). Some faculty use a 1-to-1 standard: for every hour spent in the classroom or with an instructor, the student should spend one to two hours doing independent or group work related to the course. Some institutions have departmental, school-wide, or institutional-wide statements related to this topic. No explicit recommendation resulted from this discussion. However, the Council intends to continue this discussion during the 2024-25 academic year.

### **Course Equivalency Guidance**

The Council reviewed the most recent drafted guidance regarding course equivalencies, as it pertains to transfer between public institutions in Maryland. The drafted guidance is now under review by Commission staff.

### **2023-2024 Meeting Dates**

September 19, 2023  
 October 17, 2023  
 November 14, 2023  
 December 12, 2023  
 January 16, 2024

February 6, 2024  
 April 16, 2024  
 May 14, 2024  
 June 4, 2024

## 2023-2024 Roster and Attendance

Institution	Term ends (June 30)	Representative	9/19	10/17	11/14	12/12	1/16	2/6	4/16	5/14	6/4
Allegany College of Maryland	2026	Melody Gaschler			X						
Anne Arundel Community College	2027	Heidi McLean Frye	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Baltimore City Community College	2026	Laura Pope									
Bowie State University	2026	Diarra Robertson	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Carroll Community College	2025	Raza Khan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cecil College	2025	Candace Vogelsong	X	X	X		X	X	X		
College of Southern Maryland	2026	George Bedell	X	X		X				X	
Coppin State University	2026	Atma Sahu			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Frederick Community College	2025	Joe Healey (Secretary)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Frostburg State University	2025	Doris Santamaria-Makang		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Harford Community College	2026	Brian Lazarus	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Howard Community College	2025	Kathy Lilly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Loyola University Maryland	2027	Raenita Fenner (Chair-Elect)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Montgomery College	2025	Kathryn Klose	X		X		X		X		
Morgan State University	2026	Kimberly Warren		X				X			
Notre Dame of Maryland University	2026	Angelo Letizia	X	X	X		X	X		X	
Prince George's Community College	2026	Annette Savoy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Salisbury University	2026	Annette Barnes	X		X				X		
St. John's College	2026	Brendan Boyle	X								
St. Mary's College of Maryland	2026	Walter Hill	X	X	X	X					
Stevenson University	2026	Takisha Toler	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Towson University	2025	Patricia Westerman (Chair)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
University of Baltimore	2026	Bridal Pearson	X	X			X	X	X	X	
University of Maryland Baltimore	2025	Fadia Shaya		X	X	X		X			

University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science	2025	K. Halimeda Killbourne		X	X		X		X	X	
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	2026	William B Talley	X	X							
University of Maryland Global Campus	2026	Mary Crowley-Farrell		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
University of Maryland, Baltimore County	2025	Jane Lincove		X	X	X			X		
University of Maryland, College Park	2025	Doug Roberts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Wor-Wic Community College	2026	David Mongor-Lizarrabengoa		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Part-time faculty representative (Community College 1)	2026	Kathy Jones (Howard Community College)	X	X	X						

### 2024-2025 Meeting Dates

August 27, 2024 (Welcome and introductions for new representatives)

September 17, 2024

October 15, 2024

November 19, 2024

December 10, 2024

January 21, 2025

April 15, 2025

May 13, 2025