

Minutes of  
THE FACULTY SENATE  
OF  
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The meeting of the 2019-20 Faculty Senate was held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 in Rothwell 456. The following members were present:

Dr. Glen Bishop	Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon
Dr. Pam Carr	Dr. Joshua Lockyer
Dr. Alejandra Carballo	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
Dr. Jon Clements	Dr. Asim Shrestha
Dr. Michael Davis	Dr. Jamie Stacy
Dr. Pam Dixon	Dr. Brendan Toner
Dr. David Eshelman	Dr. Jack Tucci
Ms. Holly Ruth Gale	Dr. Alaric Williams
Dr. Newt Hilliard	Dr. Shellie Hanna
Dr. Scott Jordan	

Absent: Dr. Pam Carr; Dr. Joe Stoeckel

Visitors: Dr. Barbara Johnson, Dr. Mary Gunter, Ms. Bernadette Hinkle, Ms. Pat Chronister, Ms. Charity Smith, Dr. Judy Cezeaux, Dr. Cathi McMahan, Dr. Jay Post, Dr. Siriporn McDowall, Dr. Dong-Soo Lee, Dr. Seung Suk Lee

**I. CALL TO ORDER** Dr. Eshelman called the meeting to order and requested a motion to approve the November meeting minutes.

A. Approval of the Minutes **Motion by Dr. Clements, seconded by Dr. Lockyer to approve the minutes. Motion carried.**

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Curricular Items Dr. Eshelman called for a motion on items from the curriculum committee.

**Motion by Dr. Clements, seconded by Dr. Stacy to approve curricular items. Motion carried.**

Dr. Lockyer asked about the changes to the college algebra and social science requirements. Dr. Hanna stated changes in the math requirement are related to the Praxis and the current curricular requirements for the Praxis, including an additional 18 credit hours of math beyond college mathematics. Changes in the social sciences with a focus on specific social studies courses were to address needs identified in program assessment and to meet state requirements. Courses in social sciences are required for specific majors as part of students' general education requirements.

B. Williamson Hall Ms. Hinkle, Vice President of Administration and Finance, stated the University completed a search for a new architectural firm in September 2019 and met with the insurance company and previous architectural firm in October of 2019 to determine next steps in the process for Williamson Hall. To date, no fault has been accepted for the fire. Arkansas Tech's insurance company will pay to cover construction/renovation of Williamson and then work to settle with the insurance of other parties involved. It has been determined that roof work was the cause of the fire.

The new architectural firm handling Williamson Hall specializes in historic preservation. Two options are being considered: tear down Williamson and rebuild or renovate/reconstruct. These two options will be explored and a report will be made to the Arkansas Tech Board of Trustees in January. To support the hospitality program, Tech is constructing a mobile kitchen site at the 404 Building on El Paso Ave. The kitchens should be in use by midterm of the Spring 2020 term. The construction at the 404 Building and other costs associated with the Williamson fire are being covered by business interruption insurance.

Dr. Bishop asked if there was a time estimate on moving back to the Williamson site. Ms. Hinkle stated the goal is Fall 2021. Dr. Bishop asked that the department be kept up-to-date on progress and to be included in decision making for reconstruction or renovation of Williamson. Ms. Hinkle suggested a monthly meeting with a representative of Administration and Finance, the Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, the Department Head of Parks, Recreation, and Hospitality Administration, and departmental faculty would help improve communication and give faculty input in the process.

Dr. McMahan, Department Head of Parks, Recreation, and Hospitality Administration, expressed concern about the environmental impacts of the fire and the time the Williamson roof has been open. Ms. Hinkle discussed some of the damage to the structure and some of the equipment that is salvageable. Ms. Hinkle said she would send the environmental report to Dr. Cezeaux, Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science, and Dr. McMahan.

#### C. CUPA

Dr. Gunter, Chief of Staff, will address CUPA and salary compression at a future Senate meeting.

#### D. Distributed Leadership

Dr. Gunter, Chief of Staff, stated the University administration is not drafting an official policy statement on distributed leadership. Distributed leadership is an approach to leadership practice and is one of the four pillars of President Bowen's approach to leadership. Dr. Gunter said there is a working document being developed to define distributed leadership and identify guiding principles. She gave examples of distributed leadership in action across campus, including development of the strategic plan, changes to retirement benefits (retirement loans), budget advisory, and the health insurance committee, among others.

Dr. Bishop asked if distributed leadership could be used in academic departments. Dr. Gunter encouraged the use of distributed leadership whenever it is the best approach to solve problems.

#### E. Early Warning for English Proficiency

Mr. Scott Tomlin, Assistant Director and Academic Advisor, is working with International Student Services to develop a process to identify students who need assistance with English proficiency.

#### F. Awarding Course Credit

The proposed credit hour policy was distributed to members of Faculty Senate. Dr. Tucci discussed the federal guidelines for "seat time" requirements for awarding course credit (2250 minutes – 3 credit hours, 1550 minutes – 2 credit hours, 750 minutes – 1 credit hour). Dr. Tucci requested to make the credit hour requirements clear in the policy. Dr. Johnson, Vice President of Academic Affairs, said the University needs a written policy on awarding credit hours. Dr. Hilliard recommended the policy state "no less than 50 minutes" and Dr. Davis requested to use "classroom hour" instead of course hour. The amended statement would include "classroom hour assumed to be no less than 50 minutes."

**Motion by Dr. Lockyer, seconded by Dr. Davis, to approve the credit hour policy with the identified amendments.**

## **REPORT BY VICE PRESIDENT**

Dr. Barbara Johnson, Vice President of Academic Affairs, reported a committee is being formed to identify metrics to use in assessing program viability. The committee will be led by Dr. Jeff Robertson, Dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences and the Interim Dean of the Graduate College. The committee is currently seeking input from the campus community and will have something to report to Faculty Senate in February 2020.

The Shared Governance Committee is continuing to meet. The committee received approximately 80 responses to the shared governance survey, which was sent to faculty, staff, and adjuncts at the Russellville and Ozark campus. The Shared Governance Committee will be sponsoring a speaker on shared governance at the professional development day in January.

The HLC steering committee will hold a poster session on the professional development day in January to present the HLC criteria. Faculty will have the opportunity to review the criteria and the evidence. Faculty are encouraged to provide feedback and help identify additional information relevant to the arguments. Additionally, the HLC steering committee will hold weekly Friday sessions to allow feedback from faculty and staff.

All faculty are being asked to submit an updated CV with their performance reviews. The updated CV is due by April 15, 2020.

Dr. Johnson wants faculty and staff to become more familiar with the University mission. We need to be able to discuss the institution and institutional initiatives in relation to the University mission. The focus should be on five key terms in the mission: student success, access, civic engagement, progressive intellectual development, and technological traditions.

The University is hiring a new director for the APEX center. A decision on this position should be made by the end of the Fall 2019 term.

Dr. Johnson is doing her due diligence on checking references for the Arts and Humanities Dean position. A hiring decision on the dean position should be made before the end of the Fall 2019 term. A decision on the Dean of the Graduate College position will be made after a hire is made for the Arts and Humanities dean.

## **III. OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Caps on Adjunct Teaching This item can be removed from old business. Caps on adjunct teaching were explained at the November Senate meeting.

B. Faculty Satisfaction Survey Dr. Schwehm reported the Faculty Senate will get a copy of the survey to review before the February 2020 Senate meeting. The plan is to administer the survey after the February 2020 meeting and to report the results at the March 2020 meeting.

C. Alternative Credentials Policy Dr. Stacy distributed the Alternative Credentials Policy to members of Faculty Senate.

**Motion by Dr. Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Clements, to approve the policy. Motion carried.**

Dr. Carballo expressed concern with policy wording on fluency in language. Dr. Stacy noted this wording is in the policy for teaching a foreign language without a terminal degree in that

language. It was noted that guidelines/decisions on alternate credentials for teaching a foreign language without a terminal degree will be made at the departmental level.

Dr. Lockyer asked about how individuals who go directly from an undergraduate program directly into a doctoral degree would be evaluated based on the new policy. Dr. Johnson stated individuals without a master's degree would have to be ABD or close to it.

- D. Faculty Excellence Awards Members of the committee will meet with Dr. Johnson on December 11, 2020 at 4:00pm. The members of the committee are Drs. Lockyer, Schwehm, and Tucci.
- G. Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee Dr. Schwehm said the committee plans to submit a draft of changes to Senate at the February Senate meeting. The intent is for Senate to vote on the changes at the March Senate meeting.
- IV. OPEN FORUM
- Dr. Eshelman discussed best practices for online learning coming out of the Every Student Counts committee, including being aware of the time and day of the week faculty set for assignment due dates.
- The Foundation scholarship application deadline is December 15.
- EvaluationKit did not send pop-ups for department head and dean evaluations, as well as end-of-course evaluations, because of the update to Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. The issue is being addressed.
- Ms. Gale raised concerns with the effectiveness of online delivery of end-of-course evaluations because of low response rates. Some faculty expressed interest in going back to paper evaluations.
- An email was submitted anonymously asking why faculty do not have to ability to overload our own courses, but department heads, advisors, and other staff can. Dr. Eshelman state there are departmental policies in place determining who can overload a class and the policies are determined by the departments. If faculty want additional information on the policy for their department, they can contact the Registrar.
- Dr. Eshelman notified Senate that Ms. Weaver, Registrar, is looking into new catalog software that will allow real time changes to the catalog. Changes would still go through an approval process. Most universities use this type of software. Ms. Weaver suggested forming a committee to review software.
- The University charged normal usage fees for the Pope County Republican fundraising event featuring Sarah Huckabee Sanders.
- The Well-Being Committee was formed to offer activities to improve faculty and staff quality of life. Faculty can review the committee's Facebook page for information on upcoming events.
- Dr. Eshelman distributed a draft of the Energy Policy. Questions or comments about the Energy Policy can be directed to Jonathan Collins ([jcollins3@atu.edu](mailto:jcollins3@atu.edu)).
- Dr. Eshelman and Faculty Senate expressed their overwhelming gratitude to Drs. Pam Carr and Glen Bishop for their years of service on Faculty Senate and to the University. Drs. Carr and Bishop are retiring at the end of the Fall 2019 term.

Dr. Hanna asked why a Blackboard update was being conducted during finals. Because of the move to Collaborate Ultra and Blackboard servers not being administered on campus, we have limited control over when updates are run. Blackboard stated the updates would run in the background and should not impact functionality.

Dr. Dixon asked about fees being charged to online students. Dr. Schwehm noted the online fee structure was addressed recently, but issues still remain. It was noted that the Budget Advisory Committee has a fee subcommittee that can address online fees.

Dr. Hilliard informed Senate that a website is available to help students defeat Turnitin. The website reduces flags for plagiarism.

Dr. Davis asked that we review the University policies on final grade submission as we are the only university in the state to submit grades at such an early date. Ms. Chronister, Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, said graduation is one reason, but also because of the way Banner calculates GPA and scholarship notifications. Dr. Davis distributed a plan to members of Senate to address issues with final grading.

Dr. Stacy expressed concern because of issues with black mold in Dean, Witherspoon, and other facilities. If environmental issues are being addressed in the reconstruction of Williamson, they should be addressed in other areas across campus that are occupied by faculty, staff, and students.

V.  
ANNOUNCEMENTS  
AND  
INFORMATION  
ITEMS

Dr. Clements announced the Arkansas Tech Choir Feast of Carols at 5:00pm on Sunday, December 8 at the First Methodist Church in Russellville, AR.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Dr. Tucci, seconded by Ms. Gale to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



David Eshelman, Ph.D., President



Jeremy Schwehm, Ph.D., Secretary