

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The meeting of the 2019-20 Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 in Rothwell 456. The following members were present:

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

Absent: Dr. Scott Jordan; Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon

Visitors: Dr. Barbara Johnson; Ms. Bernadette Hinkle; Mr. Robert Freeman, Mr. Thomas Pennington; Ms. Brandi Tripp, Ms. Alexis Scrimshire; Ms. Kayla Chambliss; Ms. Lou Ann Reeves

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES **Motion by Dr. Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Hanna to approve the minutes. Motion carried.**

Dr. Eshelman requested a motion to adjust the agenda to include an update from the University President.

Motion by Dr. Lockyer, seconded by Dr. Stacy to adjust the agenda. Motion carried.

REPORT BY VICE PRESIDENT Dr. Barbara Johnson, Vice President of Academic Affairs, reported there are two ongoing Dean searches for the Dean of the Graduate College and the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities. Committees have been established for both searches and the committees are currently reviewing candidates.

Dr. Johnson is in the process of conducting departmental visits with all academic departments on campus. She will share the current priorities in Academic Affairs and discuss departmental needs.

From Open Forum - Dr. Johnson made a few requests regarding faculty searches in the future. She asked that, on faculty search committees, we strive for gender balance, some diversity, and a committee member from outside the college. In the search process, she requested that we give candidates the opportunity to meet with all faculty in a department---not just those on the committee—and, ideally, with students. Last, she asked that all faculty job ads be posted six weeks before the application deadline.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Eshelman called for a motion to alter the agenda to move items A (Class Length and Room Usage) and B (Policy Website) from Old Business to items B and C in New Business.

Motion by Dr. Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Stacy to alter the agenda. Motion carried.

CURRICULAR
ITEMS

Dr. Eshelman explained to Senate that curricular items could be voted on individually or as a block.

Motion by Dr. Clements, seconded by Dr. Hanna to approve curricular items as a block. Motion carried.

DEGREE AUDITS,
CLASS LENGTH, &
ROOM USAGE

Ms. Brandi Tripp, Senior Associate Registrar, informed Senate that the Registrar's office has been working since September 2017 to utilize DegreeWorks for degree audits. The goal is get all departments using DegreeWorks for degree audits by October 2020. This timeline includes a planned upgrade to DegreeWorks.

Dr. Lockyer asked about the role of the faculty advisor when DegreeWorks is fully implemented. Ms. Tripp said the faculty advisor will remain the primary advisor and the Registrar's staff will provide a review of audits.

Ms. Scrimshire, Associate Registrar, notified Senate that rooms can be assigned on a Monday/Wednesday schedule for longer blocks of time depending upon availability. There is no institutional policy against scheduling Monday/Wednesday courses. Faculty/Departments needing rooms on a Monday/Wednesday schedule can request the rooms through Ad Astra.

HUMAN
RESOURCES

Ms. Bernadette Hinkle, Vice President of Administration and Finance, and Mr. Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources, discussed upcoming benefits changes. Currently, Arkansas Tech is fully insured through Blue Cross Blue Shield. Over the past 11 years, employee costs for benefits has gone from 0% to 22.7%, with an average increase to the employee of 8.9% per year. The cost of benefits for the University and employees continues to rise. ATU has a large medical loss ratio. The University budgeted for a 15% increase in benefits spending for the coming budget and it was not enough to cover the increases.

One reason for the large medical loss ratio and increased spending is the cost of health care providers in the area.

Mr. Freeman discussed the bidding process for health benefits. ATU determined to remain fully insured over other models of health coverage (e.g., self-insured). Bid requests were put out and Blue Cross Blue Shield was the only provider to reply. Bids were also requested for flex account, HSA, COBRA, Six responses were received and are being reviewed.

Additional changes include benefit increases to group term life (2x wage cap at \$75K) and three EAP visits.

All employees will see an increase in health premiums. New tiers for premiums has been established.

Open enrollment is November 4 – 15, 2019.

UNIVERSITY
COUNSEL

Mr. Thomas Pennington, University Counsel, announced a university policy website, where all board-approved policies are to be located. This website is required by HLC. The address is as follows: <https://www.atu.edu/policies/>

Mr. Pennington suggested Faculty Senate consider reviewing a Family Medical Leave Act policy for faculty as it is not currently mentioned in the Faculty Handbook.

Motion by Dr. Bishop, seconded by Dr. Stacy to form an ad hoc FMLA committee. Motion carried. Drs. Clements, Stacy, and Toner will serve on the committee.

RECYCLING

Dr. Hanna requested the Leadership Tech group scheduled to discuss their Leadership Tech project be moved to the November meeting.

EXCELLENCE
AWARD FOR NON-
TENURED
FACULTY

Members of the committee who worked on the policies and procedures of the award will work with Dr. Johnson to review the budget implications of the awards. The awards approved by Senate in December 2018 would amount to an expenditure of \$8,300.00 each fiscal year under the current pay for a three credit-hour overload. The members of the committee are Drs. Lockyer, Schwehm, and Tucci.

GRADUATE
COUNCIL
CHANGES

Dr. Schwehm spoke about changes to the Graduate Council with Dr. Jeff Robertson, Interim Dean of the Graduate College Chair of Graduate Council and Dr. John Freeman, Vice Chair of the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council has already discussed some of the changes being discussed in Senate. Dr. Schwehm recommended Faculty Senate form an ad hoc committee to draft changes to the Graduate Council. The changes would include a member of the graduate faculty chairing Graduate Council and improved alignment between undergraduate and graduate curriculum.

Motion by Dr. Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Stacy to form an ad hoc committee to address changes to Graduate Council. Motion carried. Drs. Dixon, Schwehm, and Williams will serve on the committee.

FACULTY
SATISFACTION
SURVEY

Dr. Eshelman asked Senate how to best distribute the results of the faculty satisfaction survey. It was stated that the minutes were emailed to all faculty. Dr. Bishop suggested creating a website to post results of the survey. Dr. Schwehm stated the results could be included in a new section on the website that contains the agenda and the minutes. The suggestion was made to include an additional link to the survey results under the agenda and minutes for May 2019.

Motion by Dr. Tucci, seconded by Dr. Schwehm to create a new link to the survey results on the Senate website under the May 2019 minutes and agenda. Motion carried.

The Senate determined the faculty satisfaction survey should take place annually during the Spring term. Dr. Bishop recommended a committee be formed to administer the survey, including reviewing/improving the questions. Dr. Schwehm suggested the committee be comprised of individuals currently on Faculty Senate. It was also suggested the survey be distributed earlier in the Spring term, preferably in February.

Motion by Dr. Bishop, seconded by Dr. Stacy to form a Faculty Satisfaction Survey Committee. Motion carried. Drs. Carballo, Schwehm, Stoeckel, and Tucci will serve on the committee.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

SALARY
COMPRESSION
PROPOSAL

Dr. Eshelman call for a motion concerning the salary compression proposal distributed to Senate at the September meeting.

Motion by Dr. Lockyer, seconded by Dr. Hilliard to approve the proposal.

During discussion, Dr. Stoeckel asked if other mechanisms had been considered on how to address faculty compression. This would include reviewing how the CUPA median is determined and how peer institutions are selected to determine the CUPA median. It was suggested that the current proposal addresses pay primarily at the rank of full professor. Dr. Eshelman pointed out that salary compression and CUPA data, though related, are not the same issue and can be handled separately. Dr. Clements agreed to pursue changes to the statement that accounted for compression at lower ranks.

The salary compression proposal was moved to the November meeting of Senate for additional discussion.

ALTERNATIVE
CREDENTIALS
POLICY

Dr. Stacy reported that the committee selected to review the alternative credentials policy will meet on October 21, 2019.

DEPARTMENTAL
PROMOTION AND
TENURE REVIEW
COMMITTEE

Dr. Schwehm reported that the committee met to review DPTC evaluation standards developed by various departments and all were relatively similar. The committee is currently working to revise some of the handbook wording to clarify the procedures for the DPTC. Dr. Schwehm discussed the differences between what the handbook outlines for the Promotion and Tenure Portfolio that is submitted by those seeking tenure and/or promotion versus standards set for portfolios submitted to the DPTC for evaluation.

Dr. Schwehm asked on behalf of the committee for members of Senate to work with their constituents to review pages 20 – 39 of the faculty handbook and send any concerns or suggestions to jschwehm@atu.edu.

IV. OPEN FORUM

Dr. Eshelman nominated Dr. Molly Brandt to serve on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee to take the place of a committee member who is retiring.

Dr. Eshelman announced that the Shared Governance Committee will have its first meeting on Tuesday, October 15 at 8am.

Dr. Eshelman read out an anonymous comment received through the Faculty Senate website. The individual who submitted the comment was concerned about a discrepancy between the amount of years applied toward promotion and the amount of years applied toward tenure when hired. The individual had a different amount of years awarded toward tenure upon hiring than years awarded toward promotion. Multiple faculty commented that faculty upon hire negotiates the details of years awarded for promotion and tenure. It was recommended the faculty member contact Academic Affairs to discuss the discrepancy and/or contact the Faculty Welfare Committee to file a grievance.

Ms. Gale stated how much she appreciated the Faculty Senate snapshot Dr. Eshelman sends out after each Senate meeting.

Dr. Hanna asked that Senate look into decisions made in other divisions that impact faculty. She stated it was great to involve faculty in programs, but faculty need to be included in decisions and planning. Dr. Johnson stated she is working with the other Vice Presidents to coordinate efforts.

Dr. Carballo asked about faculty teaching low enrollment courses without compensation. It was mentioned that historically, faculty have been asked to teach courses of all enrollment levels without compensation for various reasons, although the practice might not be as prevalent as it once was. Many on Faculty Senate have taught courses without compensation. It was suggested that faculty request partial compensation for teaching low enrollment courses.

Dr. Lockyer requested the health insurance information be distributed as soon as possible.

Dr. Stacy announced the General Technology Committee needs to know technology needs of faculty. Technology needs and/or questions can be submitted to Steve Milligan, Associate Director of OIS for Networked Systems. Tegrity lecture capture will no longer be available in 2020. OIS is working on the transition to another platform.

Ms. Chambliss asked about the maximum amount of courses adjunct faculty can teach in an academic year and why there is a cap. Currently, the cap is seven courses in an academic year. It was suggested that Ms. Chambliss contact Pat Chronister, Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, for details.

V.
ANNOUNCEMENTS
AND
INFORMATION
ITEMS

Dr. Eshelman handed out information on the upcoming musical *Taste of Buffalo*.

Dr. Shrestha wished everyone a happy Dussehra.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Dr. Stacy, seconded by Dr. Hanna to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



David Eshelman, Ph.D., President



Jeremy Schwehm, Ph.D., Secretary