

## **Faculty Senate Business Meeting**

October 7, 2019

### **Members Present:**

Douglas Airhart, Michael Best, Jeremy Blair, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Mary Lou Fornehed, Stuart Gaetjens, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Shelia Hurley, Barbara Jared, Brian Jones, Christy Killman, Nancy Kolodziej, Matt Langford, Susan Laningham, David Larimore, Mark Melichar, Christie Miller, Allan Mills, Holly Mills, Lachelle Norris, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Sally Pardue, Richard Rand, Jeff Roberts, Mike Rogers, Lee Ann Shipley, Sandra Smith-Andrews, Vahid Motevalli for Holly Stretz, Lenly Weathers, Zac Wilcox, Jeannette Wolak

### **Members Absent:**

Wei Tsun Chang, Yun Ding, Ahmed Elsayy, Steven Frye, Mary Matthews, Lori Maxwell, Ben Mohr, Anthony Paradis, Troy Smith, Barry Stein, Kim Winkle, Craig Zamer

### **Call to Order**

Senate President Smith-Andrews called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

### **1. Welcome and President's Comments**

Senate President Smith-Andrews apologized for the timing of the agenda for today's meeting; a scheduled speaker canceled while she was attending TUFS. She also welcomed Senator Nancy Kolodziej to her first meeting. Senators Kolodziej and Mike Rogers were appointed to fill seats vacated in the Colleges of Education and Engineering respectively.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

Senator Larimore made a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Killman seconded. The motion carried.

### **3. Approval of Minutes from September 9, 2019**

The notes from the meeting with President Oldham on September 30 are still being reviewed. Minutes from the last business will be tabled until the next meeting to allow for further review.

### **4. Follow-up with Committee on Custodial Issues**

Senator Wolak spoke with Craig Short and Cheryl Sullivan regarding custodial concerns. Mr. Short may seek the Faculty Senate's help in facilitating surveys about services. He intends to attend the next senate meeting to discuss concerns. Senators were encouraged to tell their departments that all issues should be shared directly with Cheryl Sullivan. It was also mentioned that positive comments and praises should be shared with her as well.

### **5. Preview Day**

Senate President Smith-Andrews shared comments from the President and Provost about Preview Day on October 5. President Oldham praised those who helped, and Provost Bruce took away from the experience positive feedback and a sense that all worked together as one. There were over 1,500 guests, 200 current students, and 400 faculty and staff involved. Senators said it was one of the best and most well-planned events at Tennessee Tech.

## **6. Follow-up on Email Issue**

Yvette Clark will update procedures relating to retirees, emeritus faculty, and other designated individuals' email accounts in the next few months. These procedures will address concerns regarding notification of changes and options for email account retention.

## **7. Absentee Senators (Recommendations)**

Senate President Smith-Andrews sought recommendations to address absenteeism in Faculty Senate and both Academic and Administrative Councils. The concern is that members are not allowing adequate representation for their departments and cannot effectively participate in shared governance if they cannot attend both Senate and Council meetings. It was suggested that both councils take up the issue to address how many absences constitute a vacancy, whether proxy attendees affect attendance, and how attendance may be reported annually, among other issues.

## **8. IDEA Evaluations**

- a. With longstanding issues regarding IDEA evaluation participation, validity, and use, senators would appreciate hearing Theresa Ennis address these concerns in a future meeting. It was suggested that Ms. Ennis could make a video to post online that discusses procedures, rules, and other concerns.
- b. Senators discussed the difference between the College of Arts and Sciences' evaluation requirements and that of the Tenure and Promotion requirements for submitting course evaluations. There is not a policy on course evaluations, though the Provost suggested there could be one if faculty felt it was needed. The requirement in the College of Arts and Sciences that faculty must submit evaluations for all courses is not a violation of policy. Many senators expressed that it makes more sense as an evaluation tool to have all course evaluations submitted for review.

## **9. Senate Inquiries Received on the Faculty Senate Website**

Senate President Smith-Andrews reported on the answers she found to the most common questions submitted on the Faculty Senate website:

- a. There is no formal change regarding start times for MW classes, but it is within the parameters for each department to set schedules for individual instructors (though class start times are to be adhered to). It was suggested senators should encourage Provost Bruce to look at proposed schedules to try to avoid dead spaces in scheduling.
- b. The President is looking into whether there are adequate spaces for bikes and vehicles. With 30% more bicycles on campus, it is important to make sure there are adequate bike racks that are convenient but do not block accessible entrances. If senators witness students locking up their bicycles in the wrong spaces, they were encouraged to remind students their bikes may be cut loose.

- c. The Grievance Committee was not dissolved in 2015. The Grievance Committee is for staff grievances. The committee meets only when there is a grievance. Grievances are filed with Human Resources, and HR will assign them to the appropriate committee (Grievance Committee for staff, Faculty Affairs Committee for faculty) for review and recommendation.
- d. Some of the links to promotion forms are not working in the Tenure and Promotion Policy in Policy Central. While the issue is being worked on, the Provost's website and the Faculty Handbook website are linking to these documents. The forms are also still available in Policy Central if searched for individually.
- e. No one in attendance was feeling any undue pressure to participate in Purple Pride Fridays (wearing purple on Fridays).
- f. Adjunct pay dates in the fall are in September, October, November, and December. Some senators are concerned that the first pay date is over a month into the semester and may wish to recommend dividing the payments dates differently so those instructors do not have to wait as long. Senate President Smith-Andrews will look at spring semester payment dates to see if the first payment comes as late as in the fall.
- g. In years past, research proposals and projects were often pushed through the Foundation to avoid fees. President Oldham says that will not be the case; the Foundation will not take over any grant management unless there is an open-ended proposal for how the money will be used. Everything not meeting this criterion must be handled through the Office of Research.

## **10. Reports**

- a. Budget Advisory Committee (Larimore and Roberts): There was no immediate budget crisis this year, so no cuts were needed, and there were no actions to be taken or surprises reported. Administrative raises were not mentioned, but other models of dealing with merit raises and bonuses may be taken up by the Board of Trustees. The Board may also consider a five-year plan to address cost-of-living adjustments. Senators discussed the benefits and downsides to the idea of merit pay.
- b. Academic Council (Null): The Council approved changes to policies regarding accessibility services and undergraduate admissions, in addition to approving the Master of Professional Studies hours reduction from 33 to 30 credit hours. Tracy Black will work on a way to hide empty cells on the tenure data cover sheet, and other possible changes were discussed for the cover sheet including IDEA evaluation numbers and adding a line for the number of proposals written.
- c. Administrative Council (Wolak): The Council approved two new student constitutions of note, both of which may aid President Oldham in his goal to increase diversity at the Tennessee Tech. The organizations are Futuro, which promotes entrepreneurship and collegiality for Hispanic students, and Model UN.
- d. TUFS (Smith-Andrews): The last TUFS meeting was the first time all ten sitting Faculty Senate presidents from four-year universities and eight presidents-elect were present. Legislative reports were favorable and all concerns from the year prior were absent. The new TUFS website is [tnfacultysenates.org](http://tnfacultysenates.org). Tennessee Tech will host TUFS April 17-19, and Senate President Smith-Andrews keep the senators aware for interest and opportunities to participate.

### **11. Potential Guest: Yvette Clark**

Senators would be interested in a visit from Yvette Clark regarding the single sign-on change coming in January, and would also appreciate a short introductory or training video about the change posted online.

### **12. Meeting with the President (October 21, 2019)**

Senate President Smith-Andrews would like senators to consider any action items that may assist President Oldham in meeting his goals in anticipation of questions and feedback he may seek.

### **13. Old Business**

None

### **14. Other Such Matters**

None

Senator Rand moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Fornehed seconded and the motion was carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Supporting documents:

- Memo from Dean Semmes
- Email Account Information

Approved: 11/04/2019