

Minutes of  
THE FACULTY SENATE  
OF  
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The special meeting of the 2019-20 Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, July 27, 2020 via WebEx.

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

Absent: Ms. Holly Ruth Gale, Dr. Efosa Idemudia, Dr. Asim Shrestha, Dr. Joe Stoeckel  
Guests: Dr. Barbara Johnson, Dr. Jeff Aulgur, Dr. Richard Schoephoerster, Mrs. Tammy Weaver, Ms. Christina Stolarz, Mr. Ken Wester, Ms. Brandye Bisek.

**I. CALL TO ORDER** Dr. Eshelman called the meeting to order.

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Dr. Johnson update  
from Academic  
Affairs

1. COVID Non-Compliance Progressive Disciplinary Guide  
Dr. Johnson, Vice President for Academic Affairs stated this is not a for individuals who forget their mask. The policy is for those who refuse to wear a mask. This is not for the occasional, I forgot to do my health screening, it is for those who continue to be non-compliant. This is only for willful non-compliance. The policy does not apply to those with an approved accommodations. You have four for each category.

Dr. Erica Wondolowski: Is there something that students can carry so they know if they are asked without having to disclose their accommodation? CHRISTINA STOLARZ: This is just about employees and supervisors, not about students (That will be Amy Pennington and Student Services.)

Dr. Erica Wondolowski: Face shields for lip reading (especially for students that need the accommodation) Brandye Bisek: Disability services will have clear masks for faculty teaching students who need this accommodation.

What are the difference in Process Directives and Office Directive

Dr. Huss asked if the policies supersede the faculty handbook's appeals process. And can we do that? Christina Stolarz, Director of Human Resources, stated the process deviates from the process set forth in the handbook, and it is only for COVID because it is a public health crisis. Ms. Stolarz stated THIS IS NOT A POLICY, it is a GUIDE. Even though it is a guide, it ends in termination.

Recommendation by Dr. Huss that this align with the faculty handbook with faculty input.

Ms. Stolarz will work with faculty representatives to adjust the guidelines based on the faculty handbook and input from faculty.

2. Online only issues
 

National surveys are showing that 25% of students who typically attend 4-year choose other institutions or delay enrollment if their institution moves to fully online. There could be significant monetary loss from freshman if we made this move. We have already cut as much as possible from our budget and cannot afford to take any other cuts.

Surveys show that students did not do well when we made the move to all online in the spring. Some reasons include: Poor internet, poor computer access, lack of support from faculty.

In March, we didn't know a lot about what was happening and now we have more information and the task force is looking at this on a regular basis. Mr. Whorton discussed some of what he knows about the current climate. He has fielded calls from many people who are on both sides of the argument from faculty, staff, students, and parents.

The Task Force does have faculty representation, although minimal, and continues to meet weekly.
3. PPE
 

Dr. Schoephoerster, Dean of the Graduate College, led an additional Academic Affairs task force to provide more guidance to the plans that were required. The task force reviewed classrooms to make sure that social distancing can be maintained. Check with your department head if you are not familiar with your plan.

Tech has ordered a lot of PPE and are working on placing signage.
4. OIS
 

Mr. Ken Wester, Director of the Office of Information Systems and Chief Information Officer, stated we have 40 classrooms that can record and is working to add another 50 classrooms online. They are hoping to have a minimum of 70 by fall. OIS is working with Music and others to meet more specific needs. There are 34 laptops left for check out in the library for faculty after the spring and have ordered 100 more. Webcams and headsets are also available for checkout.

OIS is trying to work to get hotspots for students with critical needs.
5. Academic Contingency Planning Group
 

Dr. Aulgur, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Interim Dean of the College of eTech, and Department Head of Professional Studies, spoke about the planning process of the Academic Contingency Planning Group (ACPG). The ACPG has been operating by trying to address what they can do in the fall and how we can protect faculty members that may have a need.

ACPG assessed every classroom on campus to determine capacity based on social distancing standards. They asked for classes to be assessed and there be a migration to MT49 or MT99 if enrollment was over the capacity, with a hope that less than 40% of existing face-to-face courses were moved to 100% online. The ACPG has been hesitant to share some information as it constantly changes.

Academic Affairs recommends being prepared to move fully online at any point. We must be better than we were in the spring. One thing Academic Affairs needs is for faculty to use Blackboard and communicate with students through Blackboard to

ensure we are meeting accrediting standards. We have an HLC visit coming up and they will be asking how we are maintaining rigor in online courses during this time.

### III. Questions from Senators

Dr. Hanna: Faculty members are expected to basically teach classes twice, recording a lesson we have already taught for those that cannot come to class for whatever reason.

Dr. Johnson: We are working on what that looks like and suggestions to try and prevent this.

Dr. Hanna (*from a Constituent*): Department heads and Deans have access to Blackboard shells. Some faculty are concerned about what is being reviewed, what they have access to, and the feel they are being “Spied” upon.

Dr. Aulgur: Deans will not be enrolled; this will be a departmental level, faculty/department head conversation. Need some level of assurance within departments that the courses are having the interactions required by Title IV (Google Western Governors University).

Dr. Huss: Can we get that written out and expressed stated since it could violate the handbook?

Dr. Lockyer (*from a Constituent*): Will staff or faculty who miss work due to illness or quarantine be guaranteed job security? Will faculty with extreme complications (even if teaching online) be protected and allowed to come back and are processes being put in place to help handle their load.

Dr. Johnson stated this is a question about more about insurance question. She recommended looking at FMLA for long term job protection in cases of illness.

Dr. Clements: If we move to online will it remain synchronous or will be suggested to move asynchronous?

Mrs. Weaver: We are doing an experiment in College of Ed. where we are holding Synchronous online courses. So you should be able to maintain that unless there are issues for certain students, we just request you be sympathetic and understanding.

Dr. Clements (*from a Constituent*): If a faculty does not meet the preexisting conditions or age, but simply do not feel safe doing so, are they still required to teach face-to-face.

It was stated this decision could be made at the departmental level.

Dr. Huss: If it’s ultimately Department Heads choice, why do we have to go through HR?

### IV. Questions from Others

Ms. Chambliss: How are we going to be letting students know about procedures prior to the first day of class?

Dr. Aulgur: We are working this coming week to notify students about changes to their schedule and other communications. This week we sent out recommended language that faculty can use in their syllabus or other areas.

Dr. Moss: Will all of the classrooms have recording capabilities by the time school rolls around?

Mr. Wester: We do not have the funds, time, or equipment. We are working on adding 50 more. We are working with individual faculty for specific needs including webcams. If you have specific needs, please let your department head know.

Dr. Stobaugh: If we broadcast and record an in person lecture, who owns that content and can it be used by the university without our permission?

Dr. Johnson: The university owns it. (P., 158 faculty handbook has guidance)

Dr. Housenick: Will ATU have its own COVID-19 testing capabilities.

Ms. Bisek: We are working on a contract with a lab that gives results back in 24-36 hours. Our current lab is 10 days. We are going to get an ABBOTT machine quick result that gives 10 minute test results. St. Mary's is a backup for us. As far as contract tracing, we have a team certified through John Hopkins; UAMS will be teaming up to help us with contact tracing.

Dr. Nupp: What triggers us to go 100% online?

Mr. Whorton: There is not a specific number, but there are a number of things in the risk decision matrix that will help us make that determination.

#### IV. Announcements

Dr. Aulgur: Professional development is working to provide as much asynchronous information as possible on the CETL page, including the summer development series. We are also working on a quick start guide to moving to a virtual environment. And there is a group working on a 48 hour guide to transitioning. CETL webpage will have an Academic Affairs pandemic information page. If there is something you need to help you prepare, please ask.

Dr. Johnson: Faculty is working with the AGS did a session on ...  
<https://www.atu.edu/cetl/summerpd2020.php>

Dr. Jackson: A lot of the checklists and guidelines are filtering down to the department heads. What is the purpose of a self-check? Especially, how can I determine if a faculty should have submitted since they are in different buildings?

CETL Website & [www.atu.edu/pandemicrecovery](http://www.atu.edu/pandemicrecovery)

Dr. Jacobs: New faculty orientation required on campus from their office but do not yet have access to their office.

#### IV. Adjournment

Called to a close at 5:07 pm by Dr. Eshelman