

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

This meeting of the 2021-2022 Faculty Senate was held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 1, 2021 on WebEx. The following members were present:

Dr. Michael Davis	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
Dr. David Eshelman	Dr. Masanori Kuroki
Dr. Asim Shrestha	Dr. Jamie Stacy
Dr. Newt Hilliard	Dr. Peter Dykema
Dr. Efosa Idemudia	Dr. Arwen Taylor
Dr. Sean Huss	Dr. Rene Couture
Dr. Julie Mikles-Schleterman	Dr. Melissa Darnell
Dr. Sean Reed	Dr. Bethany Swindell
Dr. V. Carole Smith	Dr. Cynthia Jacobs
	Dr. Azin Sanjari Pirmahaleh

Absent: Dr. Pam Dixon, Dr. David Cullen (adjunct representative)

- I. **Call to Order:** Motion to call the meeting to order from Dr. Bethany Swindell, seconded by Dr. Jeremy Schwehm. Motion carried. Dr. Jamie Stacy called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.
- A. **Approval of the Minutes:** from the November 2021 meeting. Minutes were approved as distributed.

No objection to modify the agenda to allow addition of the consultant report and faculty survey as item G. Motion to suspend the rules was adopted to allow agenda items F and G from old business to go first.

- II. **Old Business**
 - A. **Consultant Report (formerly item G):** Dr Stacy stated, “In response to the recommendations in the report, representatives from ATU Faculty Senate will review the most recent surveys to identify and prioritize actionable recommendations that would improve communication, transparency, shared governance and campus climate.”
 - o **Survey:** Dr. Stacy stated, “The results of the faculty senate input survey regarding the vote of confidence were distributed to all full-time faculty, dean, Dr. Bowen, and the Board of Trustees this morning. The executive summary and the survey results will be attached to the minutes.
 - The survey was distributed to all 285 full-time faculty at the Russellville Campus of Arkansas Tech University.
 - To briefly review the results:



Faculty Senate

- There was an 82.46% response rate.
- There were 226 respondents to the question “Do you have confidence in Dr. Bowen’s leadership”; 41 (or 18.14% of respondents) selected yes; 185 (or 81.86% of respondents, which equals 64.91% of all full-time faculty) selected no.
- 81.2% were satisfied with Faculty Senate’s handling of the confidence vote process.
- 72.65% believed a confidence vote should be held.”

B. Motion of a Vote of Confidence or No Confidence in Dr. Bowen (Postponed from 4/26/21 then 10/12/21 Meeting) (formerly item F): On April 26, a motion was brought before the Senate:

Motion (from 4/26): “As a matter of procedure, and to facilitate our previously discussed plan, I move to proceed with a vote of confidence or no confidence in Dr. Bowen”	
By: Dr. Sean Huss	2nd: Dr. Jeremy Schwehm

This motion was postponed immediately with the motion:

Motion (from 4/26): “Due to the Board of Trustees reaching out to the Faculty Senate and making a good faith effort to promote communication between faculty and administration, I make a motion to postpone the Confidence/No Confidence vote until the October Faculty Senate Meeting”	
By: Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon	2nd: Dr. Shellie Hannah

On October 12, the original motion came back on the floor. That was postponed again with the motion:

Motion: “moved that the vote be postponed until the December Faculty Senate meeting”	
By:	2nd:

On November 9, a procedural motion was unanimously approved by the Senate:

Motion: “Motion [for the Senate] to vote as a bloc to affirm the faculty voice if a simple majority of all full-time faculty select a specific vote of interest on the question of Confidence / No-Confidence in Dr. Bowen” [based on the survey results].	
○ By:	○ 2nd:

- The original motion, to proceed with a vote of Confidence or No Confidence in Dr. Bowen, was back on the floor. Dr. Stacy asked the Senators, “Given the November motion to vote as a bloc, and given that 81.9% percent of responding faculty (which equals 64.9% of all full-time faculty at ATU Russellville Campus) indicated they had no-confidence, is there any objections to affirming the faculty voice of no-confidence in Dr. Bowen?”
- There were no objections. Based on the motion to vote as a bloc, the Senate hereby affirms the faculty voice of no-confidence in Dr. Bowen.

- Dr. Stacy stated, “Given the vote of no-confidence and given that “The ATU Board of Trustees remains confident in our university leadership,” the Faculty Senate, in the spirit of collegiality and cooperation, will begin to explore options to regain confidence.” Dr. Stacy read a statement: As stewards of this institution, it is vital that Faculty, and Staff, have and continue to use their voice to further the strength and stability of Arkansas Tech University, the institution that we cherish. I want to express my thanks to each member of the senate, each member of the committees working on helping the faculty voice be heard, and the faculty more generally for your willingness to step forward and express your opinion about the direction of ATU and for all the hard work you have done and will continue to do in the coming months.

III. Committee Updates

A. Standing Committees

1. Budget Advisory Committee (Stacy): Dr. Stacy is unable to attend due to a final scheduled at the same time. Dr. Swindell volunteered to represent the Faculty Senate at the meeting.
2. General Education Committee (Taylor): Continue to work on assessment and matters for next semester.
3. Institutional Aid Committee (Reed): No report
4. Shared Governance Committee (Stacy): No report.
5. Campus Space and Utilization Committee (Hilliard): No report.
6. Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee (Hilliard): No report.
7. Institutional Scholarship Appeals Committee (Swindell): No report.
8. Professional Development Committee (Taylor): No report.
9. Technology Prioritization and Impact Committee (TBA): No report.

B. Ad Hoc & Senate Committees

1. Faculty Workload Committee (Huss/Darnell): Meeting set and more details will be reported in February.
2. Insurance Benefit Committee (Davis/Stacy): No report.
3. Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee (Smith/Huss) No report.
4. Exploratory Committee on P&T Salary Increases (Hilliard): No report.
5. Restructuring Committee (Stacy): Final proposal sent with Faculty Senate motion to Executive Council. The plan will go in from of the Board of Trustees in January.
6. Strategic Enrollment and Retention Committee (Mikles-Schluterman/Couture): Met November 30 and planning for aggressive spring schedule. Dr. Cass is leading. Timetable to submit 3-year plan in the summer.

IV. New Business

A. Curricular Items: <https://www.atu.edu/standingcommittees/curriculum/2022-23/Summary%20Proposals%20CC%20Nov%2023%20FS%20Dec.pdf>

Motion to take the items as a block from Dr. Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Eshelman. Motion passed by unanimous consent. Motion to approve the curricular items as set forth by Dr.

Schwehm and seconded by Dr. Hilliard. Motion carries. No objections to reviewing the tabled curriculum items from the November meeting. Motion to take the tabled items as a block from Dr. Schwehm, seconded by Dr. Hilliard. Dr. Reed asked if all issues were addressed. Dr. Jacobs asked if the agriculture department was okay with the changes. Dr. Stacy stated that there were no objections in the curriculum committee meeting. Motion passed by unanimous consent. Dr. Schwehm moved to approve the items, Dr. Hilliard seconded. Dr. Brant (agriculture) was called upon to speak. She stated that the biggest concern is that moving away from ACT 2003 will not allow students to get a minor as the ag business major is already 122 hours so there is no room for a 1-hour accounting lab. Dr. Huss asked what Senate action Dr. Brant would recommend. She asked for the one curriculum item be separated from the bloc motion. Dr. Schwehm withdrew the motion. Dr. Stacy will contact Ms. Weaver.

- B. Online Training Opportunities:** Dr. Robertson discussed the opportunities for faculty for online training based on the 1.1 million CARES funds. These are detailed on the CETL website. Money must be spent by May 2022 so the deadline is swift.
- C. Anonymous Letters:** One letter about the concerns of Outlook issues. Dr. Stacy spoke with Ken Wester about the issues. Mr. Wester stated that OIS will try and send out announcements in advance of any major updates they become aware of and to beware of phishing emails.

V. Old Business

- A. Concerns related to the primacy of academics / Provost:** No report.
- B. COVID Updates:** The Task Force continues to meet. Mask mandate still in effect.
- C. Restructuring:** Dr. Robertson stated the only shift from the final presented restructuring proposal would be the Department of Computer & Information Science remaining merged with engineering rather than becoming a separate department because of current budget constraints.
- D. VPAA Update:** Dr. Johnson expressed her appreciation for well wishes and welcome back messages.
 - Dr. Johnson reiterated the money for online training.
 - 11 faculty submitted proposals for innovation in teaching and all were funded.
 - Graduation is December 11.
 - Dr. Johnson was asked to gather preliminary feedback on the AGB consultant report via three questions: Q1) What are your initial reactions to the AGB report? Q2) What are the top priorities from the recommendations that you would like to see moved forward? Q3) How do you see your role as a faculty senator in this moving forward?
 - Dr. Stacy said that the Senate will have a working group to develop of list of recommendations based on the survey responses.

- Dr. Eshelman stated the importance of item 6B2 from the report: informal interactions with the Board of Trustees. Dr. Dykema expressed that it would be nice to meet with the Board.

VI. Open Forum

- Dr. Swindell asked if Senate would continue with Webex or move to in-person meetings in the spring. Discussions amongst Senators indicated that the Senate meeting room is small and not capable. The Senate would like to meet in person, if safe to do so, and have Webex running so anyone can access remotely. Final decision on meeting, in-person or virtual, will be made by January 30.

VII. Announcements and Information Items

- Next Senate meeting is February 8
- Wind ensemble and guest high school bands are going to Carnegie
- ATU Alumni House had retro sign installed

VI. Adjournment: Dr. Schwehm moved to Adjourn. Seconded by Dr. Huss. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dr. Jamie Stacy, Chair



Bethany Swindell, Secretary