

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
October 6th, 2023
HSS 1028

Attendees: Jessica Curtis, Katie Camden, David Pearlman, Dwayne Powell, Addie Fleming, Suzanne Melescue, Audrey Folsom, Scott Mangan, Robert Williams, Zahid Hossain, Shanon Brantley, Alexander Sokolov, Cheryl Knight, Robert Robinette, Bert Greenwalt, Renee Sumler, William Maynard, Khem Aryal, Veena Kulkarni, Pradeep Mishra, Matt Carey, Gary Edwards, Ibrahim Duyar, Tocarra Carter, LTC J. Morgan Weatherly, Rollin Tusalem, Guolei (Jason) Zhou, Richard Segall, John Hershberger

Proxy Attendees: Donna Caldwell for Andrea Brown, Susan Whiteland for Kim Vickrey, Amanda Wheeler Gryffin for Paul Finnicum

Guests: Todd Shields, Calvin White, Will McLean

Absentees: Jake Qualls, Arianne Pait, DayDay Robinson, Karen Graham, Ed Salo, Amanda Mohler

Meeting Called to Order: John Hershberger established a quorum. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by John Hershberger.

Order of the Day: Motion to approve the order of the day by Donna Caldwell (proxy for Andrea Brown), seconded by Alexander Sokolov, all in favor, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the September 15, 2023 meeting minutes with the addition of Guolei (Jason) Zhou's attendance by Audrey Folsom, second by Katie Camden, all in favor, motion carried.

Provost Update- Dr. Calvin White:

- [A-State Promise Plus Scholarship](#): This is in addition to merit-based scholarships. It's A-State's commitment to Arkansas. Bring better quality students to A-State. Incentive to consider us and help bring more students on campus. Get our name out to all 75 counties; put something out to attract better quality students (students with 27, 28 on ACTs)
- Rolling out new marketing campaign—delta region and statewide. Billboards, ads on TV. Don't leave any stone unturned—taking good things that faculty do for the state of AR. The pentagon—how to we attract 1. Have things other schools don't have- 1st public school of vet med (Lyon private with higher tuition). 2. Med school on campus. 3. Largest graduate enrollment in state and increasing. 4. ABI Arkansas Bioscience Institute
- Safe Zone Trainings will occur. Reconfiguration with legal and compliance; needed to be centralized. Format will continue- train the trainer. Title IX office will release dates.

Committed to Safe Zone trainings. They will happen. May not happen when some faculty want them to happen but will happen this semester.

- Retention and high DFW rates. Working with Deans on high DFW rates. We can put 1000 students on campus, but if we lose 47%, we are running in circles. Take ownership of our retention. We have a role to play as faculty. New initiatives, early detection, student success. We have a 38% 4-year graduation rate and 53% 6-year graduate rate. We can do better; we must do better.
- We must take the good things being done here and take them to the 75 other counties. The delta is shrinking-population is shrinking. The delta population will not sustain our student population anymore. We must recruit statewide.

Campus Update from Chancellor- Dr. Todd Shields:

- Echo emphasis of retention. We are losing juniors and seniors. Morally, Dr. Shields can't stand that seniors are leaving. Employers are looking for them and making offers that a 21-year-old thinks is great. Our job used to be to deliver information—that's not our mission anymore—learning is our mission. Students choose places that allow them to learn. We are not going to lower our standards; but getting students there is different than in the past. ACUE courses can help with this. It is financially imperative to retain our students.
- ITS is checking Duo entry to see if students are on campus. Nikesha, Martha in Student Affairs, are being very proactive. Knocking on doors for students not coming to class. Reach out to them. Non-scholarship athletes' 5-year graduation rate is 80%. Making sure people bought their books; did they scan into a meeting or group? Do they have a place they belong? Surveys in new student orientation-anxiety, depression, belonging. Following up with this as soon as they sign up for courses in DegreeWorks. They have to fill this out again when they get ready to register for courses. Just some of what we are doing.
- Model- Georgia State. Sunbelt Conference- sat next to the Chancellor at Georgia State. Their admission standard is much lower than ours. They raised their 6-year graduation rate from 25% to over 65% with intrusive advising methods. Looking at classes with high DFW rates; not punitive, but how can you reach those students? If you aren't trying, it will be punitive. Not flunking 40% of class! Discourages students and they leave.
- Last spring, we talked about equity. 1/3 of campus was reviewed every year; in past experiences. Still feel that a group should investigate this. Still got to make this happen. Faculty shouldn't have to raise their own hand on this. Chancellor apologized that this is slow-moving.
- Questions:
 - Donna: lowest ACT for scholarship here: AR Lottery-19- but doesn't cover everything—grows the longer you stay. Are we spending more money? No. Non merit institution scholarships. Promise Plus- it's a package--get the lottery, Pell grant, and then we cover the rest. Full ride has been based on merit, high performer, private scholarships in departments. Tuition is full ride now with qualifying for admission, state scholarship and Pell grant and we cover the rest.

Room/Board- \$2500 to stay on campus for 1st year and up to \$4500 on years after that. Freshman students have to stay on campus, but there are some exceptions. Admission is GPA OR ACT/SAT (or top 20% in class). ACT or SAT have been shown to not be very predictive of college success. They do not have to accept student loans to qualify for A-State Promise Plus.

- Why are we losing juniors and seniors? We don't know. Hypotheses, but no studies where we've investigated this. Look at 1st to 2nd year retention; was up to 73/74% at one time. Most places if you get them to sophomore year, they stay. We are an exception. 2 people are writing their dissertations on this. Nikesha and Martha looking into this. Melanie interviewing students. Lose scholarships, good job offer? We were going to lose an international student from Canada over \$900; office found a way to cover. Barriers with registration- payment plan, they have to make 2 months of payments before they can register for classes.
- Library 1 credit hour 7-week course Intro to Academic Research. Starfish/Pack Support Alert (Early Progress Surveys)- courses on alternate calendar are missing these reminders. Need earlier for those type courses (7-week, etc.).
- We need a page that contains key information for Pack Preview. Financial Aid and Admissions are there at Pack Preview. Cheat sheet- that is sent to faculty and all attendees.
- Marketing- billboards, commercials, TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram—targeting 17- and 18-year-olds. Doing this for the first time ever. Unique generation of students. Parents involved; they are the gas to the engine.
- Session 2 courses—failure rate in gen eds high according to anecdotal evidence. Freshmen maybe shouldn't take session 2 courses?
- LEARNS Act- 9th and 10th graders taking college classes. Jonesboro students taking concurrent classes; never stepped foot on campus or met a faculty member. Maybe make them come to campus, tour.
- No award for non-tenure track faculty for research. Chancellor really wants 2 paths- teachers and researchers. Workload policies. Shared governance. We've got plenty of space—Tuesday mornings, only at 62% of capacity (space usage)- most of the time, it's less than 50%.
- DFW rate- What is a high DFW and what is the goal? Should be a campus discussion. If above 35-40%, then something is wrong. What are the plans for support? University College/advisors--last spring chancellor met with advisors, not working together and not proactive. Starting using a chatbot. 1 advisor for about 275 kids. We have enough people. Think with new scholarship, we will be recruiting students who are better prepared academically.
- Moving toward more centralized advising? No, coordinate advising. Collaborate as faculty with other resources on campus so they can help them.
- Provost—asked faculty, “How do you feel?”
 - Help for advisors? --departments are doing this behind the scenes. How do we determine the follow up? Will reach back out and follow up on Pack Support.

- Where do we send students who need financial help? Send to the Provost's office. We aren't going to let juniors or seniors leave for \$1500-\$2000. Trying to raise funds for scholarships. Emergency funds-donors are interested in.
- Canvas- people observing cannot see assignments only if they did it and the grade (like athletics).
- The fact that we are 40% funded by the state is really good. Grants, private donations, raising tuition, getting/retaining more students.
- Summer classes- not mandating, not low enrollment. Salaries- should be incentivized; not equal across the board. Reward high performers.
 - Market studies for incomes? Looking into this
 - Overloads- pay experienced faculty rather than adjuncts? Dr. White is okay with faculty having overload rather than sending classes to adjuncts. However, there is a point where the quality of what is taught erodes in relation to faculty having too much overload (AOS question).
- Some faculty have built in summer hours to support their salaries. Low enrollment classes will be canceled. 8, 12, 18; spring, summer, fall. Deans should work with chairs to start looking into this. Faculty student ratio 13:1. Will hold AOS courses to the same standards.
 - Grad seminars are different; they are designed to be small. Also new courses-we understand these.

New Business:

- No new business.

Old Business:

- Please review the Team Teaching Proposal and provide comments back to the President by the next meeting.
 - Send comments/feedback to Ed – no discussion

Other Business:

- None

John Hershberger adjourned the meeting at 4:44 pm.