

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

This meeting of the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 in Rothwell 312 and on WebEx. The following members were present:

Stan Apple
Dr. Michael Bradley
Dr. Breanna Claire
Dr. Rene Couture
Dr. Melissa Darnell
Dr. Michael Davis
Dr. Peter Dykema
Dr. David Eshelman
Jasmine Greer
Dr. Newt Hilliard
Dr. Efosa Idemudia

Dr. Masanori Kuroki
Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon
Dr. Tom Nupp
Dr. Azin Sanjari Pirmahaleh
Dr. Sean Reed
Dr. Jamie Stacy
Dr. Bethany Swindell
Dr. Arwen Taylor
Sherry Tinarella
Dr. Ellen Treadway
Dr. Erica Wondolowski

Absent: Dr. David Cullen, Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman, Dr. Kuldeep Singh

Also present: Dr. Julie Furst-Bowe (VPAA), Dr. Nate Chapman (Center for Undergraduate Research), Dr. Robert Stevens (DEI Speaker), Mr. Wyatt Watson (Office of Institutional Research)

- I. **Call to Order:** Dr. Sean Reed called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.
 - A. Motion to approve the minutes from the October 11 meeting from Dr. David Eshelman, seconded by Dr. Sean Huss. Motion carried
 - B. Dr. Reed requested that Dr. Stevens and Dr. Chapman be moved to the beginning of the agenda.
- II. **Request for a new standing committee:** Dr. Nate Chapman requested that a new standing committee be formed for the Center for Undergraduate Research, as the nomination process now in place has not reliably created a functioning committee. An ad-hoc committee to draft a proposal for a new committee will include Dr.s Huss, Hilliard, Reed, and Stacy.
- III. **DEI Speaker:** Dr. Robert Stevens spoke on accessible and inclusive classrooms. He emphasized that inclusive course design includes both the diversity of material selection and the

accessibility of the syllabus, as well as the importance of individual relationships with students in order to foster an environment where they can raise concerns and address difficult topics. Dr. Stevens recommended that professors solicit feedback early in the semester, use a variety of teaching methods including small, diverse groups, approach controversial topics with a plan for de-escalation in mind, and ensure early on that they are taking basic measures like checking the classroom for accessibility and using correct names and pronouns.

IV. Committee Updates

A. Curricular items

<https://www.atu.edu/standingcommittees/curriculum/2023-24/Summary%20Proposals%20Oct%20CC%20Nov%20FS.pdf>

Motion to approve the curricular proposals from Dr. Sean Huss and seconded by Dr. Michael Davis. Dr. Eshelman asked whether it might eventually be possible to convert the certificate in Casino and Gaming Industry to a Bachelor's degree; Dr. Bradley clarified that it is so far being marketed to those who are already working in this field and want further credentialing. Motion carried.

B. Standing Committees

- i. Budget Advisory Committee (Nupp): Clarification of Tech's budgetary model, which is incremental, i.e., always based on the previous year's budget. The committee had some discussion of other models, given the need to adjust to large changes in enrollment.
- ii. General Education Committee (Tinerella): Nothing to report.
- iii. Institutional Aid Committee (Hilliard): Nothing to report.
- iv. Shared Governance Committee (Eshelman): Nothing to report.
- v. Campus Space and Utilization Committee (Singh): Nothing to report.
- vi. Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee (Hilliard): Nothing to report.
- vii. Institutional Scholarship Appeals Committee (Swindell): Nothing to report.
- viii. Professional Development Committee: \$15,000 more has been allocated for Professional Development Grant, which will be split between this semester's and next semester's applications.
- ix. Technology Prioritization and Impact Committee (Apple): Nothing to report.
- x. Emergency Management and Safety Committee (Laffoon): Nothing to report.

b. Ad Hoc & Senate Committees

- i. Faculty Workload Committee (Eshelman/Darnell): Nothing to report.
- ii. Insurance Benefits Committee (Davis): Nothing to report.
- iii. Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee (Wondolowski): In a meeting with Ms. Melisa Riffle (HR), the committee discussed their goals for the year: the inclusion of DEI statements in job applications; mandatory training on diversity; and the appointment of a Dean of DEI. Ms. Riffle said that the school will need a university statement on DEI, and that anti-bias or diversity training will

need to be determined by the Executive Council. The position description for a Dean or Associate of DEI, reporting to Student Affairs, has been approved. Dr. Eshelman noted that the Senate has asked for this position to report directly to the President, because DEI is relevant to academics, not just student life, in terms of curriculum, hiring, faculty, research, etc.

- iv. Exploratory Committee on P & T Salary Increases (Hilliard): A meeting has been scheduled with Dr. Furst-Bowe and Academic Affairs; updates forthcoming.
- v. Strategic Planning Steering Committee (Darnell): Nothing to report.
- vi. Hiring Processes (Dykema): Nothing to report.
- vii. Prior Learning Assessment (Swindell): Three talks on PLA were held last month and the committee is working to determine their strategy and scope going forward.
- viii. Transfer Students Committee (Stacy): (Dr. Nupp speaking for Dr. Stacy): A new position will be advertised for a transfer student advisor. The faculty subcommittee met to discuss the transfer of Gen Ed credit and how that will change as the Gen Ed curriculum is modified. Dr. Davis wondered whether transfer students were immediately placed with an advisor in their program or sent to the advising center; the committee hopes to clarify the policy for this, and whether it's being followed.
- ix. Micro-Credentials (Wondolowski): Nothing to report.

V. New Business

- A. **VPAA Update (Furst-Bowe):** Dr. Furst-Bowe reported that the Tech has a five-year budget using an incremental model, with contingencies and reserves for enrollment changes. The EC has approved an allocation of money set aside for the strategic plan and CERC to Academic Affairs for: hiring a graduate recruiter and transfer advisor; professional development grants; minority student recruitment; the OAR and PLA initiatives; Hyflex; curriculum/catalog automation software; and the short-term credential initiative.
- B. **Update on Course Evaluations (Watson):** Mr. Watson reported that OIS has developed a survey tool for evaluation, which is being piloted this fall semester. The Senate discussed, without resolving, the problems of low participation rates, the anonymity of FOIA-able student responses, and the opening of evaluations before the final drop deadline.
- C. **Possible Faculty Senate/Graduate Council Liaison (Reed):** Dr. Ellen Treadway volunteered for this position. Motion to appoint Dr. Treadway from Dr. Sean Huss, seconded by Dr. Rene Couture. Motion carried.
- D. **Items Concerning Adjuncts (Malone):** Adjuncts receive a delayed first paycheck because of the date of enrollment verification and initial add/drop deadline. Data from Dr. Meyers suggests that adjunct pay at Tech is competitive with comparable schools in the region. However, Ms. Malone reported that UCA and ULAR were paying adjuncts ten years ago what Tech adjuncts make now. Dr. Huss agreed that we've forgotten how to dream, and suggested we might do better than join the race to the bottom in the treatment of adjuncts.

VI. Old Business

Dr. Reed agreed to put visiting speakers at the top of the agenda unless they are relevant to new/old business later in the agenda.

VII. Open Forum

The Senate discussed the removal or replacement of trees around campus, including concerns about losing biodiversity with the planting of donated clones. The arborist's report says that trees are removed due to maturity or sustainability.

VIII. Announcements and Informational Items

~The "Do Something" initiative collected over a ton of food for the pantry in London and ran an energetic voter registration campaign.

~Tech's Multicultural Mixer was held on November 10.

IX. Adjournment

Dr. Michael Bradley moved to Adjourn. Seconded by Dr. Erica Wondolowski. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Sean Reed, Chair



Dr. Arwen Taylor, Secretary