

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The December meeting of the Faculty Senate was held at 1:00PM on Wednesday, December 5, 2018 in 456 Rothwell. The following members were present:

Dr. Glen Bishop	Dr. Joshua Lockyer
Dr. Pam Carr	Dr. Johnette Moody
Dr. Jon Clements	Dr. Jeremy Schwehm
Dr. Michael Davis	Dr. V. Carole Smith
Dr. Carey Ellis	Dr. Monty Smith
Dr. David Eshelman	Dr. Sarah Stein
Ms. Holly Ruth Gale	Dr. Bruce Tedford
Dr. Shellie Hanna	Dr. Brendan Toner
Dr. Newt Hilliard	Dr. Jack Tucci
Dr. Scott Jordan	Dr. Susan Underwood

Dr. Christine Austin, Dr. Phillip Bridgmon, Dr. Cheryl Chaney, Dr. Loretta Cochran, Mr. Ken Futterer, Ms. Jennifer McNeely, Dr. David Middleton, Dr. Hanna Norton, Mr. Thomas Pennington, Ms. Karen Riddell, Dr. Mike Rogers, and Ms. Tammy Weaver were visitors.

CALL TO ORDER Dr. Moody, President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Dr. Susan Underwood moved to accept the minutes from the November 13, 2018, meeting. Dr. Newt Hilliard seconded. Minutes were accepted.

REPORT BY VICE PRESIDENT Dr. Phillip Bridgmon, VPAA, reported that Dr. Dana Fox has accepted the position of Graduate Dean and will join Arkansas Tech on July 1, 2019. The recruitment for the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs continues. The cutoff for candidates to submit applications for preferred consideration is January 11, 2019.

Dr. Jack Tucci asked Dr. Bridgmon about the enrollment forecast. Dr. Bridgmon reported that it is expected that enrollment for Fall 2019 will increase and should continue to increase for the next couple years based on the number of inquiries and applications. Freshmen and graduate student applications are up.

Dr. Tucci asked about faculty teaching loads. Dr. Bridgmon stated that faculty teaching loads are too high given the other expectations for faculty on the ATU campus.

Dr. Bridgmon went on to say that the grade appeal process needs to be improved as the current policy leads to confusion. Dr. Judy Cezeaux is leading a committee to address this issue. Dr. Bridgmon will have the committee report its recommendations to the appropriate Faculty Senate subcommittee.

President Bowen and Dr. Bridgmon will provide a general update to faculty at the beginning of spring semester on January 9.

Dr. Tucci asked if the university would put more focus on the recruitment of high performing students. Dr. Bridgmon responded by saying yes and no. High performing students are welcome and are often supported with scholarships. High performing students are considered to be those with ACT scores of 30 and above. However, the university will not attempt to shape a class. ATU will continue to be access driven.

The Department Head Council is in operation and is being chaired by Dr. Blanks.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Curricular Items

Dr. V. Carol Smith moved to consider all curricular items as a block. Dr. Shellie Hanna seconded. Motion passed. Ms. Tammy Weaver asked to propose an amendment that the drop of CUL 2023 from the catalog would not also result in the drop of HA 2023 with which it is cross listed. HA 2023 is to be maintained in the catalog. Dr. David Eshelman moved to approve the curricular items as amended. Dr. Jon Clements seconded the motion. The motion carried.

b. Persistence and Completion Committee

Dr. Hanna Norton addressed the work of the Persistence and Completion Committee. The committee is working to make persistence and completion part of the culture of ATU. Dr. Norton suggested that faculty could add a section to annual portfolios describing their efforts to encourage persistence in pursuit of and completion of degrees. In response to a question from Dr. Jon Clements Dr. Norton clarified that the committee is not seeking to change language in the faculty handbook, but only looking for ways to encourage faculty to think about and share ways that contribute to persistence and completion. A further suggestion was to have Department Heads collect such information and contribute to Weave. Dr. David Eshelman suggested that departmental review committees could make this a question they ask faculty during the annual evaluation process.

c. Quality Matters (QM)

Dr. Loretta Cochran described this program. A group meets at 10:00AM on Mondays on the 4th floor, Dean's Conference room, Rothwell Hall. Several faculty have qualified as reviewers and additional faculty are at the Masters level. Workshops are available as well as QM courses. Dr. Cochran and Dr. Moody present at national QM meetings. All ATU faculty have a QM account. Workshops are free. Courses cost \$200. Contact Dr. Cochran or Dr. Moody for further information. QM supports the HLC effort. When HLC staff hear that QM is being followed, they move on to other areas. License is \$3,600 annually. QM vetting is not required on campus, but as Dr. Jack Tucci, observed, it provides a quality way to set up any course, and in particular online courses.

d. TIAA/CREF Retirement Funds

Mr. Ken Futterer addressed the Faculty Senate on this matter. The policy on accessing TIAA/CREF retirement funds is stricter than policy governing Social Security, the Arkansas Teachers Retirement System, and the policy at other universities. This is caused of a clause in the ATU contract with TIAA/CREF. The university could change the policy and the Faculty Senate should look into the possibility of making access to TIAA/CREF retirement fund accounts easier for faculty who are working at ATU but are approaching retirement.

Dr. Jack Tucci made a motion that ATU change its contract with TIAA/CREF to allow earlier access to retirement funds. Dr. Ellis seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Futterer then discussed a second issue, the recently adopted policy on outside employment. Mr. Futterer stated that the current policy is overly burdensome for faculty. Dr. Jon Clements stated that the policy was substantially changed by the Board of Trustees after it left the Faculty Senate, which is their prerogative. However, it would have been better that instead of instating the new policy without faculty input if the Board would have communicated to the faculty about its concerns and listened to the Faculty Senate about how faculty see the policy. Mr. Futterer asked that the Faculty Senate to express dissatisfaction with the outside employment requirements. Dr. Clements suggested that at this point a formal resolution from the Faculty Senate may be too forceful and not be viewed in a positive light by the Board. Mr. Thomas Pennington, Campus legal counsel, said he would

look into the matter to determine if the Board would be open to making some changes in the outside employment language.

Mr. Futterer asked that his statement be read into the record. Dr. Tucci so moved. The motion was seconded by Dr. Jeremy Schwehm. Motion carried. The statement appears as Appendix A.

- e. Procurement Tabled until a representative from the appropriate office could attend. Dr. Bruce Tedford commented that this is the second postponement for this issue. Dr. Moody provided an assurance that someone from procurement would attend the February meeting. The delay is because of staffing changes in Procurement.
- f. Wellness Center Policies Postponed until next month as Wellness Center staff were attending a conference this week.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Ethics Policy Mr. Thomas Pennington stated that the committee met and discussed changes in the draft policy. Many of the provisions are statutory. The committee is also working with the Staff Senate. The policy is to be viewed as aspirational rather than punitive. An example of an issue that needs clarification is when university funds can be used for reimbursement of expenses related to school functions. Mr. Pennington asked that a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate be established. Dr. Jon Clements, Ms. Holly Ruth Gale and Dr. Bruce Tedford agreed to serve on the subcommittee. Dr. Michael Davis expressed concern that the policy may infringe on academic freedom and suggested language be added to make the policy more explicit that it does not affect academic freedom.
- b. HLC Dr. Susan Underwood reported that the HLC committee and subcommittees are working on evidentiary statements in support of arguments designed to show that ATU meets HLC requirements. A committee is needed to develop and implement a standard vetting process for all courses across the University, including the Ozark campus. Dr. Carey Ellis stated that Dr. Lisa Harless and Dr. Shelly Daily would be willing to be on the committee. Dr. David Eshelman reported that Mrs. Jana Crouch and Ms. Elaine Tyse were willing to be on the committee. Dr. Underwood will organize the first meeting of the committee. Committee members will then choose a chair and begin work.
- c. VPAA Qualifications Statement Jon Clements observed that this and other Faculty Senate documents should appear on ATU letterhead. The response to the request for input from faculty for this statement was very limited. Dr. Clements stated that in drafting the statement, he kept the language positive. He is open to additional input but time is of the essence. Dr. V. Carole Smith asked that the importance of teaching and learning at ATU be added. Dr. Newt Hilliard and Dr. Bruce Tedford recommend changing the research statement so that it is related more to pedagogy, teaching, and learning as ATU is not eligible for some types of federal research grants. Ms. Jennifer McNeely suggested adding a statement on working with adjuncts. Dr. Joshua Lockyer suggested to add a statement to indicate that the Tech in the university name is somewhat misleading as the university is more of a liberal arts school.

Dr. Clements will revise the VPAA qualifications statement and request that the Faculty Senate Secretary distribute. The statement is attached as Appendix B.
- d. Academic Integrity Policy Dr. David Eshelman made a motion to approve the policy. The motion was seconded by Dr. Jon Clements. After discussion, Dr. Clements stated he would revise the policy and return it to the Faculty Senate for further consideration.
- e. Adjunct Support Ms. Jennifer McNeely discussed the findings of a survey of adjunct instructors at ATU. Top adjunct instructor issues in order of priority are pay, job security, and tuition discount for self and family. In addition many adjuncts are unaware of the benefits available to them. Many

adjuncts feel left out. Departments should improve information flow and the sense of inclusion by adding them to email lists and inviting them to faculty meetings. Dr. David Eshelman made a motion to encourage departments to include adjuncts whenever possible. Dr. Jeremy Schwehm seconded the motion. The motion carried. Dr. Sarah Stein commented that she would provide a list of adjunct benefits available at ATU and a list of businesses that take part in the student discount program. The lists appear in Appendix C.

- f. Campus Landscape Change in staff has required this item to be postponed until the February meeting. Dr. Bruce Tedford commented that changes in campus vegetation has interfered with student research projects. Better communication needs to take place so that trees that are part of research projects are not removed until the project is complete, with exceptions made in cases of safety concerns.
- g. Dean/Department Head evaluations Postponed until February meeting.
- h. Faculty Awards Dr. Jeremy Schwehm brought to the attention of the Faculty Senate that faculty awards had been left off the agenda. Dr. Schwehm moved that faculty awards be considered. Dr. Joshua Lockyer seconded the motion. The motion passed. Dr. Schwehm reported that Dr. Phillip Bridgmon, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs is supportive of additional faculty awards. Two awards are being considered for non-tenured faculty and one award for adjunct faculty. The award would consist of a three credit-hour overload plus \$1,000. The adjunct faculty award would consist of pay for one three hour course. It is anticipated that the new recognitions would be awarded for the first time during May 2020. Dr. Jon Clements moved to approve the new awards. Dr. David Eshelman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

OPEN FORUM
ANNOUNCEMENTS
AND
INFORMATION
ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT Meeting adjourned at 3:29

Respectfully submitted,



Johnette Moody, D.B.A., President



Glen R. Bishop, Ph.D., Secretary

Appendix A
Statement on Outside Employment by Mr. Ken Futterer

Ken Futterer
Music Department
Dec 4, 2018

7 terms Senate membership
2 terms Senate President

Address to Faculty Senate, Dec 5, 2018

Karen and I joined the faculty of Arkansas tech 38 years ago. At that time, Tech had app. 2,000 students attending. Our chief rival, Henderson State was close to that size. Over the past 38 years the population of Tech has steadily increased to over 10,700 students, but Henderson has remained roughly static, a remarkable increase.

Tech's growth was partially circumstantial and partially planned, but there had to be careful and wise fiscal management, as then and now Tech is woefully underfunded. So underfunded, that there have never been enough faculty positions to teach our student population if the faculty were unwilling to teach overloads.

My point in referencing the above information is that without faculty willingness to work overloads for a dramatic reduction in pay, ATU would have had to turn away hundreds if not thousands of students over the course of many years.

(To put this in perspective, the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act requires 1+½ for overtime; we accept less than 1/8 of our salary per overload.)

Why has Tech continued to grow? Is it that cute Bulldog, or is it the quality of the programs? And how do our programs remain "quality"? Is it the superiority of our administrators, the wisdom of the Board of Trustees, or is it the faculty?

Administrators and Board members come and go, but the faculty remains.

Tech has grown and continues to grow due to the quality of the faculty, who keep our programs at tiptop shape, and sacrifice time and wealth to provide quality education to all students.

Since the retirement of Dr. Brown, shared governance at ATU has blossomed. With the encouragement of Dr. Bowen, the faculty crafted our new handbook, and after carefully give and take with our administration, the Board passed it with no reservations.

So then, why did the Board take what seems to me the ill-advised action of inserting an additional clause into our outside employment policy? It would have been easy enough for the Board to return this document to the Senate, with stated reservations, and allow the process of shared governance to come to a mutual solution. But that is not what happened.

I realize that the Governor of Arkansas appoints our Board, and ATU is not a democratic organization. The Arkansas Tech Board of Trustees has the authority to amend, or even replace our handbook at any

time, for any reason, on any whim. However, having the legal authority to commit an act is not the same as having the moral prerogative to do the same.

Shared governance must be a two way street. If the faculty is to be the only one sharing, with “surprise” amendments popping up in the handbook, then the good will that has been engendered these last few years can be squandered.

When faculty and administrations/boards get sideways, there can be dramatic consequences. Especially in a situation like Tech, where our spectacular growth has been and will continue to be almost entirely at faculty expense.

What can we, as faculty, do when our Administration and/or Board behave in a dictatorial or unyielding fashion?

In some states, faculties have called upon collective bargaining. I personally don't like that arrangement; it guaranties an adversarial relationship, with no hope of good will in crafting consensus.

Other faculties have emulated the Solidarity movement that removed the communistic government in Poland. Their motto, “They pretend to pay us, we pretend to work”.

I am not recommending any of the above actions, as they punish our students for a lack of good faith from above, an act I know this faculty would find abhorrent.

I personally know many of the members of our Board. They are people of good will and commitment. I can't help but believe that they acted in good faith, but did not considered or have been misinformed on the importance and repercussions this type of unilateral action could engender.

I am petitioning the Senate to request that the Board revisit their addition to the outside employment policy, and work with the Senate to create a mutually acceptable compromise statement.

Appendix B
VPAA Qualifications Statement

FACULTY SENATE – ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

TO: VPAA SEARCH COMMITTEE
FROM: MEMBERS OF THE ARKANSAS TECH FACULTY SENATE
SUBJECT: VPAA SEARCH PROCESS
DATE: DECEMBER 5, 2018

To the Members of the VPAA Search Committee,

This letter is to advise the VPAA Search Committee of the characteristics we, the Faculty Senate, find important when selecting the new Vice President of Academic Affairs.

We believe that the new VPAA should:

- Have a strong commitment to shared governance.
- Have a full understanding and appreciation of the nature of Arkansas Tech as a teaching-focused, liberal arts institution.
- Have a commitment to supporting and advancing the academic division of the University. (i.e. addition of new faculty positions, load equity across divisions, working for competitive faculty remuneration, etc.)
- Have strong communication skills and an ability to articulate to the President of the University the needs of the Faculty, while also being able to articulate to the Faculty the needs of the President.
- Promote research and grant opportunities as they support our pedagogy and instruction, and work to help facilitate their implementations.
- Develop aspirational goals for the University while being realistic about day to day needs.
- Make fair and reasoned decisions regarding tenure and promotion.

Thank you for your consideration,

Members of the 2018-2019 Arkansas Tech Faculty Senate

Appendix C
Benefits and Discount Lists

Adjunct Benefits:

Game tickets

Anyone with a Tech ID may enter athletic games free of charge. This includes their immediate family members as long as the employee is present with card.

ID Cards

ID cards provide adjuncts discounts at various food locations across campus, and at the ATU Bookstore. Some vendors might provide a discount on goods and services., but some will reserve discounts for students only. *

Library

Adjuncts may reserve and request materials. A librarian is assigned to each academic department and could give more details if needed.

Meal Plans

Adjuncts may purchase a meal plan for the semester or may add Wonderbucks to their id cards.

Racquetball Courts

Admission to the racquetball courts during faculty/community hours for the adjunct faculty and immediate family members (spouse and children)

Retirement

Adjuncts may contribute money into a retirement fund.

Worker's Compensation

Adjuncts can access the Worker's Compensation Insurance program provided that they have job related injuries.

TechFit

TechFit may be utilized upon presentation of employee ID card. The employee's account will be charged \$25 per semester upon first visit.

Vendors List

Below is an updated list of local businesses that take part in the student discount program upon presentation of the ID card: Student Rate

St. Mary's Fitness Center
Back to Basics
Beach Shack (tanning only)

20% Discount
Papa Murphy's
IHOP
Russellville Eye Clinic

15% Discount

America's Best Value Inn
The Cake Place
Pottery Worx
Pam's Shoes and Pedorthics

10% Discount

Western Sizzlin
Buffalo Wild Wings
Donut Donut
Taco Johns
La Huerta
Rose Drug (cash prescriptions only)
New Tire Company (except tires)
Subway
Brick Oven Pizza
Feltner's Whatta-Burger (except lunch specials)
Linh's Vietnamese Cuisine
Starbucks
Old Post BBQ
Lavish
New China
Leaning Willow
The Other Foot
GT's Tanning/Southern Glow Tanz
Tangles
Firehouse Subs
AT&T

5% Discount

Freddo's
Quiznos
Arkansas Tire and Auto