

Faculty Senate Business Meeting

March 21, 2022

Submitted by K. Craven

Members Present:

Stephanie Adams, Douglas Airhart, Dan Allcott, Michael Allen, Troy Brachey, Chris Brown, Debra Bryant, Melissa Comer, April Crocket, Kris Craven, Dennis Duncan, Mary Lou Fornehed, Steven Garner, Scott Hagarty, David Hajdik, Katherine Hermann-Turner, Tammy Howard, Janet Isbell, Christy Killman, Matt Langford, Emily Lee, Jane Liu, Mark Loftis, Jeanette Luna, Chad Luke, Lori Maxwell, Jennifer Meadows, Holly Mills, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Joseph Ojo, Kristin Pickering, Richard Rand, Christopher Reames, Drew Sisk, Scott Smith, Troy Smith, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Holly Stretz, Dan Swartling, Lenly Weathers, Robert Wilbanks, Russ Witcher, Laith Zuraikat

Members Absent:

Sean Alley, Steve Canfield, Yun Ding, Syed Rafay Hasan, Samantha Hutson, Ann Manginelli, Elizabeth Ramsey, Lee Ann Shipley, Kimberly Winkle

Call to Order

Senate President Luna called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Senate President Elect Maxwell moved approval. Senator Airhart seconded. Senate President Luna made a friendly amendment to add an additional item before Other Such Matters to discuss forming the nominating committee for new officers for next year. The motion was approved.

Approval of Minutes and Notes

1. February 21, 2022 Faculty Senate Business Meeting Minutes

Senator Airhart moved to approve the Minutes from the Business meeting on February 21. Senator Fornehed seconded. It was noted that any typos should be sent directly to Secretary Craven. The motion carried.

3. March 7, 2022 Faculty Senate Meeting with the President Notes

Senator Duncan moved to approve the Notes from the meeting with the President on March 7. Senator Airhart seconded. The motion carried.

Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Survey Idea (20 minutes)

1. How can we measure job satisfaction?
2. What topics would we like to measure over time, e.g. salary satisfaction, employee culture, etc.?

3. Discussion

Senate President Luna discussed the survey that is being requested by the Committee on Emerging Threats and Opportunities. They are concerned about the attrition of faculty and staff and would like to get feedback on issues and concerns among current faculty and staff about job satisfaction. Human Resources will work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to create the exact questions, but they would like to have ideas from the Faculty Senate on topics for the questions.

- Salary
- Whiplash from large number of recent institutional changes
- Exhaustion
- Workload
- Quality of support
- Merit pay
- Disconnect between the timelines for evaluation → AOR for next academic year, evaluation for previous calendar year
- University Budget and its impact on academic departments
- Number of systems that faculty and staff must use
- Time spent navigating new systems
- Shared governance
- Academic calendar
- Communication with administrators
- Transparency
- Communication → changes in the tenure and promotion processes, during hiring
- Support for research, travel, and presentations
- Staff travel for development
- Research infrastructure and ITS support
- Library resources → time for interlibrary loans, processes for searching for materials
- Diversity during hiring → setting up search committees
- Cost of living raises
- New computers, and their issues
- Provost Office and President Office following tenure and promotion policies
- Feedback loop with HR during hiring
- How the university determines merit for raises
- The way finance office communicates the budget, provides budget tools, budget transparency
- Equity pay increases → where do we stand according to CUPA
- What bill was it that mandates merit pay?
- Do we feel supported by the Board of Trustees?
- Do we feel supported by other members of our department?

- Do we feel supported by the administration?
- How long has it been since the public salary data for TTU was updated?
- Feeling appreciated
- Are they satisfied with the area or state: housing? schools? diversity? types of laws/bills being considered in the state?
- Our job requires us to spend the money in our budget, there seems to be a disconnect with finance who is trying to prevent us from spending the money

Promotion Salary Increase Proposal (Luna, 30 minutes)

1. Revisiting promotion raises, last revised in 2012
2. How do we compare to other LGIs? What changes would we like to see?
3. Discussion

Senate President Luna is pleased to ask the Senate to help with this issue. She has developed a proposal to discuss. There has not been a change in the raises given for promotion since 2012. Senate President Luna looked at other institutions in the state. We are the only one that has both a percentage and a dollar amount. The recipient gets the larger of the amounts.

Discussion concluded that we should go for the higher end. There was an opinion that 10% for all promotions was reasonable. As for the dollar amount, HR and the Provost's Office will need to be consulted to see if there are absolute maximums that would apply. This will also affect the issue of salary inversions. With new faculty getting higher starting salaries and then higher raises, it will jump their salary over existing faculty at the same and even higher ranks. This will likely prompt a review across campus, similar to the past, and could result in other equity increases to address this salary inversion.

For the dollar amount, it would be good to use a weighted mean of the other members of the faculty across campus. This will also be influenced by the CUPA data. However, there were issues the last time this was addressed. There was some difference in the numbers reported by the departments and the numbers reported by the administrators. It needs to be clear who will get the numbers and from where the numbers will come.

There was agreement to propose 10% across the board for all promotions. Senate President Luna will work on appropriate numbers for the dollar amount and bring an updated proposal to the Senate before submitting to the Provost and President.

Reminder: Joint Academic and Administrative Council Meeting this Wednesday, March 23, 3:35pm (Smith-Andrews and Winkle)

1. Policy 780, Misconduct in Research
2. Discussion

Senator Smith-Andrews reminded the Senators that this will be a first reading of this policy and we will not be voting on it at this meeting. This is a joint meeting of the Academic and

Administrative Council with the intent of getting this policy approved before the end of the academic year. The documents were sent to the Senators earlier today, considerably later than the required deadline. VP Taylor was asked to include Senators with research experience to be involved in drafting the new version of the policy, but she did not consult with anyone. She is open to any productive suggestions regarding this policy. You are asked to think about pitfalls for the policy, without mentioning any specific previous case.

For example, the amount of time for an investigation has been a problem in the past and should be considered in the new policy. There is a concern regarding the definition of research misconduct given in the policy. There seems to be a lack of sanctions mentioned, which leaves it open to a wide range of options.

Senator O'Connor has been asked to read this policy, as he has for all new policy changes. He also consulted with University Counsel Troy Perdue who has spent a significant amount of time evaluating the policy and has not yet reached any conclusion. Senator O'Connor is also not satisfied with the state of the policy proposal or the amount of time given to review the document.

The special called joint meeting will proceed as planned as the Senate does not have the power to cancel the meeting. Senators are encouraged to read the proposed policy carefully and to consult with faculty in their departments about the new policy proposal prior to the meeting on Wednesday.

Update on Tennessee Senate Bill 2290 (Smith)

1. Bill is scheduled for vote today at 4pm.
2. Discussion

The legislative meeting where they will vote on this bill is ongoing. However, the vote is not likely to take place until later this evening. President Oldham indicated that there will be implications for campus if the bill is passed. University Counsel Perdue has offered to conduct a workshop with the Women's Center and has extended this offer to any other department on campus. He is also willing to come to a future Senate meeting with President Oldham to discuss the implications with us. If you have any questions, please reach out to Counselor Perdue.

Nominating Committee – new item (Luna)

1. Senate President Elect for 2022 – 2023
2. Senate Secretary for 2022 – 2023

Senate President Luna asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee. Senator Smith-Andrews, Senator Hajdik, and Senator Null volunteered to serve. The vote will take place at the final Business meeting on April 18, 2022. Senate President Luna and Senate Secretary Craven discussed the expectations and duties of these positions.

Other Such Matters

1. Questions/concerns following the most recent Board Meeting (March 10, 2022)?
2. Any other such matters

Senator Null asked about the progress on the possible changes to the faculty evaluation process. It is known that the committee continues to work, but the current status is unknown. It is suggested that we ask the Committee Chairman, Jerry Gannod, to return to a future meeting and update the Senate on the status.

Adjournment

Senator Smith-Andres moved to adjourn the meeting. Senator Airhart seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Approved: April 18, 2022