

Faculty Senate Minutes for April 17, 2015

Chair Julie Isaacson called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Delta Center for Economic Development, Room 201.

Approval of Minutes

Senator Pradeep Mishra moved to approve the minutes of March 20, 2015, and the motion was seconded by Senator Andy Mooneyhan. The motion to approve was unanimous.

Guests

Ms. Jennifer Smith, Associate Vice President for Benefits, ASU System Office

The Senate was pleased to welcome Jennifer Smith, Associate Vice President for Benefits. Ms. Smith was invited to respond to questions that had been submitted to her by Senator Judy Pfriemer, chair of the Employee Benefits Committee.

Ms. Smith's presentation included a comparison of benefits from 2010 to 2015 with references to several improvements in coverage including the implementation of a value formulary prescription drug benefit and coverage for dependent children until age 26. She compared the ASU benefit plan to those of peer institutions, and reported that ASU employee out-of-pocket costs have not changed significantly since 2010.

Senator Pfriemer asked Ms. Smith if it were possible to allow employees an option to pay a higher premium and choose a healthcare provider who may be out-of-network.

Ms. Smith replied they must charge everyone the same premium, and explained the way they differentiate coverage is in plan design (i.e., co-pays and provider networks). She described the "blue fee" for utilizing care outside of our network, explaining that costs are higher when employees go out of state for healthcare services.

Senator Pfriemer asked Ms. Smith if it were possible to provide the Employee Benefits Committee with more feedback than what is currently being provided on what is happening in the plan. Ms. Smith replied that last year the plan paid out \$14.6 million in claims. Ms. Smith reported that benefits are the second largest expense for the university, stating that, for every dollar of salary, the university pays 32 cents for benefits, retirement, fica, workers compensation, long term disability, life insurance, and healthcare coverage.

Ms. Smith reported the implementation of a new Employee Benefits web site located at <http://www.asusystem.edu/offices/employee-benefits/>. She reported the site includes an Excel spreadsheet "Contribution Worksheet" to assist employees in calculating the maximum amount they can contribute to their optional retirement plan.

Senator Pfriemer requested information regarding outbound calls, success rates, and/or managed care for employees in the hospital, stating she had been unable to find any employees who had received such calls. Ms. Smith replied that the system office has

hired a retirement management consultant and switched to an online enrollment for all of our retirement plans to save on costs. She reported that TIAA-CREF had reduced fees and provided a revenue credit if the savings were used to hire a consultant. She reported they had taken steps in the grandfathered plan to control costs and had issued an RFQ for a broker and benefits consultant.

Chair Isaacson asked Ms. Smith for information regarding the “suitcase” plan. Ms. Smith replied that employees may continue to access the national Blue Cross network voluntarily, but will pay a separate deductible for doing so. Ms. Smith added that a Center of Excellence for cancer in another state is considered in network.

Senator Pfriemer asked Ms. Smith for information regarding in-network providers for those employees who live outside the state of Arkansas. Ms. Smith replied that employees are advised to use their home address rather than their ASU address on employment documentation, and that employees who live in Memphis, for example, may go wherever they wish to receive healthcare services. Senator Pfriemer offered that employees living in locations such as West Memphis and Mountain Home are paying more because they are must go to Tennessee and Missouri for services. Senator Pfriemer suggested that we need to look into this situation so that it is fair given that there are deductibles for both in-network and out of network services.

Chair Isaacson noted that the Jonesboro campus functions under the guise of a shared governance process and that the Jonesboro employees would like to know how they can participate more fully in the employee benefits discussions and decision-making processes. Ms. Smith replied that she thinks it might help if she provides information to Lori Wynn early in the year and that she would like to conduct another employee benefits survey to learn what are our specific concerns. Ms. Smith replied there are concerns with increases and our “grandfathered” status and noted that as state funding stays flat, the Board of Trustees indicates they do not want to increase contributions because that will result in an increase in premiums. Senator Pfriemer stated that the Jonesboro campus is unique when compared to the Beebe and Newport campuses. Additionally, Senator Pfriemer suggested that the employee survey needs to come out before changes are made in the Fall, and questioned how the Benefits Committee may be able to get more involved in the process given the short timeframe. Ms. Smith replied that they will hire a consultant over the summer. Senator Pfriemer inquired regard the timing of the impact of these consultants on the decisions to be made early in the Fall, and stated the Employee Benefits Committee has concerns regarding screenings and vaccines that are provided or not provided under the current plan. Ms. Smith replied they are working to provide a fair premium and that a change to an un-grandfathered plan will result in a rate increase.

Chair Isaacson acknowledged Mr. Shane Broadway, Vice President of University Relations, ASU System Office, who accompanied Ms. Smith.

Phillip Jackson, President, Arkansas State University Foundation

Chair Isaacson reported that Mr. Jackson was unable to attend and asked the Senators to review his suggestions that were provided with the agenda. Mr. Jackson will visit with the Senate at a later date to discuss options for investing ASU Faculty Association funds.

Moment of Silence

Chair Isaacson requested a moment of silence to recognize Bonnie Thrasher and Greg Chance, colleagues from the College of Media and Communications.

Bonnie was an instructor of multimedia journalism and faculty advisor to the student newspaper. Greg was the long-time news director at KASU, the public broadcasting service for Arkansas State University.

New Business

Act 226 and ASU-Jonesboro policy to disallow trained and licensed staff and faculty to carry a concealed handgun on this campus

Senator Win Bridges moved to exercise the option to opt-out of Act 226, thus disallowing trained and licensed staff and faculty to carry a concealed handgun on this campus. The motion was seconded by Senator Andy Mooneyhan. In the discussion that followed, comments regarding vote tallies from individual colleges were provided by Senators Richard Segall (College of Business) and Fabricio Medina-Bolivar (College of Science and Mathematics). The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

15SP-05 – Realignment of Academic Colleges

Senator Shivan Haran reported the proposed was submitted for an expedited review. Senator Andy Mooneyhan moved to approve the proposal, and the motion was seconded by Senator Haran. In the discussion that followed, Senator Fabricio Medina-Bolivar provided comments regarding the vote tally from faculty in the College of Science and Mathematics. Senator Donna Caldwell questioned the location and status of University College. Senator John Hall thanked everyone on the Faculty Senate Academic Restructuring Task Force, and Dr. Cooksey and members of the Provost's Academic Restructuring Task Force for their work on this proposal. Chair Isaacson recognized Dr. Jeff Pittman, Chair, Shared Governance Oversight Committee, for his leadership. The Chair called the vote and the Senate responded all in favor with two abstentions.

Committee Reports

IDEA Pilot Results

Senator John Hall, Chair of the IDEA task force, reported on the activities of this committee comprised of Senators Brenda Anderson (Nursing and Health Professions), Richard Segall (Business), and Dr. Ruth Owens, Associate Professor Spanish and ITTC Faculty Fellow. The committee conducted two pilot tests of the IDEA student evaluation

instrument and suggested it has merit and that it overcomes some of the current limitations of the student evaluation process currently in use. The committee reported evidence of the reliability and validity of instrument and offered comments on how the electronic format of the IDEA system provides a higher survey response rate.

Senator Warren Johnson thanked Dr. Owens for her work with the committee and suggested there are problems with the IDEA system relating to the types of questions it provides, the lack of a comment feature, and issues relating to connectivity on mobile devices.

A motion was made by Senator Brenda Anderson to propose that the university further investigate the IDEA system. Dr. Owens commented the cost for full adoption is approximately \$50,000. Senator Donna Caldwell seconded the motion. The Chair called the vote and the Senate responded all in favor with one abstention.

Chair's report

Faculty Association President-Elect Vote

Chair Isaacson reported the vote will open at midnight, April 22 and remain open until midnight, April 24. CIO Mr. Henry Torres has assured Chair Isaacson that election results will be ready for announcement on Monday, April 27.

Board of Trustees Reception on May 8

Chair Isaacson reported the reception is likely to occur from 4:00 to 6:00 pm, following the meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Intellectual Property / Student Notes

Chair Isaacson reported meeting with Dr. Brian Rogers, Intellectual Property & Technology Transfer, regarding web sites that reimburse students for posting course notes. She reports that Dr. Rogers was cautious to tell us we have entered a new era and that most existing intellectual property laws were written well before we had social media and various options for posting information online. He reported the consideration of discernment regarding verbatim transcription of course content and students' posting instructor presentations online versus students paraphrasing general knowledge typically available in textbooks. Senator Medina-Bolivar reported is waiting for the university to rewrite the intellectual property policy and that he followed up on this issue with Dr. Andy Sustich who clarified the IP policy and confirmed that materials created by faculty for their classes are owned by faculty, and that the university does not have ownership unless the author was hired to develop specific course materials. Senator Medina-Bolivar reported he continues to work on issues relating to patent issues, stating that recent changes in management of the Delta Center are significant given that persons who were helping in these efforts are no longer here, and this is likely to impact economic development and technology transfer and licensing efforts.

COEBS Request Regarding White Paper and Accreditation

Chair Isaacson reported she met with the Provost who stated she had reached out to Dr. Joanna Grymes for names of potential consultants who may be able to help with accreditation issues. In the discussion that followed, Senators Hall and Holifield commented on concerns relating to the timeline of accreditation and the need for administrative support for this process.

Faculty Senate Committee Appointments

Chair Isaacson informed the Senate she will issue a call for committees very soon, within the next week.

ASU Shopping Center / Convention Center

Chair Isaacson reported receiving a letter from Dr. Scott Darwin regarding ASU's proposed plan to sell or lease acreage on Johnson Avenue and the potential opportunities of this venture to serve the university in its role as a teaching institution and the community in a role to provide student scholarships.

Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Survey

Chair Isaacson asked the Senators to participate in the Chamber's online survey available at www.surveymonkey.com/s/jonesborostrategy.

Senate Finance Committee

Chair Isaacson received a report from Senate Finance Committee chair Senator Bill Rowe stating the committee will not have a budget report for this year.

Contract Parking

Chair Isaacson reported receiving many comments by email regarding changes in parking fees. In the discussion that followed, Dr. John Pratt reported that it was announced in Executive Council that several parking lots will be converted to contract parking for faculty use. Chair Isaacson reported this is the first increase in contract parking fees since its inception. Senator Hall asked if this is an issue of shared governance and Dr. Jeff Pittman reported that given the Deans Council proposal to move Parking Services from Student Affairs to financial administration, SGOC decided this restructuring was not an issued for shared governance. Senator John Hall moved that the Senate develop a proposal claiming a possible violation of shared governance by Parking Services as a result of increasing the contract parking rate without input from concerned constituencies; the motion was seconded by Senator Judy Pfriemer. The motion carried with two abstentions.

Travel Reimbursement

Chair Isaacson reported on Bill Rowe's request that Senate discuss travel reimbursement practices, specifically that reimbursements are not provided uniformly on campus but vary by college according to each dean's preference, and how this practice may impact tenure track faculty. Given Senator Rowe's absence, Senator Holifield reports that

Senator Rowe had planned to propose a written memo to the Provost requesting that faculty travel expenses be reimbursed (1) according to the practice afforded to administrators and (2) uniformly across all colleges. Chair Isaacson suggested that she could email the Senators the existing travel policy and the memo requesting uniform reimbursement, and that Senators could vote electronically on whether to submit the memo to the Provost. Senator John Hall moved to approve the proposal and Senator Judy Pfriemer seconded the motion. The motion to approve was unanimous.

Senator John Hall moved to adjourn. Senator Shivan Haran seconded the motion.

April 17, 2015

Senators in Attendance:

Association Officers:

Chair Julie Isaacson

Agriculture (1)

Greg Phillips

Business (3)

Sam Pae

Richard Segall

Jollean Sinclaire

Education & Behavioral Science(6)

John Beineke

Julie Grady

John Hall

Mitch Holifield

Ryan Kelly

Andy Mooneyhan

Engineering (1)

Shivan Haran

Fine Arts (3)

Claire Abernathy

Humanities & Social Sciences (5)

Win Bridges

Warren Johnson

Cherisse Jones-Branch

Library & Information Resources (1)

Wendy Crist

Media & Communications (2)

Pradeep Mishra

Military Science (1)

Nursing & Health Professions (6)

Brenda Anderson

Rejoice Addae

Donna Caldwell

Larry Morton

Judy Pfriemer

Science & Mathematics (4)

Bruce Johnson

Fabricio Medina-Bolivar

Suzanne Melescue

University College (1)

Absentees:

Proxies:

Kyle Chandler

Bill Rowe

Hans Hacker

Gretchen Hill

Larz Roberts

Cecil Clark

Debbie Shelton

Jeff Jenness

Nikeshia Nesbitt