

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Friday, September 11, 2009, at 4 p.m. in Room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Dr. Jennifer Helms	Dr. David Eshelman
Dr. Glen Bishop	Dr. V. Carole Smith
Dr. Eric Lovely	Dr. Tom Limperis
Dr. Gill Richards	Mr. David Mudrinich
Dr. Linda Bean	Dr. Jeff Robertson
Dr. Alex Mirkovic	Dr. Cathy Baker

Dr. Jim Walton, Dr. Penny Willmering, Mr. Ken Futterer, Dr. Annette Holeyfield, and Dr. Larry Morell were absent. Dr. John Watson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, was a visitor.

CALL TO ORDER

President Bishop called the meeting to order and asked to amend the order of the agenda to discuss Item A in Old Business first with Dr. Watson. Motion by Dr. Mirkovic, seconded by Dr. Bean, to amend the order of the agenda. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
END OF TERM
SCHEDULE/FINAL
EXAMS

President Bishop asked Dr. Watson for any comments. Dr. Watson reminded the Senate of work by a committee during the past spring semester, resulting in a proposal to change the end of term schedule and recommended by the Senate. He emphasized that he was very interested in the efforts being made to amend the end of term schedule but stated there were two issues to address as part of the effort. First, he noted that the recommendation made would have removed Reading Day. Dr. Watson reported that the Executive Council did not wish to delete Reading Day. Additionally, he noted his own concern that faculty take seriously having exams during final exam week if those exam hours are to be counted as class time. He reminded the Senate that part of the reason the end of term schedule was changed was due to the fact that MWF lecture sections were short 100 minutes of class time. The proposal made by the Senate includes counting final exam time as class time; Dr. Watson indicated he must be convinced that the faculty at large will adhere to the policy relating to exam week as stated in the *Faculty Handbook*. He asked that the Senate provide both assistance and assurance in this effort.

President Bishop questioned whether a resolution made by the Senate was appropriate. Dr. Watson responded that resolutions need to be supported by data. Dr. Mirkovic suggested having departments discuss the issue during departmental meetings. Dr. Watson asked the group to “think outside the box” on the entire issue.

At this time, Dr. Watson excused himself from the meeting.

Motion by Dr. Lovely, seconded by Dr. Robertson, to bring the spring committee back together. Motion carried. Dr. Lovely stated he would be glad to head the committee but noted that the deletion of Reading Day had been a significant piece of the former recommendation. President Bishop asked for volunteers to be involved with the committee;

Dr. Eshelman, Dr. Mirkovic, and Dr. Richards volunteered. Dr. Lovely stated he would send out an email to the committee participants and set up a meeting.

At this time, the order of the agenda was resumed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Bishop asked for a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion by Dr. Eshelman, seconded by Mr. Mudrinich. Motion carried. President Bishop asked for any amendments or corrections. Motion by Dr. Bean, seconded by Dr. Smith, to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: MERIT PAY POLICY

Mr. Mudrinich reminded the Senators that a committee during the spring semester had looked at merit pay policies around the country. He stated he had interviewed individuals at various institutions, some of whom liked merit pay and some of whom did not. He noted the merit pay policy currently in the *Faculty Handbook* and asked whether everyone was satisfied with this policy or did they want something different. President Bishop noted that the current policy has never been used as there has never been a merit pay pool established. He stated that a stronger merit pay policy, something similar to the process used in promotion and tenure, might influence the administration to establish funding for merit pay. He also noted that merit pay is a means by which to reward faculty who are “working much harder than other faculty.” Dr. Smith stated her objection to merit pay, citing her experiences in the public schools, and noted that issues relating to some faculty working harder than others would not be “fixed” by a merit pay policy. Dr. Richards also stated his concern for a merit pay policy and noted that he did not believe such a policy “would work well on this campus.”

Motion by Dr. Richards, seconded by Dr. Lovely, to not implement any salary policy based on merit. After discussion, Dr. Richards amended his motion to delete the current policy in the *Faculty Handbook*, seconded by Dr. Lovely. Motion carried. President Bishop asked for a motion to discharge the merit pay policy committee. Motion by Dr. Bean, seconded by Dr. Smith. Motion carried. President Bishop expressed his appreciation to the committee for their work.

CAMPUS RECYCLING

Dr. Lovely reported that the campus has a large recycling bin on campus which has not been used by the custodians in the past. However, he stated he had just recently heard from the custodians in the McEver Building that a meeting for custodians is to be held concerning facilitating recycling on campus on a trial basis. Brian Lasey in Physical Plant will be overseeing this effort. He asked the Senate to write Mr. Lasey and his supervisors a letter, thanking them for their efforts. He also asked that Mr. Lasey be invited to a spring meeting for an update on the trial effort. Dr. Lovely noted that only select buildings will be involved in the trial. The Physical Plant pays a \$150 fee each time the large recycle bin is emptied, some of which is reimbursed by the sale of the recyclable material. Initially, the material to be collected will be cardboard, plastics, and aluminum. Dr. Lovely noted that paper is currently being picked up by a different entity. He stated that he had talked to the university counsel concerning the state law on this matter, but that it was a moot point by that time.

Motion by Dr. Lovely, seconded by Dr. Smith, to write a letter to Mr. Lasey, with a copy to his supervisor, thanking him for his efforts and inviting him to a spring meeting. Motion carried. Dr. Bean volunteered to write the letter.

NEW BUSINESS: TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

Dr. Lovely noted significant changes made over the summer involving technology, specifically, Banner and One Tech upgrades and issues relating to broken web page links. He also noted that the Technology Committee had not met in some time. It was noted that

the Technology Committee had been established as an ad hoc committee; it was also reported that Dr. Morell had met with Dr. Underwood concerning these issues. Motion by Dr. Lovely, seconded by Dr. Eshelman, to postpone this issue until next month to allow Dr. Morell to report. Motion carried.

TOBACCO FREE
POLICY

Dr. Lovely noted his previous concern that the tobacco free policy contained an “apparent double jeopardy issue” as an employee could both be disciplined by the university and then turned over to the Russellville District Court for additional action. He stated that the university counsel had assured him that the issue of double jeopardy does not exist in the policy. Any penalty assessed by Arkansas Tech is a civil penalty, not a criminal penalty. A penalty assessed by the District Court would be a criminal penalty.

OPEN FORUM

President Bishop asked for items for discussion in Open Forum. Dr. Lovely reported that two faculty members in his department had asked the Faculty Welfare Committee to review the equity salary survey conducted by the administration each spring. The two had alleged issues with the way the salaries are calculated and the lack of transparency on the methods used. The Faculty Welfare Committee had ruled that this was not under their purview as it was not a complaint brought by one faculty member but a complaint by several faculty members on behalf of the faculty at large. The faculty had asked Dr. Lovely to request review and consideration by the Senate on this issue.

Dr. Lovely read the complaint by the two faculty members and asked that this item be placed on next month’s agenda. He also asked if Dr. Joe Stoeckel and Dr. Tom Nupp could be guests at the October meeting to discuss this issue. President Bishop agreed to the request and suggested that someone draft a motion for next month concerning this issue. Dr. Richards advocated broadening the scope of the review to include administrative salaries.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

No items were presented at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Glen Bishop, Ph.D., President



Cathy Baker, Ph.D., Secretary