

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 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. Glen Bishop	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
Dr. Beth Giroir	Dr. David Ward
Dr. Sean Huss	

Dr. Carey Bosold, Mr. Neal Harrington, Dr. Annette Holeyfield, Dr. Linda Kondrick, and Dr. Deborah Wilson were absent. Dr. John Watson, Ms. Pat Chronister, and Mr. Michael Stoker were visitors.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

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

NEW BUSINESS:
PROCEDURE FOR
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Dr. Finan expressed concern regarding the approval of the minutes of the final spring Faculty Senate meeting each year, typically scheduled for April or May. He stated, with the current practice of approving the minutes during the initial Senate meeting in August, continuing members may have difficulty recalling the events of the meeting, in addition to new members being asked to vote on the minutes of a meeting in which they were not present. Dr. Finan suggested the minutes instead be approved using email for discussion and voting. Dr. Bishop asked if this issue was addressed within Robert's Rules of Order, the parliamentary procedure adopted by the Senate. President Lovely stated, to his knowledge, there would not be a restriction preventing a vote by email. Dr. Bishop requested this be investigated further, and Mr. Futterer volunteered to do so.

Motion by Mr. Futterer, seconded by Dr. Kellner, to table this discussion until the March meeting of the Faculty Senate. Motion carried.

ACADEMIC
CALENDAR

In Dr. Bosold's absence, President Lovely read aloud a letter, expressing her concerns with the academic calendar. Dr. Bosold stated in the letter she had been contacted by multiple faculty who were dissatisfied with the December graduation date occurring the week before the Christmas holiday, and the practice of no longer rotating the commencement ceremonies between the colleges. She mentioned difficulty in finding available spaces and vendors for the Nursing department's ceremony for graduating seniors, which is held the evening before commencement. She reported several students and faculty had conflicts with planned family events and either could not attend the ceremony, or missed a portion of their family holiday plans. She also suggested the break between the end of the spring semester and summer I be shortened to allow an extended break between summer II and the beginning of the fall semester.

Dr. Huss inquired how the academic calendar was determined. Mr. Futterer stated one contributing factor is a legal requirement to have a certain number of classroom hours per credit hour. He stated this causes the calendar to be fairly rigid beyond the first day of classes. Dr. Brant stated her department had questioned why the beginning of classes had shifted one week later, causing the semester to end later. Dr. Kellner responded the beginning date was delayed with the intention of acquiring students enrolled elsewhere who, if dissatisfied, would still have time to enroll at Tech.

Dr. Mason recognized Dr. John Watson and asked him to address the issue. Dr. Watson stated the academic calendar was largely based on how the actual calendar fell, although many issues are involved. He stated the beginning of summer I is somewhat inflexible, due in part to the university's attempt to coincide with the public school schedule.

Ms. Chronister mentioned the three weeks between spring and summer I are the only time during the year the residence halls are completely empty, allowing time for maintenance and cleaning. Dr. Kellner noted, for faculty with holiday related conflicts with the commencement ceremonies, he anticipated a lenient absentia policy, and Dr. Watson agreed.

FACULTY WEBPAGES

Dr. Finan recognized Mr. Michael Stoker and invited him to address the Senate regarding faculty webpages. Mr. Stoker reported the faculty webpages have been reformatted to a uniform, basic layout including only the faculty member's name, rank, directory information, educational background, and the courses taught in the last academic year. He stated this information is pulled directly from Banner. Mr. Stoker mentioned a number of faculty had contacted him, expressing a need to add awards, publications, and other academically relevant information to the new webpage format. He recognized the value which was lost in transitioning to a basic layout, but stated guidelines would need to be in place to prevent university liability.

Mr. Stoker stated Dr. Jeff Woods and Dr. Daniel Bullock were researching practices at other institutions, and he requested volunteers from the Senate to join this ad hoc committee working to develop guidelines for content. Mr. Futterer volunteered to serve, stating within the Music department, degrees are less relevant than under whom faculty have studied, which would warrant content more biographical in nature. Drs. Finan and Moody volunteered to serve as well, and Dr. Mason recommended Dr. Marc Fusaro be invited as he had shown interest. Mr. Stoker thanked the senators and excused himself from the meeting.

CHANGES TO ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Dr. Watson distributed a document detailing proposed changes to the membership of the Assessment Committee. He stated the changes would go before the Board of Trustees next week, and welcomed feedback from the senators. Dr. Watson informed the Senate of the history of the university's assessment program, stating the previous director, Dr. Carey Roberts, was a full-time faculty member who coordinated assessment half-time. He stated the position had evolved into a full-time commitment, resulting in the hire of Dr. Monica Varner into the new position of Director of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness. He reported Dr. Roberts had served as chair of the Assessment Committee, as well as the representative from the College of Arts and Humanities. Dr. Watson stated one proposed change to the membership would be to permanently install the Director of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness as the chair of the committee, and allow Arts and Humanities a separate representative.

OLD BUSINESS: AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Dr. Kellner reported he believed a resolution to the issue with using student labor on a full-time basis in the summer could be identified within his college, and as such could be removed from the agenda.

REPORT BY SUBCOMMITTEE COLLABORATING WITH THE

Dr. Rogers reported it was his understanding the two items from the Faculty Senate brought before the Board of Trustees had been approved. President Lovely confirmed that the verbiage regarding workman's compensation and the Senate becoming an advisory body for Faculty Handbook changes had both been approved.

ADMINISTRATION Dr. Rogers stated the subcommittee would be willing to pursue the remaining issues of recommending tenure for prospective senators and removing the appointive membership, but only if further pursuit was the will of the Senate. The resulting discussion centered on whether the Senate had the ability to rewrite the proposed changes to the handbook, as the existing language was voted on by the faculty. President Lovely stated there would be no issue if Dr. Robert Brown, University President, or the Board of Trustees wanted to move forward with the changes, but if the Senate were to rewrite and resubmit the changes, it would need to go before the faculty for another vote.

President Lovely expressed concern regarding the H-1B visa issue, stating if the administration is willing to revisit the policy, this subcommittee would be an appropriate channel for beginning a dialogue. Dr. Rogers suggested waiting to present the Senate's concerns to the new University President. Dr. Mason invited Dr. Watson to address the matter. Dr. Watson stated he continues to seek a resolution for the issue and would report to the Senate on any progress.

President Lovely asked if it was the will of the Senate for this subcommittee to persist. Dr. Ward stated he did not see a reason to dissolve the subcommittee. Dr. Rogers suggested it become a standing subcommittee of the Senate. Dr. Mason agreed, stating the subcommittee provides a channel for communication between the Senate and the University President. Dr. Rogers strongly encouraged the Senate to invite the new University President to the initial Faculty Senate meeting in the fall to demonstrate their openness.

Dr. Huss inquired as to the status of the recommended changes to the non-discrimination policy. President Lovely stated the changes were forwarded to Dr. Watson, and Dr. Watson agreed to follow up with the university's Legal Counsel. Dr. Watson also mentioned Ms. Jennifer Fleming, Affirmative Action Coordinator, would be scheduling meetings with each department to discuss Title IX and sexual harassment in light of the recent legislation targeting sexual assault in the university setting. He then stated he was considering inviting a speaker to campus to address diversity and sensitivity issues, but emphasized this would be independent of the upcoming Title IX and sexual harassment meetings. Dr. Watson thanked the Senate and excused himself from the meeting.

Mr. Futterer stated, in regard to the proposed letter to Dr. Brown, it would be appropriate for the Senate to thank him for his years of service and congratulate him on his upcoming retirement.

Motion by Dr. Bishop, seconded by Dr. Brant, to resolve to congratulate Dr. Brown on his years of service and retirement. Motion carried.

**REPORTS FROM
SUBCOMMITTEES**

The Senate subcommittees did not have any reports or updates at the time.

OPEN FORUM

Dr. Finan proposed the addition of a suggestion box for the faculty and staff in a central location, such as the Library, to enable the submission of anonymous concerns. President Lovely stated this item would be added to the agenda for further discussion.

President Lovely announced Ms. Liz Means, Director of Disability Services, would be addressing the Senate at the upcoming meeting on March 11, as part of an outreach campaign to faculty.

President Lovely reported the Arkansas law which addresses accessibility requirements for state purchased software (Act 308) has resulted in the rejection of engineering and graphic design software which has been approved in the past. He asked the senators to check within their colleges and departments for faculty who may use other such software in their courses.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS President Lovely announced the upcoming meeting of the Faculty Senate would be held on Tuesday, March 11 at 3:00 p.m. in room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center.

It was also announced the university has obtained unlimited remote licenses for both SAS and SPSS software, which can be accessed at <https://remoteapp.atu.edu> .

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric C. Lovely, Ph.D., President



Marcel B. Finan, Ph.D., Secretary