

## Faculty Senate Minutes

3:00 p.m., March 4, 2016

Delta Center 201

**In Attendance:** Greg Phillips, Julie Isaacson, Shivan Haran, Philip Tew, John Beineke, Julie Grady (also proxy for Ryan Kelly), Mitch Holifield, Loretta McGregor, Claire Abernathy, Nikesha Nesbitt, Mary Donaghy, Cherisse Jones-Branch, Warren Johnson, April Sheppard, Pradeep Mishra, Brinda McKinney (also proxy for Donna Caldwell), Larry Morton, Bob Bennett, Bruce Johnson, Fabricio Medina-Bolivar, Suzanne Melescue, Farhad Moeni proxy for Richard Segall.

**Absent:** Claudia Benavides, Sam Pae, Kyle Chandler, Bill Rowe, Win Bridges, Larz Roberts, Michael Fellure, Rejoice Addae, Debbie Shelton, Amber Wooten, Jeff Jenness.

Meeting called to order by President Phillips at 3:01 p.m.

Approval of minutes of February 19, 2016 with the following amendments:

- Page 2, under New Business, first paragraph: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee should be *Undergraduate Admissions Appeals Committee*
- Page 3, top of the page: Dr. McDaniel is a member of the Undergraduate Enrollment and Academic Policy Committee
- Page 1: misspelling of Fabricio Medina-Bolivar's name
- Page 2: under New Business, first paragraph: change wording to indicate that students are not only transferring to the University but also being admitted
- Page 3, end of paragraph five: Admissions Standards Committee should be *Undergraduate Enrollment and Appeals Committee*

Motion to approve as amended: Loretta McGregor; Seconded by: Fabricio Medina-Bolivar: 19 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions.

### **Old Business:**

#### SGOC Proposal 16 SP 01, Admission by Exceptional Talent revision

Dr. Medina-Bolivar asked if the table provided applies only to student athletes? President Phillips responded that yes, he believed that was correct. Dr. McDaniel confirmed, yes, it is only student athletes because that is what the Senate asked about last time, so she only looked at numbers for student athletes.

Bob Bennett made a motion to decline acceptance of this proposal. Brinda McKinney seconded the motion. President Phillips asked Dr. Bennett if he would care to share why he was in favor of declining the motion. Dr. Bennett said he would suggest that the policy is premature and that there is nothing wrong with the system that is already in place, other than the fact that for one reason or another it is not functioning. He suggested it would be better to get the system functioning properly, than to layer something else on top of it. The proposed policy would take the issue out of the shared governance process.

President Phillips added that he has heard repeatedly that the faculty are not really in favor of having two separate admissions procedures, one for student athletes and one for non-student athletes.

Dr. McGregor shared that she had spoken with her department as well and they echoed these sentiments. She went on to say they do not see a reason to support a second system as we already have a system in effect and this new system would only provide assistance to student athletes. She was asked by her constituents not to support this proposal.

President Phillips said Donna Caldwell had emailed him and volunteered to serve on the committee in order to help assure that the original committee set up to review applications of this type would function appropriately. She is a 12-month employee. It seems like we should try to make the shared governance committee work by providing leadership as opposed to trying to create another procedure. With your permission I would like to include these comments along with our decision regarding this proposal.

Julie Isaacson suggested that the eligibility for the committee be amended so that a 12-month contract was required and that would ensure committee members were present in the summer to address these students. Dr. McGregor responded that she felt this was outside the purview of the Senate and that we should not limit the committee members in such a way because it would take a lot of faculty out of the running, but to make sure the members understand they will need to be involved in the summer. President Phillips suggested that eligibility guidelines for members serving on the committee and their agreement and willingness to serve under those conditions could get us a functioning committee. Dr. McGregor asked that we call for the question, please.

The motion was to decline the proposal; 17 were in favor, 2 against, and 2 abstentions. President Phillips indicated that he would fashion a set of comments to be sent back with the response.

#### AOS Faculty Support Memo 2-19-16 and Response – Greg Phillips

President Phillips reminded the Senate that a memo was received on February 19<sup>th</sup> from AOS proposing changes to faculty support structure for online classes. Comments were sent out via email. He invited Dr. Haran to speak to this as he had requested time to do so. Dr. Haran said he had been out of the country and had not had a chance to look at the responses that had been emailed so he would like to wait until he had a chance to review these before addressing the Senate.

President Phillips asked if there were other comments or thoughts from the Senate and shared that he had received both positive and negative feedback regarding this matter. At this point Dr. Holifield asked if he could address the Senate. He shared that he was part of the Department of Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education and they are one of if not the major consumer of AOS services. He said he would like to add the following comments to the responses that were already circulating.

“The stance of faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education (ELCSE) regarding the support strategies

is clearly communicated in today's Senate packet. The gist of the department's response is that faculty continue to want the same service from A-State Online Services (AOS) that they were receiving prior to this spring semester and believe that the graduate assistants and faculty mentor will be ineffective and add unnecessary costs. In other words, we do not support more spending to resolve problems that are consequences of the AOS director's 2015-2016 edicts. There is no need to elaborate further in regard to this response.

"This presentation to the Senate and to the University at large today are the unanimous perspectives of the ELCSE faculty regarding the Director of AOS. During the past seven months, this group has, until today, avoided publicly airing their collective perceptions. But after months of frustration in seeking relief from the director's directives and management style, we wish to voice our consternation.

"It is the faculty's perception that the director is utilizing the same Theory X management/leadership style that he employed during the two years that he was dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Science. Seemingly, he continues to value being in control more so than serving, being directive more so than being collaborative, and relying on intimidation more so than on collegiality. He still appears to sidestep the spirit and intent of shared governance as noted in the A-State Faculty Handbook. Engaging in initial and ongoing collegial collaboration with faculty could have yielded a crop of wheat rather than the tares that have sprouted from his Theory X directive approach. In other words, the current negative situation could possibly have been avoided had the director employed a service leadership model and avoided intruding into academic and departmental matters. Forming an advisory committee just prior to the Provost's release of her November 3rd Senate memo and shaking his head no while attending one two-hour February listening session appear to be too-little-too-late, after-the-fact damage-control efforts and do not a collegial collaborative problem-solver make.

"Having experienced the director as a dean for two years, the faculty are incredulous as to why the Provost, who knows the history of the director's removal as dean and the faculty's feelings regarding his tenure as dean, would appoint him to any position in which he can exert any influence over our professional work and job satisfaction. Therefore, any strategy would be appreciated that (1) effectively and efficiently supports faculty and (2) that helps them to temper their perception that the director is using his position to avenge his removal as the Dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Science."

Dr. Holifield stopped reading his comments and inserted additional information. He showed the memo delivered by interim dean Gina Hogue this past August and indicated that it was the first communication they had with the director since his appointment. No other college or department received the memo, and it

was included in the Senate packet at today's meeting. He asked the Senate to notice the following:

The first paragraph talks about the reduction of support and a 16-week series of training sessions. Below that there are three directives he pointed out; he suggested that upon hearing the word "avenge" some might ask if the department is paranoid or overreacting and indicated that they are not: these directives are only in reference to his department. They refer to issues which we aired and settled while he was dean and now they are being brought back and he is saying they will do it this particular way, which is the way he wanted it done when he was dean. Now that he is director of AOS he is making that happen.

Dr. Holifield referred to Dr. Tew's emails asking whether these changes in support would affect courses that are not supported through AOS and the director responded, "in regards to 'normal' online classes they will receive the same quality and type of support they have received in the past." He said those who work with AOS courses are not getting the same support they have received and asked why AOS courses would not receive the same support they've always received and that they want? He reiterated that they just want what they had and went on to say these are only two examples of the director of AOS denying the service they have normally received but saying other groups can continue to have the same support they have received. He also pointed out that in the memo there is no rationale for what they are doing. The question continues to arise as to why we are being directed to do these things.

Dr. Holifield continued by saying in a memo to Dr. Tew the director used the phrase "normal courses" so his courses must not be "normal." Dr. Tew stopped Dr. Holifield to say that the use of "normal courses" was his language when he addressed the director with his questions and that it was being repeated back to him. Dr. Holifield thanked him for the clarification. He then continued:

"Adding to this incredulity is what seems to the faculty to be a disconnect between what faculty perceive to be support assurances from the Provost and the director's actual implementation of those assurances. For example, the Provost's November 3, 2015 memo to this body assured that the reorganization of A-State Online Faculty Support resources will provide 'more dedicated support for faculty desiring greater assistance with their courses and allows those faculty seeking more independence the opportunity to work at their own pace or be self-sufficient.' Nevertheless, in a January 25<sup>th</sup> email from the director's assistant Chris Salehi states, 'The role as the instructor of the course now is to build, copy, update, manage, etc. the content of your courses.' Faculty agree that content (i.e. what is taught in a course) should remain under their control and that they are indeed responsible to use technology for creating, updating, and managing this content. However, copying and grooming a course, for example, are not parts of course content. These are strictly technological and clerical tasks.

"This January email comes after the Provost's November 3, 2015 memo to the Senate and her November 8, 2015 email answer to Dr. John Beineke's question: 'Does your memo to the Faculty Senate make all content

in the (August and Dauer) memos null and void?' Dr. Cooksey answered, 'Yes.' An important question to ponder follows: Why would Chris Salehi send a memo that appears to be in direct conflict with Dr. Cooksey's memo and email?

"Mixed signals such as these continue to exacerbate the continual ambiguous dance around the solutions to the problems initiated in the director's August memo and the Dauer memo.

"The evolution of online education at A-state is magnifying the interdependency of curriculum, instruction, and technology. Making changes in one area often requires changes in the other areas. The three must be in sync and complementary in order to effectively serve students. In the current situation at A-State, technology, an instructional tool, is 'a tail wagging the dog.' Faculty primacy in regard to curriculum and instruction is being negatively affected by the directives of an administrator who has yet to identify and to discuss with faculty the problems that initially he was supposedly trying to solve.

"Publicly today, the ELSCE faculty respectfully asks Dr. Cooksey to resolve this seven-month ordeal by (1) unequivocally reinstating the faculty support provided prior to the spring 2016 semester and by (2) impressing upon the AOS director the necessity of being collegial and collaborative before rather than after the fact. The faculty hopes that the Provost and the director will accept these two solutions as olive branches that could set all of us on a path of restoring morale and a positive work environment."

When Dr. Holifield finished, President Phillips asked if there was any one else who wished to speak to this issue. Dr. Beineke said he went to a listening session about a month ago and when he walked in was given a handout that had "concerns" on one side and "solutions" on the other before anyone had even had a chance to say anything or begin a conversation. He felt these "solutions" actually created more problems. He explained that he went to meet with Dr. Cooksey one-on-one and she was very gracious, friendly, and open. She explained that there was administrative confusion between what AOS and ITTC wanted to do and that there had been some personnel issues. She asked him what he wanted to which he replied he just wanted the same medium support Henry Torres spoke about when they described the various levels of support and she agreed to that. He went on to express that this bothered him because he felt all of his colleagues should get the same treatment he was receiving.

Dr. Beineke indicated that he gave a document to Dr. Cooksey that his department had worked on and voted unanimously to send to her. He indicated strongly that he didn't want this to be a conversation or an email just between himself and Dr. Cooksey; he said it is an issue he is part of, but it isn't just his issue. When they did not hear back from her, Dr. Beineke asked his chair to find out about the status of the document. Dr. Cooksey responded that the document didn't really reflect what has been going on with AOS. He said the problem is that Dr. Cooksey is saying one thing and the directors are saying something else. The simple solution is to give faculty the same "normal" support they have had.

Dr. Beineke went on to say this was also personal. He explained that his course is part of the second seven weeks and it was prepared and ready last October. In December he went over and sat with a staff member for an hour or so and did all of the shells/etc. and he was ready for the course to go. There are 11 adjuncts and 315 students involved in this course that has been held up because new courses are under review for 5-6 weeks while he has been attempting to find out the status of this course. They were able to get the course sorted out and up and running but when Dr. Beineke received his course review it was 16 pages long.

A Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> memo from Dr. Cooksey said there were going to be 4 new positions created. To the best of his ability Dr. Beineke indicated he had seen 1 job listed. He said from what he was told yesterday there have been no new hires and he hopes that pledge will be kept.

He went on to say the 16-page review he got from a marketing person talked about content in his course; course organization, objectives, syllabus, course presentations, assessment design.... He said he would gladly work with my chair/dean to improve his course but this really bothered him.

Dr. Haran spoke up and said he had a couple of comments. He said from his observations over the last several months there seems to be some deeply rooted animosity from the ELCSE department for some reason he was unaware of and that it appeared to be a reoccurring issue. He expressed that he felt it has been dragging on and on. He went on to say that in two different meetings that have been held, none of the ELCSE reps have raised any questions or doubts, while other groups have been having conversations and debates. He said his feeling is that all of this is unnecessarily brought to the senate floor again and again when several of these things can be resolved by meeting with the AOS Advisory Committee, which is the reason it was formed.

Dr. Haran said that when he found out his name wasn't on the agenda he decided to postpone his response because he expected the schedule/agenda to be honored. He continued that all of the animosity building up seems to be ongoing and suggested that we focus on solving it. He offered to set up a meeting just for these individuals if they have issues and asked that they please email him because there was no point to continue going on about these matters in this time and place.

Dr. Holifield responded by saying the reason this is going on is because in seven months it has not been resolved through these private meetings, public meetings, the senate meetings, etc. He felt it should be easily solved but for some reason it hasn't been solved.

Dr. Haran asked Dr. Holifield to please give him some dates and said they would discuss these issues and try to sort it out as soon as possible. He expressed his offense at the kind of language used and reiterated the desire to sort things out and solve problems, rather than pointing fingers. He said this is the reason the committee was initially formed and how he felt they were being sidestepped.

Dr. Holifield responded by saying there was no intent to sidestep the committee but simply to bring attention to what their department felt was a prime reason for the situation we are in. He continued that he was simply relating to this body the perception the faculty in his department have and that it has been

troubling and an issue for a long time. He went on to say that he finished his proposal today with that solution; they want the same support they had prior to this spring and a director that will be collegial. Dr. Haran asked why other colleges have not complained about the collegiality or the support being provided and why the ELCSE seems to have these problems.

Dr. Beineke said he was offended because they are asking for the same support they had in the past. He shared that at one point during the listening session he expressed that he didn't know how to do something and the comment was made indicating he was the only professor of 200+ that didn't know how to do that particular thing. He found this highly offensive and out of line. He responded that it really bothered him when Dr. Haran indicated they haven't made any suggestions, and that all he could do was look at the evidence.

Dr. Haran responded by saying again that he wants to resolve this and assured the Senate and Dr. Beineke that he would personally look in to it. He asked that until then everyone kindly bear with him and not continue to bring this matter up. He shared his understanding that they should soon be fully staffed and that would mean there were more people to help. He said there are constraints on both sides, but that he hoped we could get a solution that would please everyone. Dr. Haran went on to say that he is fairly new to this, it was only his second meeting, and he has questions as well, but it is important for everyone to play with a level head in order to resolve the issue.

Judy Grady said she had been teaching under a lack of leadership in education and didn't need to know what was happening with them, there was no doubt in her mind it is being handled the same way it was in her department. She indicated their department is still reeling from the lack of leadership and said she simply trusted them. She went on to say when you have a class of 400 there isn't time; things must be done immediately; courses must be fixed – not 10 months later. She gave her full support to any action that resolved this situation.

Loretta McGregor said she also agreed with her colleagues and could see their problem, but that yelling back and forth in the Senate was not being productive; storming out when you don't get your way is not productive. She said the two issues have become intertwined: a personal issue and conflict with concern about the support being provided. She did not know how to separate those, but begged the Senate President to get involved personally and find a solution so we would no longer have the bickering. She also moved to close discussion on this matter for today. April Sheppard seconded the motion. President Phillips asked what we would have him do and what his response should be, to which Dr. McGregor said she wasn't sure if others should also be involved, but if one person is saying they have a problem, then there is a problem that needs to be addressed. She went on to say she didn't know if there is a solution, but this is not one; everyone is uncomfortable and unhappy and no one wants to do this every other Friday. She said we want to serve, we want something to happen, we want to be a positive source for faculty, we want to have open dialogue, we want it to be a collegial environment, and that isn't happening.

President Phillips called for the question. 17 in favor, none against, none abstained. He went on to say he would talk to the administration about this but didn't believe he could say anything new.

### **New Business:**

#### SGOC SP 02, System Revisions to Staff Handbook – Lori Winn

A new proposal entered the system this week and President Phillips sent the version he had out via email; he also included it in the packet. This is regarding a *system* policy change, not ASU-J policy change. President Phillips said he saw one change recognizing that more time is needed to accomplish a task, while two other changes are required by law. He introduced Lori Winn who has been coordinating this proposal and expressed the Senate's appreciation to her for being here to explain this to us.

Lori Winn said the first page asks for clarification in the language regarding who should be a mandatory reporter and additional clarification on conducting an investigation. The second page asks for time extension for title 9 investigations. Federal law allows 60 days, we initially established 20 days, but due to the extent of the investigations and how they can go it takes quite a bit to ensure you are giving a fair review. As a result they are asking for an extension of 45 days to ensure they can meet with all individuals and respond accordingly. The third page includes new language required under Arkansas law. On the fourth page both the existing and proposed language are highlighted. This includes a medical amnesty policy hoping to encourage students to come forward rather than being penalized should they be in violation of the university policy. She shared that this is very common on other university campuses.

President Phillips added that during the SGOC review of this proposal this week as a committee they agreed this wasn't really the kind of proposal that we need to vote up or down; the law is mandating it. We are welcome to provide review, comments, etc. if there are things that don't make sense to us. Dr. McDaniel said President Phillips was correct and this new information would update what is currently there. He also said it gave him pause that the faculty handbook would be amended and yet it wasn't really a handbook issue, which made him wonder if it should be taken out and placed into a system employee handbook.

Lori Winn said, with regard to the faculty handbook, there are a lot of things that are out of date and need to be amended. She said she understood there is currently a discussion about whether some of these things should be removed and indicated that if that is the direction the faculty want to go, she looked forward to helping us with it and that if not, it needed significant work. Dr. McDaniel volunteered to work on it and Lori said she would be happy to go through it with him.

President Phillips welcomed feedback at the next meeting and said it would be communicated back to the system.

#### Removal of Faculty Senate Bylaws from Faculty Handbook – Greg Phillips

At our last meeting Dr. Mike McDaniel posed the question regarding whether we want to remove the senate bylaws from the faculty handbook. Currently, in

order for us to amend our association bylaws it takes approval through the entire shared governance process and that seems quite cumbersome. President Phillips went on to state his support for the proposal. He said it might be something we want to first have removed officially and that would put it back in the Faculty Association's hands and it would be up to us if we want to change anything. He went on to say he would raise this issue as old business at our next meeting and we would decide whether we want to put it on the ballot next fall for the Faculty Association as a whole to weigh in on. President Phillips expressed his feeling that this seemed the most appropriate way to deal with the matter. He invited anyone who had good rationale for *not* removing the bylaws from the handbook to share reasons it should be left in.

Dr. McGregor said based on our previous conversation and now this recommendation regarding the bylaws that maybe it is time to review the entire faculty handbook and make recommendations regarding what should be in the Faculty Handbook, what should be in the Faculty Association bylaws, and what should be in the Employee Handbook. President Phillips asked if she was a member of the Faculty Handbook Committee to which she responded no.

President Phillips said he heard very similar comments from the Faculty Handbook Committee recently. Dr. McDaniel suggested that there will be other things as well that might have a more appropriate home in a different repository and said he was sure the committee would appreciate having more input from the faculty at large as to what is appropriate to stay in and what should go to another place that is more appropriate.

President Phillips asked if there were any new issues that should be brought forth. At 4:19 Cherisse Jones-Branch made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Dr. McGregor seconded. The meeting came to a close by acclamation at 4:19.

Minutes submitted by Claire Abernathy, acting secretary of the Faculty Senate.