

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday, May 1, 2012, at 12:40 p.m. in Room 202 of Baswell Techionary. The following members were present:

Dr. Ernest Enchelmayer	Dr. Cathi McMahan
Dr. Dan Bullock	Dr. V. Carole Smith
Dr. Eric Lovely	Dr. Tom Limperis
Dr. Susan Underwood	Ms. Jamie Earls
Dr. Sean Huss	Dr. Penny Willmering
Dr. James Walton	Mr. Ken Futterer
Dr. David Eshelman	Ms. Annette Stuckey
Dr. Robin Lasey	

Dr. Jennifer Helms, Dr. Johnette Moody, and Dr. Sherman Alexander were absent.

Prior to the meeting, a lunch was held with Dr. Robert Brown, President of the University, and Dr. John Watson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, in attendance. Dr. Brown asked to address the Senate prior to the lunch and expressed his appreciation for their diligence and work this academic year. He noted that Arkansas Tech is still the only institution to have complied with legislation requiring the credit hour reductions to 120 for baccalaureate degree programs and 60 credit hours for associate degree programs. He credited the faculty at large for this accomplishment.

Dr. Brown reported that a 3.9 percent increase in tuition and a 3 percent across-the-board raise for unclassified are budgeted for 2012-13. Additionally, all unclassified faculty and staff will receive a bonus of \$1,000 at the end of May.

Regarding state funding, Dr. Brown noted that prisons, public schools, highways, and public services are the top priorities within the state's budget. Higher Education is further down the list, which limits the university's ability to increase funding without increasing tuition and/or enrollment.

Dr. Brown reported that Arkansas Tech's graduation rate is now the second highest in the state. He announced that an 89 year old graduate will walk at the May graduation, having completed a B.P.S. degree. The gentleman had initially begun his college career in 1941.

Dr. Brown gave a final caution before the beginning of the meeting and asked faculty to be careful what they store on their office computer. As state employees using state computers, information on the computer, including emails, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Dr. Brown and Dr. Watson excused themselves from the meeting after lunch.

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

President Smith called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2012, meeting.

Motion by Dr. Walton, seconded by Dr. Willmering, to approve the minutes as distributed.
Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:
REPORT ON
RETIREMENT
FUNDS AND
CHARGE TO
COMMITTEE

President Smith asked Dr. Bullock for a report. Dr. Bullock deferred to Dr. Walton, a member of the Faculty Salary, Benefits, and Awards Committee. Dr. Walton reported that Arkansas State University, the University of Central Arkansas, and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock all allow employees leaving the university to roll their 403B funds into a different investment plan, although this may be subject to certain restrictions. At Arkansas Tech, portability (rollovers and withdrawals) of funds is not possible until age 55. President Smith stated an additional issue of concern to her relates to the 10 year payout for TIAA funds to be channeled into CREF funds.

Dr. Bullock noted that another key issue relates to accessibility of the funds. He wondered if the Senate should ask Mr. Moseley what options the university has relating to changing the current retirement plan. The consensus was to invite Mr. Moseley to the September meeting to address this issue.

REPORT ON
FACULTY HIRING
PRACTICES AND
THE FACULTY'S
ROLE

President Smith asked for a report. Dr. Huss stated he had not received any additional comments relating to the draft questions. He will prepare this document and have it ready for the fall.

REPORT ON
ONLINE STUDENT
EVALUATIONS

President Smith asked for a report. As the subcommittee had not yet met, no report was given, and the item was tabled until fall.

REPORT ON
MOTION ON
EVALUATION OF
ADMINISTRATORS

President Smith asked Mr. Futterer for a report. Mr. Futterer reported he had researched this topic and found that evaluation of the president by university boards is fairly common. He distributed some information supporting this and stated he would continue to research and determine what role the faculty might play in that evaluation and have a report for fall.

Dr. Lovely reported that the faculty at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville do evaluate their President.

REPORT ON
STANDING
COMMITTEE
ELECTION
RESULTS

President Smith asked Dr. Underwood for comments. Dr. Underwood reported that just over half of the faculty responded and voted in the online elections. The results of the elections have been posted.

NEW BUSINESS

President Smith asked for any items for new business. None were given.

OPEN FORUM

President Smith asked for items for discussion at this time. Mr. Futterer reported he had been approached and asked to question what departments are doing across campus in relation to the promotion and tenure process, i.e., do some departments have promotion and tenure committees. None of the Senators knew of such committees in their colleges.

Mr. Futterer noted that the *Faculty Handbook* does not at this time support this concept; he asked, however, if the Senators would like to pursue this idea. Dr. Walton commented that the size of some of the departments would limit the ability of them to form such a committee. Dr. Lasey observed that input at the departmental level to the process might be advantageous and commented that college committees could be formed instead of departmental committees. Dr. Willmering advocated a higher value being placed on feedback from the peer review committees during the tenure and promotion process.

Dr. Enchelmayer stated that his department has an informal process in which the department head asks for feedback from each department member on those faculty going up for promotion and/or tenure during a given year. Dr. Eshelman suggested asking all tenured faculty in a department to provide a letter for each promotion and tenure portfolio. The letter might or might not be in support of the applicant.

Dr. Huss reported that Behavioral Sciences currently has incorporated service and scholarship review as part of their peer review process. Dr. Walton noted this might assist junior faculty needing suggestions for improvement. Ms. Earls commented that the process, whatever it is, needs to be uniform across campus. President Smith emphasized that, if the peer review process were to be expanded to include review of service and scholarship, training for the peer review committee members would be very important.

Mr. Futterer noted all the comments and suggestions and stated that he would appoint a subcommittee next fall to explore these issues. He noted that Dr. Carey Roberts, chair of the Assessment Committee, could be a possible member for inclusion on the subcommittee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

President Smith asked for any announcements. Mr. Futterer thanked President Smith for her service. President Smith expressed her appreciation to the Senators for their hard work this year and stated she had “learned a lot.”

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



V. Carole Smith, Ph.D., President



Daniel W. Bullock, Ph.D., Secretary