

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday, October 8, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Dr. Sherman Alexander	Dr. Chris Kellner
Dr. Carey Bosold	Dr. Timothy Leggett
Dr. Molly Brant	Dr. Eric Lovely
Dr. Ernest Enchelmayer	Dr. Kevin Mason
Dr. Marcel Finan	Dr. Johnette Moody
Mr. Ken Futterer	Dr. Michael Rogers
Mr. Neal Harrington	Dr. David Ward
Dr. Sean Huss	

Dr. Glen Bishop, Dr. Beth Giroir, Dr. Annette Holeyfield, Dr. Linda Kondrick, and Dr. Deborah Wilson were absent. Dr. Robert Brown, Dr. John Watson, and Dr. Carl Greco were visitors.

CALL TO ORDER

President Lovely called the meeting to order and asked for a motion in regard to the minutes of the September 10, 2013, meeting.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Dr. Kellner, seconded by Dr. Moody, to approve the minutes as distributed.
Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:
UPDATE ON
PRESIDENTIAL
SEARCH

Dr. Robert Brown, University President, stated the Board of Trustees is committed to an open and inclusive process in the selection of a new university president. Dr. Brown reported he had engaged Dr. John W. Moore with Penson Associates to provide the Board with an understanding of the needed process for a national search and an awareness of the common pitfalls to avoid. He stated the Board would utilize national resources for the search and may choose to hire a national search firm to seek out and recruit the best potential candidates. Dr. Brown reported the Board of Trustees was currently in the process of appointing an advisory and screening committee, which will be representative of all segments of the campus. He provided a loose, realistic timeline for the process that had been established: advertising in December, receiving applications through January, screening materials in February, interviewing in March or April, and naming the new president in April or May. He emphasized that open communication was a priority for the Board and mentioned the development of a website which will be used to submit comments and feedback throughout the search process. Dr. Brown then invited questions from the Senate.

Dr. Enchelmayer asked if Penson Associates would serve as the first level of screening for potential candidates. Dr. Brown stated the sole task of Penson Associates was to establish the search procedure for the Board of Trustees and to advise against common errors made by institutions in this process. He explained that the screening of candidates will be a task of the advisory and screening committee, which will consist of approximately ten to twelve members from all facets of the university and include representation from the community.

President Lovely questioned if the changes to the Faculty Handbook recently voted on by the faculty would be presented to the Board. Dr. Brown responded some changes will be included in the October Board of Trustees agenda. President Lovely inquired whether Dr. Brown anticipated any challenges to the proposed changes. Dr. Brown stated he cannot anticipate the actions and decisions of the Board of Trustees but he provides as much information as possible for their consideration.

Dr. Rogers asked where advertisements for the position will be placed. Dr. Brown answered the scope of the search will be national, therefore advertisements will be placed in national publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. He also stated it is typical for institutions to write letters to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) to announce the vacancy, which will solicit applications. Dr. Brown mentioned, in August of this year, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* named Arkansas Tech University as one of the five fastest growing public master's universities in the United States, which has generated national recognition of the university.

Dr. Brown encouraged the senators to contact him with any questions that may arise, and also stated the website, once developed, will provide answers to many questions. Dr. Brown thanked the Senate, then he and Dr. Watson excused themselves from the meeting.

President Lovely requested the agenda be amended to add item D, "Non-Discrimination Policy" under New Business.

Motion by Dr. Moody, seconded by Dr. Enchelmayr, to amend the agenda as proposed. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Futterer reported he had met with Dr. Watson and discussed the membership of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Teacher Education Council, both of which do not currently have representation from the supernumerary group (faculty from the departments of Professional Studies and the Center for Leadership and Learning). He stated Dr. Watson had mentioned there was only one tenured faculty member in the supernumerary group at this time, and there was no certainty in future years there would always be a tenured faculty member within the group. President Lovely emphasized the importance of all faculty being represented on such committees, but expressed concern the single tenured faculty member could become a permanent member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and Teacher Education Council. Mr. Futterer also mentioned the supernumerary group does not presently participate in Teacher Education. President Lovely advised this issue be revisited in the future as the university continues to grow, rather than address it with the current makeup of the supernumerary group.

Motion by Dr. Rogers, seconded by Dr. Kellner, to remove this item from the agenda for the time being. Motion carried.

SCHEDULING OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

President Lovely stated the discussion regarding the scheduling of committee meetings would be postponed until Dr. Bishop was present to report to the Senate.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

President Lovely distributed a copy of the university's non-discrimination policy from the Faculty Handbook with proposed verbiage added, which also included references of non-discrimination policies from the EEOC, the Department of Human Services, and the University of Arkansas. He then introduced Dr. Carl Greco, inviting him to address the Senate.

Dr. Greco referenced a letter written by a faculty member which had been published in the American Society for Engineering Education magazine, *Prism*. He stated the letter expressed the opinion that diversity efforts should not be inclusive of homosexuality.

Dr. Greco reported a response to this letter was published by Inside Higher Ed titled “Engineering Bigotry?” Dr. Greco suggested that sexual orientation and gender identity be included in the coverage of the non-discrimination policy.

Motion by Dr. Huss, seconded by Mr. Harrington, to add “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” to the university non-discrimination policy in the Faculty Handbook. Motion carried.

President Lovely stated he would forward the Senate’s motion to Dr. Watson.

OLD BUSINESS:
RESULTS OF
FACULTY
ELECTIONS

President Lovely requested that the minutes reflect the proposed amendments to the constitution of the Faculty Senate, which were voted on by the faculty in spring of 2013, with 60% participation from the faculty at large:

- I. Proposed change to the membership requirements of the Faculty Senate, requiring tenure to be eligible to serve; 70% of participating faculty voted “Yes”.
- II. Proposed change to eliminate appointed members on the Faculty Senate; 65% of participating faculty voted “Yes”.
- III. Proposed addition to the Faculty Senate constitution regarding the Faculty Handbook, stating the Senate serves as an advisory body on proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook; 91% of participating faculty voted “Yes”.

President Lovely stated he was pleased to hear from Dr. Brown these issues would be presented to the Board of Trustees for action at the October meeting. He asked this item remain on the upcoming Senate agenda, and stated he would report the action taken by the Board.

REPORT BY
SUBCOMMITTEE
ON PROMOTION
AND TENURE
ISSUES

President Lovely stated, while there was no progress to report at this time on the promotion and tenure issues, Dr. Watson had been encouraging of the Senate to pursue agenda items such as this, and to bring any suggestions they may have to him.

REPORT BY
SUBCOMMITTEE
ON ACADEMIC
DISHONESTY

Dr. Rogers reported he had circulated the proposal among subcommittee members, without receiving any feedback which would warrant further development. He suggested this item be tabled indefinitely until the proposal can be incorporated into a university wide strategic planning process. President Lovely encouraged the subcommittee to continue working on the proposal, to ensure they are prepared to present a complete package during the strategic planning period.

REPORT BY
SUBCOMMITTEE
ON FACULTY AND
STAFF FINANCIAL
AID

Mr. Futterer stated the subcommittee had not been able to meet, but he had met with Dr. Watson and discussed faculty, staff and dependent tuition waivers. He reported, of those using the tuition waiver benefit, 71% are university employees and 29% are dependents of university employees. President Lovely suggested the policy may need to be altered to account for dependents pursuing graduate degrees. Mr. Futterer replied the current policy does not prohibit a faculty member from pursuing any type of degree, but there are limitations for dependents. Dr. Enchelmayer expressed concern that a dependent who does not immediately attend college following high school graduation may be unable to receive the tuition benefit once past the age of 24. Mr. Futterer stated the IRS definition of a dependent does not include an age limit, but the university policy does. He reminded the senators this was a benefit provided to university employees and cautioned them from pressing this issue, as nearby institutions have recently removed this benefit entirely. President Lovely asked the subcommittee to revisit this issue and return with the appropriate agreed upon action.

REPORT ON
FACULTY HIRING
PRACTICES

Dr. Huss distributed the results of the survey on faculty hiring practices which are available online at www.atu.edu/standingcommittees/FacultySenate/archive/2013FacultySurvey.doc.

President Lovely commended Dr. Huss for his diligent work on the survey.

NOISE LEVEL
NEAR HINDSMAN
BELL TOWER

Dr. Bosold reported she had not experienced any further issues with the noise level surrounding the Hindsman Bell Tower during class time.

Motion by Dr. Kellner, seconded by Dr. Huss, to remove this item from the agenda. Motion carried.

OPEN FORUM

Dr. Kellner stated he was recently informed student labor will be held to a maximum of 28 hours per week due to the Affordable Care Act. He explained this restriction would adversely affect the research within the Fisheries and Wildlife program, as students are hired full-time during the summer, and it will be difficult to fill part-time positions with students seeking full-time employment. Dr. Kellner reported he had contacted other universities to compare approaches being taken to this legislation, and some institutions were offering a contract for a specific job that should be completed between specified dates for a set payment amount, rather than using a timesheet and reporting hours. He also stated one institution was allowing students to work full-time for a three to four month period, but would only be considered “full-time” once that period was exceeded. Dr. Mason reminded the Senate, regardless of how individual institutions define full-time employment, it has been defined within the Affordable Care Act as anyone working 30 hours per week or more. Ms. Chronister stated university administrators had been meeting with an insurance consultant group to determine the best approach in handling these issues. She mentioned it *may* be possible to designate a small group of adjuncts as eligible for insurance, but she doubted the same would be possible for student labor as the employment periods for students are inconsistent. Dr. Rogers suggested this be added to the upcoming agenda for further discussion.

Dr. Kellner reported he had been approached by a colleague during spring commencement who questioned the rationale for the colleges to no longer be rotated between the morning and afternoon ceremonies. Ms. Chronister responded it was her understanding that a standardized schedule was requested by the Board of Trustees and the administration.

Dr. Kellner described an issue one of his advisees experienced during preregistration in which the student had scheduled an advising appointment on the morning of the first day the student was eligible to register, and the desired classes were already closed. He speculated this was caused by students who were given registration codes by advisors and registered themselves at midnight. Discussion following the description of the issue centered on whether this was a difficulty for many students and whether there would be a feasible solution. Dr. Kellner stated he only knew of this student having difficulty and did not believe the issue was widespread.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

President Lovely announced the upcoming meeting of the Faculty Senate would be held on Tuesday, November 12 at 3:00 p.m. in room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric C. Lovely, Ph.D., President



Marcel B. Finan, Ph.D., Secretary