

**ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
September 16, 2022  
HSS 1028**

**Attendees:** Sudeepa Bhattacharyya, Andrea Brown, Donna Caldwell, Ibrahim Duyar, Gary Edwards, Addie Fleming, Karen Graham, Bert Greenwalt, Matt Harmon, John Hershberger, Katie Hill, Gabriel Horowitz, Zahid Hossain, Cheryl Knight, Veena Kulkarni, Scott Mangon, William Maynard, Suzanne Melescue, Carlitta Moore, Nikesha Nesbitt, Tim Oliver, Arianne Pait, Jake Qualls, Claude Rector, Robert Robinette, Ed Salo, Sarah Scott, Eric Scudamore, Richard Segall, Rollin Tusalem, Kim Vickery, Robert Williams

**Proxy Attendees:** Sandra Combs for Pradeep Mishra, Jessica Curtis for Kris Biondollilo, Jeff McLaughlin for DayDay Robinson

**Absentees:** Sudeepa Bhattacharyya, Bert Greenwalt, Nikesha Nesbitt, Arianne Pait, J. Morgan Weatherly

**Meeting Called to Order:** Ed Salo established a quorum. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Ed Salo.

**Order of the Day:** Motion made to approve the order of the day by Andrea Brown, Carlitta Moore seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion made to approve the September 2, 2022 minutes with the correction of Marika Kyriakos as proxy Tim Oliver by Matt Harmon, Andrea Brown seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Todd Shields  
*Chancellor* ([chancellor@astate.edu](mailto:chancellor@astate.edu))

Dr. Shield gave a campus overview and wanted to highlight a few areas he is working on: pay inequities, salary increases, differences across colleges, and fundraising strategies. He wished to focus on three things: communication, finances, and enrollment:

- 1) Communication: Discussion among different groups, but no collective discussion. Invited cabinet. Wants to improve communication with faculty senate. Focusing on different problems—deep dive and make sure everyone in the cabinet understands. Met one-on-one with Deans. Plans to meet with deans as a group and with the cabinet. Make sure we are all on the same page.
  - a. Interest and desire for everyone to be on the same page. Open to suggestions. Communication is a difficult thing, especially with so many people. Trying to get the cabinet to communicate what they are doing with each other; Deans talking to Deans; Chairs. Don't want an "us vs. them" culture. Create an "us" culture.
    - i. Structural changes with communication- Deans and Chairs meeting with cabinet; making these meetings happen. Not sure Chancellor met regularly with Deans. Coming to the faculty senate. Open to "state of the union" address if faculty wish.

- 2) Finances: Confusion about finances. Russ spoke about it at Fall Faculty Conference.
  - a. We are in a good place--We have revenue and reserves, and have had raises. Lots of people would like to be us. Last 3 years in a row, spent more than we made; a hole was created; we filled the hole with cuts and one-time reserves, along with revenue from online education. Can't stay on this path. How long can we keep this up?—not long. Think through how to generate revenue in different areas. Not just survive, but thrive. Want permanent funding to support permanent positions (faculty).
    - i. Online going up, campus going down—question about this.
      1. Want to grow everywhere we can. Don't want to stop on-campus growth. Will discuss this with enrollment.
- 3) Enrollment: Quick Wins-great not to be down, but up.
  - a. Very diversified portfolio—different revenue sources (not all eggs in one basket so to speak). Have heard that people worry about online competing with on-campus—demographics are so different and don't believe they are competing. The first year online average age is 27; the average overall is 33. Few cases where 19-year-olds are taking online-exists, but rare. If they do start to compete, we are in trouble. Don't want to cannibalize ourselves. Do want more students on campus-they pay for housing, meal plans, books, spend money in town, etc. Make more money from the student on campus. Have also heard concerns about partnerships with other institutions (2-year institutions, Querétaro, Mexico). No money that we put down for campus in Mexico. Nearly 1,000 students there now; don't have a penny there; time, flights (sponsored). College in Mexico the University of Mexico is free; our campus is a unique-elite school; with dual degree opportunities; on campus residential (atypical in South America)- from a dedicated or wealthy family. The students are brilliant. Diversifying with no cost; nothing was taken from A-State to make that happen.
    - i. Carlitta asked about on-campus bringing more revenue as she sees more advertising for online programs. She states that this could be from social media/internet algorithms.
      1. Dr. Shields asked- What's our argument to bring students here? Online is marketing heavily. Have to learn to talk to students in their vocabulary and mediums. "Medium is the Message". These students get their news from TikTok. Generated based on likes. Don't read a newspaper or listen to the radio. Listen to Spotify or iTunes. No TV-stream it all. How do we advertise? Doesn't work for those < 35. Potential to work with student ambassadors to recruit—targeted marketing approach.
      2. Higher education—given that we are public good. If you wanted to change your lot in life—you went to higher education. Opened doors and opportunities. Public pushback—tuition going up. Less federal and state funding (around 40%) will probably drop. Limit what people will pay to where they will still believe it is worth it. Long-term gap (between those with a college education and those without)-is greater than ever—higher majors—college-educated people. Exceptions do exist, but higher education is still the way to

- improve life—live long, more satisfied with life, more productive member of society. We are not that great at marketing ourselves.
3. Online market by Academic Partnerships (AP); Undergraduate programs had not been marketing this way--Changing this year; marketing firm to market on campus (Thilla). A marketing campaign to launch this fall. Doing focused research. 1 entity- the agency we are using is Academic Partnerships. What's the value proposition? Doing research to sell us compared to other schools to students. There are 7 different experiments that are running now.
  4. Enrollment aspect-how do we make sure the quantity/quality is not a trade-off? Retention?
    - a. 3 things we want to do
      - i. 1) heat map of AR and edges of surrounding state; principals, teachers, counselors- grad from A-State.—more than anywhere else. Erica to talk to alumni—look at them as an army of recruiters; dinners with these people; competitions with schools; huge leverage and advantage that we have. Need to activate this army of recruiters. Telling students and colleagues! If you have ideas, we are open.
        1. Idea: hosting an academic competition-quiz bowl to get students and alumni back on campus; Thilla mentioned summer camps as well. Good yield if they come to campus.
      - ii. 2) Student Success- 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup>-year retention, low as 70, high as 77; good, but don't want to stop. Losing students is a lose/lose situation. Students lack conflict management skills (COVID, living in dorms, etc). Commended those who did ACUE training—shown to decrease DFW rates. Students learn differently. We must adapt. The 6-year graduate rate is only about 50%. Want to know why someone leaves when they only have a year left (juniors/seniors)-lose/lose situation. Need support systems in place to help them succeed. Don't believe we know why these students are leaving.
        1. The number for the traditional program. What is the graduation rate from AOS? Hard to determine; Transfer from on-campus to online does not hurt us and is rare—still an A-State grad.
        2. Andrea asked about strategies to increase student success. Dr. Shields says he honestly doesn't know yet. Who are these kids? What's happening? Believe 1<sup>st</sup> summer is a

big hurdle according to literature; not sure why this is happening. Believe this is a unique situation.

- a. Could it be how they learn? Could be. Job offers and leaving? Mom and dad need them home to help make money for the family?
  - b. Need to look into transfer students and transferring degrees
  - c. Plenty of students, but not taking as many courses: do we appeal to part-time students? More high schools offering concurrent credit; first day and already a sophomore. Parents love; educators hate. Did they get the same prep as if they take on campus? 35/40 hours of credit when coming to campus.
  - d. When students leave, it is hard to determine why. Can we look at departments with students with high graduation rates and determine why do they have such a high success rate? Before students can withdraw we could require an exit interview.
  - e. Unbundling of the degree—students taking credits at other places even while here on campus. Often cheaper and easier.
- iii. 3) Dr. Shields discuss that admission requirements changed a few years ago. This past year 224 students who received rejection letters, over 200 would have been admitted to the University of Arkansas, over 150 to Ole Miss, and over 100 would have been admitted to UCA; competitive disadvantage with admission requirements. Before the change, 500 that new standard would have knocked out. How many didn't even apply? If rejected, got to have 3 references to reapply. Not an intended consequence. Need a trial to test something different as seniors will begin applying this fall for next year.
1. Thilla- 3.0, ACT 19 or above, or top 20; other schools have at least 2 pathways (test optional OR this-or-this); conditional

admission that is much easier to apply, but must have support for students to succeed.

2. We are increasing; in categories, we want to be. Dr. Shields would like support on a trial of a change in admission standards. Will we be able to support this? He thinks we will.
3. Out-of-state students? Contiguous states get in-state rate; value/proposition—think it is lots of opportunities exist, but not too large; Thilla stated we do have recruiters in other areas/states
  - a. Tim Oliver had three questions:
    - i. Student demographics AOS vs traditional; financials are different. Might help to know what the difference is. How many AOS students do we have to make up an on-campus student? Not a trade-off. Would like to know the financial implications. Student online vs f-2-f. Reach people who reach a ceiling of careers. What's the difference in revenue between these 2 groups of students?
    - ii. Enrollment- census data 11 day of enrollment and year-to-date data—can the faculty senate see that? Yes—this will be sent.
    - iii. Admission standards-just changed 2 years ago—don't seem to have a clear identity in that regard; undergrad scholarship has changed the last 4 years—confusion for school counselors was unsure what students would get by coming to A-State. Doing the little things to connect with students. Lack of a consistent message.
  - b. Additional info; ACT/SAT is not a good predictor. GPA important.

- Increased standards before to increase grad rate
- c. Want to change to something like UCA and Old Miss; must go to SGOC
- d. Andrea mentioned increased communication between admissions, registrar, advising, etc.; issues with adding dropping and no one there. Dr. Shields plans to work on this.

**Old Business:**

*Committee Reports:* N/A.

*Report from questions about the proposed sale of property:* see the email that Ed sent on 9/15/22. Attached at end of the meeting minutes.

**New Business:**

*Appointment of Committees--*Committee list from Ed (see below):

- **Faculty Senate Ad hoc Committee on Retention of Faculty**
  - Kristin D. Biondolillo <kdbiondo@astate.edu> (Senator-- Chair [Psychology])
  - Dominique Hallett <dhallett@astate.edu> (Library)
  - Shelley Gipson [sgipson@astate.edu](mailto:sgipson@astate.edu) (Art)
  - Kellie Buford ([Kbuford@astate.edu](mailto:Kbuford@astate.edu)) (History)
  - Andrew Gadberry [agadberry@astate.edu](mailto:agadberry@astate.edu) (English)
  - Amanda Mohler [amohler@astate.edu](mailto:amohler@astate.edu) (Nursing)
  - Paul A. Finnicum [pfinnicu@astate.edu](mailto:pfinnicu@astate.edu) (HPSS)
  - Veena Kulkarni [vkulkarni@astate.edu](mailto:vkulkarni@astate.edu) (CSG)
- **Faculty Senate Ad hoc Committee on Multi-disciplinary teaching**
  - John Hershberger <jhershberger@astate.edu> (Senator – Chair [Chemistry])
  - Tracy Farmer <TFARMER@astate.edu> (library)
  - Sarah Scott <sscott@astate.edu> (Senator-Communications)
  - Susan Whiteland [swhiteland@astate.edu](mailto:swhiteland@astate.edu) (Art Education)
  - Joanna Grymes [grymesj@astate.edu](mailto:grymesj@astate.edu) (Teacher Education)
  - Brinda LeGrand [bmckinney@astate.edu](mailto:bmckinney@astate.edu) (Nursing)
  - Andrew Gadberry <agadberry@astate.edu> (English)
  - Bilinda Norman <[bnorman@astate.edu](mailto:bnorman@astate.edu)> (Nursing)
  - Ross Carroll <[bcarroll@astate.edu](mailto:bcarroll@astate.edu)> (Physics)
  - Cristy Phillips [cphillips@astate.edu](mailto:cphillips@astate.edu) (Physical Therapy)

*Committee Letters-* Ed stated that committee letters have gone out, but he needs one person for Academic Hearings from the College of Agriculture (must be tenured).

**Other Business:**

*Open Forum*-There was a question about MWF class cut due to change in the length of the semester. Will McLean that this happened before he started his new role; set up for 4-day finals week—not conducive for finals schedule, classrooms, etc. Will stated he had to make an executive decision; not permanent and has been fixed moving forward.

Ed Salo adjourned the meeting at 4:45 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm in HSS 1028.

Additional questions and follow-up on the possible land sale

Edward Salo <esalo@astate.edu>

Thu 9/15/2022 2:55 PM

To: Sudeepa Bhattacharyya <sbhattacharyya@astate.edu>; John Hershberger <jhershberger@astate.edu>; Scott Mangan <smangan@astate.edu>; Suzanne Melescue <scmelescue@astate.edu>; Andrea Brown <anbrown@astate.edu>; Addie Fleming <afleming@astate.edu>; Matthew Harmon <mharmon@astate.edu>; Cheryl Knight <cknight@astate.edu>; Carlitta Moore <camoore@astate.edu>; Arianne F. Pait <apait@astate.edu>; Claude Rector <crector@astate.edu>; Katerina Hill <khill@astate.edu>; RICHARD SEGALL <rsegall@astate.edu>; Bert Greenwalt <bertg@astate.edu>; John Weatherly <jweatherly@astate.edu>; Zahid Hossain <mhossain@astate.edu>; Jake Qualls <jqualls@astate.edu>; KRISTIN D. BIONDOLILLO <kdbiondo@astate.edu>; Karen Graham <kgraham@astate.edu>; Eric Scudamore <escudamore@astate.edu>

Good afternoon,

One of the senators had a few follow up questions about the possible land sale

1. When and how did A-State acquire this land? In other words, how long have we owned it?
2. Who will have access to the proceeds in the reserve fund?
3. Who and how will determinations be made of how to spend the money in the reserve fund?

I sent the questions to Len (who was out of the office till today). Here are his responses for your information.

Sorry for the delay, I was out of state participating in an HLC peer review until last night. I will do my best to answer the questions below.

1. The purchase long predates my employment with the university. Our Banner records indicate the purchase was made December 21, 1966. This was part of an 88+/- tract of land. This 30+ acres represent the last portion of the initial purchase still owned by the university.

2. Fiduciary responsibility for all university funds is vested in the Chief Financial Officer, Russ Hannah. Clearly, the CFO is not the sole party to determine how or when these funds will be used. As I noted previously, these funds will be held in reserve and used for future strategic purposes.

3. I am awaiting official information from the board minutes before providing a final answer. Generally speaking, strategic decision making is a collaborative effort on the part of the Chancellor's Cabinet and making a strategic investment of this amount would certainly fall under consideration of this body and approval of the Chancellor and President. In this specific instance, Trustee Jerry Morgan made a statement after board deliberation and approval of the resolution pertaining to this property. I am awaiting feedback on the specific wording and what, if any, additional board approvals would be required to use these funds for future strategic



purposes. I have a call in to the appropriate parties seeking the board language and will update you when I get that info.

Thanks,  
Len

Edward Salo, PhD  
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President, Faculty Senate  
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