

Faculty Senate Business Meeting

February 24, 2020

Members Present:

Douglas Airhart, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Andrew Callender, Kris Craven, Mary Lou Fornhed, Steven Frye, Stuart Gaetjens, Sheikh Ghafoor, Mark Groundland, David Hajdik, Shelia Hurley, Brian Jones, Christy Killman, Nancy Kolodziej, Matt Langford, David Larimore, Lori Maxwell, 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, Troy Smith, Sandra Smith-Andrews, Barry Stein, Holly Stretz, Zac Wilcox, Kimberly Winkle, Jeannette Wolak

Members Absent:

Michael Best, Jeremy Blair, Wei Tsun Chang, Yun Ding, Barbara Jared, Susan Laningham, Mary Matthews, Anthony Paradis, Lenly Weathers

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 reiterated the desire for shorter, pointed meetings with focused discussion.

2. Approval of Agenda

Senator Stretz made a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Stein seconded. The motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes from January 27, 2020 Business Meeting

Senator Stein made a motion to approve the minutes. Senator Frye seconded. A friendly amendment was requested to clarify that Faculty Senate had voted in the past to keep Good Friday as an instruction day. The motion carried.

4. Approval of Notes from the February 17, 2020 Meeting with the President

Senator Airhart made a motion to approve the minutes. Senator Stein seconded. The motion carried.

5. Reports

- a. Academic Council: Recent council business included changing admission requirements for the Master of Professional Studies to align with other majors, and a minor was approved in Event Planning, Promotion, and Management, among other business.
- b. Administrative Council: Recent council business included continued review of the procedures with special attention to composition of the council, possible term limits, and attendance.

6. Audit on Campus

Information only – Senate President Smith-Andrews stated that the audit currently underway by the state is a periodic review and is not a cause for concern nor a response to wrongdoing. Most of President Oldham’s cabinet has been interviewed as well, and the main purpose is to determine the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees. All locally-governed institutions (LGIs) are under review.

7. Centralized Advisement Center Follow-Up

In light of recent concerns shared in senate meetings and with the President, the question was posed about what action Faculty Senate should take. There continue to be many concerns, including the absence of a needs assessment, a lack of data to support that the center is the solution to Tech’s retention issue, the source of the funding for the center, training and turnover, return-on-investment, and many unknown variables, among other issues. Ideas including opting in/out of the advising center were discussed, as well as taking a “wait and see” approach. Senators chose to address these concerns again with President Oldham before taking any action.

8. Tenure Cover Sheet

Senator Null presented the current working draft of the tenure cover sheet, as well as a list of questions submitted by chairs and Senator Null’s responses. Additional feedback was requested about the cover sheet, the narrative, the answers to the questions, and any further suggestions before meeting with Provost Bruce to discuss the cover sheet. Suggestions for new lines or sections on the cover sheet included:

- Participation in recruitment events
- Senior thesis advisement (for departments without graduate programs)
- Breaking up the checklist into sections (research, teaching, service, etc.)
- Including an “other” or “additional information” section
- Adding friendly language to the top of the checklist similar to, “This checklist is an outline of how you have met your department’s expectations and the mission of the university,” to avoid faculty feeling as though they must have something in every category

Senator Null reminded senators that this cover sheet has not yet been approved by councils and that she will take feedback to Provost Bruce and report back.

9. Education Benefits Policy 630

After many inquiries and issues of Tech faculty and staff not being reimbursed, the policy will be changed to remove the restriction that the degree must be directly related to the employee’s position. This restriction is removed only for on-campus courses; those seeking reimbursement for education at other institutions must still meet the higher standard related to their current position at Tech.

10. Changes in IDEA/Faculty Handbook

There is no longer an opt-out option for IDEA evaluations submitted during faculty evaluations. This was a unanimous vote by the Deans, and chairs may now see all qualitative and quantitative data on

evaluations from all courses, including comments. The language regarding IDEA in a previous version of the Faculty Handbook was shared for comparison.

11. Post-Retirement Contracts

Information only: Those interested in post-retirement contracts must be aware that the terms of the pay and the length are negotiable, based on need, and handled on a case-by-case basis.

12. Representation on Academic/Administrative Councils and Faculty Senate

The ad hoc committees for both councils are continuing to work on procedures and look into the composition of the councils. Any proposed changes will be taken up in councils and Faculty Senate before taking them to Dr. Huo for approval to update Policy 102.

13. Nominating Committee

Senate President Smith-Andrews sought volunteers to comprise the Faculty Senate nominating committee for the next president-elect and secretary. Senator Airhart was selected to chair the committee, and Senators Jones and Norris will serve on the committee.

14. Old Business

Currently, only two non-instructional faculty assignments may be awarded each year. Senator Roberts made a motion to support the increase in non-instructional assignments awarded each year. Senator Rand seconded. The motion carried.

15. Other Such Matters

- Senator Smith shared his memory of serving on the ad hoc calendar committee that looked into the Good Friday holiday and other holidays. It was his understanding that the holiday did not have to be called “Good Friday” and could be taken any time during the year, which was his preference over losing an instruction day. He had the impression it was not going to be taken as a Good Friday holiday.
- Senator Null asked for the status of Senator Pardue’s request that President Oldham reinstate the faculty compensation committee. Senator Pardue said she would revisit the topic with the President with specifics regarding her request and would share the outcome.
- Senator Rand invited anyone interested to attend an upcoming talk on corporate responsibility hosted by the College of Business. Regarding how state-appropriated funds for raises are being handled locally, he urged senators to contact state legislators to encourage them to write into the legislation how the money is to be spent. If it is intended by them to be “across the board,” encourage them to write that into the legislation so it cannot be handled differently locally. Senator Pardue offered that senators should also ask for the raises to be fully-funded so the institutions do not have to make up the difference.

Adjournment

Senator Stretz moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Rand seconded and the motion was carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Supporting documents:

- Brandon Johnson Response to Centralized Advising Concerns
- Tenure Cover Sheet/Checklist
- Tenure Cover Sheet/Checklist FAQs
- Educational Benefits Policy 630
- Previous Policy on Faculty Evaluations from the Faculty Handbook

Approved: 03/23/2020