

Faculty Senate Business Meeting

October 26, 2020

Members Present:

Stephanie Adams, Douglas Airhart, Dan Allcott, Michael Allen, Jeremy Blair, Troy Brachey, Debra Bryant, Wei Tsun Chang, Kris Craven, Dennis Duncan, Mary Lou Fornehed, Steven Frye, David Hajdik, Tammy Howard, Janet Isbell, Brian Jones, Christy Killman, Nancy Kolodziej, Matt Langford, Susan Laningham, David Larimore, Emily Lee, Chad Luke, Ann Manginelli, Lori Maxwell, Jennifer Meadows, Mark Melichar, Holly Mills, Lachelle Norris, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Anthony Paradis, Sally Pardue, Richard Rand, Jeff Roberts, Troy Smith, Barry Stein, Holly Stretz, Daniel Swartling, Robert Wilbanks, Zac Wilcox, Kimberly Winkle, Russ Witcher, Jeannette Wolak

Members Absent:

Chris Brown, Yun Ding, Mary Matthews, Mike Rogers, Lee Ann Shipley, Sandra Smith-Andrews, Lenly Weathers

1. Call to Order

Senate President Holly Stretz called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Senator Rand made a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Roberts seconded.

Senator Airhart asked that item #5 be dropped because the committee has not met. The motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes from August 31, 2020 Business Meeting and Notes from September 14, 2020 Meeting with the President

Senator Duncan made a motion to approve the minutes and the notes from previous meetings. Senator Isbell seconded.

A typo was pointed out. One senator expressed that it is sometimes hard to tell in the notes from the meeting with the president what is coming from the president and what is coming from the senate.

The business meeting minutes passed. The notes from the meetings with the president passed as amended.

Senate President Stretz briefly discussed some concern that the President's Cabinet seems to be using the Faculty Senate to communicate some issues with the faculty. However, communication of many things should be done through the College Deans and not the faculty senators.

4. Racial and Ethnic Diversity Champions

President Oldham has said that TTU needs to improve the diversity on campus. He has asked VP Rob Owens to create a program of Racial and Ethnic Diversity Champions. These

champions would be formally trained to assist with this improvement. President Stretz is concerned that this will lead to hiring a consultant that is somewhat redundant. The Deans of the Colleges already have one and she feels that the faculty senate should also have one and there should be one from the student body. Unfortunately, VP Owens was not present in the meeting to discuss this topic further.

Other Discussion:

Question: How is this different from the Diversity Committee from before? That committee had no support and was disbanded. Are there other committees still around? How will this be different?

Comment: We have a position on each search committee to insure diversity considerations during a search for a new position.

Comment: HR has an 8-week training program where completing the training earns the participant a certificate. Senator Winkle has completed this training and is willing to serve the Faculty Senate as its Diversity Champion.

Comment: The position on the search committees is about making sure the search demonstrates equity, which is not the same as diversity. This is to make sure that the search is fair in how it evaluates all candidates applying for the position.

A question was raised as to who is ultimately responsible for this now that Libby Gayes is no longer at the university. The answer given was Thomas Heard.

Senate President Stretz relayed some concerns regarding students' attitudes that they are currently being required to teach themselves. She is trying to get some messages out to clarify the position of the faculty on this matter.

Discussion: Masks & Gaitors – The recently distributed TTU branded gaitors were ordered early and there was a problem with getting them. A study has stated that 2-ply gaitors have some efficacy. The ones being distributed are 2-ply. Also, flannel is not good, these are not flannel. Senate President Stretz is working on a message to appear on the Dashboard.

Comment: Karen Lykins put out a message about the teaching themselves attitude.

Comment: Much of this is trickling down from the Provost's Office. Are they just listening to a small population of students who are not happy with the current situation? The AAUP resolution that was recently passed is not helping the situation, it seems to need to fix a problem. Maybe the Provost should be focused on defending the faculty and not listening to a small set of unsatisfied students.

Comment: That is right. Teaching themselves has become a buzz phrase among the students. This may be coming from those who are not doing the work. There is no need for a state of alarm.

Comment: Where were the gaitors purchased? Is there any oversight into the purchase of these things? There were some masks distributed earlier that are very thin and not worth wearing. Where did they come from?

Comment: The first ones, back in the summer, they are thicker but there is no pocket for a filter. And no filters were given.

5. Joint Committee on Procedures Report (Douglas Airhart)

This item was eliminated as the committee has not met and does not have a report for this meeting.

6. Budget Committee Reports (Jeff Roberts, David Larimore, Holly Stretz, Sandi Smith-Andrews)

There is a meeting on Friday at 2:00 p.m., we will see how that goes.

a. New Structure

President Stretz presented the restructuring of the Budget Committee. The committee is concerned strategic thinking, university-wide perspective, long-term rather than short-term view, and in-depth understanding of the University budget. The restructuring incorporates four new sub-committees: Emerging Opportunities and Threats (senators: Jeff Roberts, Jeanette Wolak), Effectiveness & Efficiency (senators: Sandi Smith-Andrews), 3-Year Strategic Budget Planning (senators: David Larimore), and Facilities and Infrastructure (senators: Holly Stretz). The hope is that this will add more effective communication which is needed according to VP Stinson. The main issue with communication is the timing.

b. Training

Senate President Elect Wolak reported that she attended the budget training session and found it very useful. Participants were asked to provide feedback and she provided some.

c. Details of tuition variance spending

President Stretz has asked for and recently received information regarding the tuition variance spending. She will be sharing this information with the Senators. It can be discussed again once the senators have had the chance to read the document.

Other Discussion: The October revision is the closest to the actual budget for the year. There are always surprise expenses and they must be managed. The concern is that traditionally there have

not been any senators present when these decisions regarding how to manage these expenses are made.

- This year one concerning expense was in regard to reductions in force, RIF's.
- Another point was made about expenses over time for retirement plans has changed. Initially the university was required to contribute the same to all plans, however, that has changed requiring the university to contribute more of the expenses for some employees than for others. Also, the new hires are under new guidelines.
- There are new rules from Title IX on how to handle sexual harrassment claims. The university must now have more representatives present during the process, almost like an actual court case. There are university expenses associated with this process.
- The portion of the budget for the library is as low as it was in the 1980's. With the move to electronic resources there are extra expenses for subscriptions and this has not been accounted for in the budget. This year there has been an adjustment to help, but it is being spread over three years and when that period ends it will be a problem again. Additionally, there have been a number of nursing resources supported by TBR and this support is about to come to an end. This is yet another indication that the situation is becoming critical and will begin to impact research and students. The need for additional support needs to be known before the May budget.
- Athletics is also being affected.

7. Update on Data Management Discussions (Holly Stretz, Sandi Smith-Andrews)

This is a project that will have a serious impact for research. The federal government is now requiring all grant proposals to have a data management plan. This is a significant effort for a project that requires looking backward and forward at the management of project data. Jeff Schaeffer, the director of the water center, has developed a data management plan in fisheries. It is recommended that there be a presentation for interested faculty. This would also involve the Library.

8. Faculty Senate Compensation Resolution – Wolak

Senate President Elect Wolak has updates and feedback. In response to her request at the last meeting, she has received feedback from all of the colleges on campus. There were a number of edits provided, with special thanks to Tom Timmerman from the College of Business. The main changes were discussed. The general idea is that the faculty senate is saying we would like to go back to something similar to the model that was used in 2013. Also, there should be representation from the senate in the development of the model. Some citations were added to give support for the idea that an incentive-based model has been shown to not be affective for this environment.

Other Discussion:

- Need to address time of service, cost of living as opposed to the assigning of arbitrary bonuses. The BOT seems to believe in “what have you done for me lately”

- When the model is performance driven there will be animosity and will not work well
- The current model doesn't adequately recognize long-term projects that do not see significant results until the end of the project – what about all of the work that happens in the mean time?
- What does budget stability really mean?
- We had an equity model for many years and there were several senators on the committee that was continually developing the model. It was meant to correct salary discrepancies, help with gender and others who tend to get paid less for the same work, merit, and service. Over time, years of service was weighted too high and annual evaluations not weighted enough. There was some effort to fix it, but the BOT wanted something different.
- In all of the feedback received, no one said they wanted to stay with the current model.
- To help with perception in this issue, Senate President Stretz has proposed a resolution on what the faculty wishes the public to know about us. This will be in Microsoft Teams and she would like feedback.

Senator Rand moved that the Senate accept the Resolution as amended; Senator Smith seconded; there were no nay votes and one abstention. The Resolution passes.

9. Summer Calendar

The provost is trying to revise the calendar. She is very concerned with the current schedule as posted on the calendar. She plans to have the summer classes start and end earlier. If there are any issues with the proposed changes, they need to be raised soon. One senator pointed out that moving the start and end dates is acceptable if this does not lengthen the period for adding classes, students should not be able to add classes after the first week has concluded.

10. Old Business

Question: Has the situation with Center Stage been finalized? Do we have a definitive answer to whether the recent cuts will be temporary or permanent?

Question: Looking at the meeting minutes and notes shows that there are senators who are not attending. Is there an attendance expectation?

Comment: The BOT has a team in teams with access to files and chat. Trustee Pardue showed this and highlighted some items. She expressed her approval of the Senate beginning to do the same. She also pointed out that her term will be ending in June 2021 and it is time for the Senate to begin the process of choosing her replacement.

Comment: The McKinney case was recently settled through the course system. The terms of the settlement are sealed so we are not privy to the details. Is the BOT aware of the terms?

Answer: Yes. However, they are sealed and cannot be discussed here.

Comment: In a review of the existing policies, there is no official university policy for a pandemic. Under the current circumstances should one be developed? The message so far has been that we are following the CDC guidelines, is this sufficient?

Comment: Senator Null reports that the center stage carry forward funds have been restored. Most events have been fully funded and they are working to get the regular budget restored.

Comment: During the last pandemic scare, a statement was developed for faculty to include on their syllabi. Should this be reinstated?

Comment: Departments did develop a pandemic plan then. They were expected to update this plan recently. However, there is no published university policy.

Question: Now that the law suit is settled, can we delete our emails?

Answer: Ask Kaye Carpenter. She is under a temporary contract as university counsel until the new hire officially starts.

11. Such Other Matters

None

Adjournment

Senator Mills moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Rand seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Supporting documents: Draft Resolution on Faculty Compensation

Approved: November 23, 2020