

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
October 20th, 2023
HSS 1028

Attendees: Dwayne Powell, Karen Graham, Ed Salo, John Hershberger, Jessica Curtis, Arianne Pait, Scott Mangan, Kim Vickrey, Andrea Brown, Audrey Folsom, Katie Camden, Addie Fleming, Khem Aryal, Sarah Scott, Toccara Carter, Suzanne Melescue, DayDay Robinson, Zahid Hossain, Alexander Sokolov, Cheryl Knight, Shanon Brantley, Robert Robinette, LTC J. Morgan Weatherly, Renee Sumler, William Maynard, Rollin Tusalem, Veena Kulkarni, Matt Carey, Gary Edwards, Ibrahim Duyar, Guolei (Jason) Zhou, Richard Segall, David Pearlman

Proxy Attendees: Karen Graham for Rob Williams, Arianne Pait for Jake Qualls,

Guests: Todd Shields, Calvin White, Will McLean, L. Fears

Absentees: Amanda Mohler, Bert Greenwalt, Pradeep Mishra, Paul Finnicum

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 to approve the order of the day by Andrea Brown, seconded by Alexander Sokolov, all in favor, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the October 6, 2023 meeting minutes with correction (Audrey Folsom's name under the Approval of Minutes) by Andrea Brown, second by John Hershberger, all in favor, motion carried.

Campus Update from Chancellor- Dr. Todd Shields:

- On Monday (10/16/23), called to state legislature for hearing. ASU System Team attended. They had the least number of questions for A-State. Lobbied before, which felt very fruitful. There for 3.5 hours. Stood by commitment to not change anything. Questioned most about what we are doing compared to what Fayetteville is doing—asked “that's what U of A does, is that why you are doing it”. Stressed importance of having Loni at cabinet meeting. We were thanked for the brevity of our responses. Received praises from multiple senators. Asked questions about have we ever given preferential admission preference based on ethnicity or sexual orientation. Confusing admissions with student success. Used veterans, women in STEM, people with disabilities, religious conservatives, rural students as examples that they weren't thinking about. From an admissions standpoint, it's the same criteria for all students. When they get here, we need to know where they are at. Efforts of measuring anxiety and belonging; making sure people are finding their niche. Knocking on doors, checking in on students. We got a lot

of applause. We do not know some things; they are not going to make any law until at least 2025.

- Where is the video? Ed will find it and send it out. It is located on the state legislator website.
 - Here is the video, scroll down to the section labeled Higher Education Subcommittee. A-State starts around 12:54. (sent to faculty senators via email by Ed Salo on 10/21)
 - <https://senate.arkansas.gov/todays-live-stream-meetings/archived-meetings/>
- How many people are on the committee at the meeting? Hard to tell. Packed and then only about 15 people left by the end of the meeting. Approximately 16, plus 4 ex officio members.
- Talk about removing tenure? One of the things we've been watching. FL, TX GOP; they are following a similar model. TX is more moderate than FL. We were getting indication that our legislature might follow the same model. Did get through TX senate-to remove tenure, but house killed it. Be careful not to overreact. Some are just trying to get elected or make the news. Doing our best to build a relationship with Senator Sullivan. AR Research Alliance—he was excited to hear about this. We are trying to be proactive about what they are doing.
- We can't meet with everyone, but you (faculty senators) are our choir—get this message out (include Dr. White's message below). We will be giving more support to students (intrusive advising). Measuring belonging and anxiety. No one is going after students with 25 or 28 on their ACT. The default assumption is that we are letting in kids who are not ready—but it's not true. Very soon we will be the only campus in the state with med school, NYIT wants to partner; vet science, AR bioscience institute, international. Teaching faculty ratio 13:1; lower than Hedrix. We have a lot of faculty, but not always in the right places. We can still keep class sizes small. Students won't get these things anywhere else. We are the best kept secret! We have advertised and told them, which is something we haven't done on this campus before. If people have concerns, we want to know.
 - Where are we “stealing” students from? We've been comparing ourselves to UCA; that's where the students we are capturing now would have been going. We have things that are to have 2nd best in the state Honors college in state—other school has \$300 million endowment for just the honors college. Sell med school, vet school, ABI, campus in Mexico, largest grad school in AR. This is our pentagon, as we are calling it. Don't benchmark ourselves against them. Parents love those things-also marketing to them. Social media marketing- to students. Inundating them on their phones. We didn't differentiate marketing strategies between students and parents before—we didn't even tell students.
 - All our fees are built into tuition; other places fees match the tuition, and it is very expensive to live there.

- Are we doing anything for transfer students? Contacting students who may be in this position. Using geocoding/geofencing-- if they go into that we send them message. Admin at another institution stated to Chancellor “This is your time!”
- UCA’s promise of everyone under 100K? Their promise has work study components; students have to commit to work for them and ours is free of that. Ours incentivizes students to stay on campus. We know students who live on campus do better.
- Is there a limit to how large our student body can get? Let's get there! 20 faculty per student ratio, then we’ll get to that. Just above 7,000 on campus- want to get to 12, 13, or 14,000. Our goal is to say we educate more Arkansans than anyone else in the state. Classroom usage reaches a peak on Tuesdays at 0900; a lot of empty classrooms and dorms. We have space and people.
- Info sheet about scholarships? Supposed to have that and will send that. Hoping we can pass out or have QR codes for Pack Preview and similar events.
- Where is the plan to retaining quality faculty? Have to work hand in hand. It's about money, course releases, work schedules, and that equity is the same across campus. We're not equitable across campus. Getting better students and the funding to create space for people who want to conduct research, reward great teachers who don’t want to do research, and funding to counter for those who want to leave. Every 100 students was/equaled a 1% range (at other schools Chancellor has been at)-were indoctrinated with that. State isn’t funding raises. It’s about tuition.
 - Has maternity leave come into that conversation? Very problematic. Lori Winn (HR) stated nothing separate other than sick leave. As a system, the system voted to not allow catastrophic leave for that because of the sensitivity of how that could impact the banks. The system voted against using banks. Departments might work with you or may not. Largest start-up package in research this year-research expectations. The more marginal revenues- the larger those start up packages will be to recruit and retain high quality faculty. The state only gives us 40% of our operating budget. State is not how we run the place. It does take money for adjuncts to cover sickness or maternity leave.
- Update on the workload policy? Dr. Calvin White stated that the initial draft is done, but it hasn’t left the Provost’s office. Lori Winn and Will McLean to serve as chairs, will be working on committees. The policy will be put in this committee (faculty senate). Dr White stated that he won't let it get bogged down and killed. Stated he wants your input and say-so. Rewarding outstanding teachers and reducing loads for those that are doing research. Trying to balance teaching and research and creative activities. Slow walking it on purpose. It also takes into account administrative duties. We want your feedback and for you to have ownership. Again, it will come to faculty senate. We want to put you where you want to be. Advertising what we want. Using percentages. Any problem from

legislature? One of the few that don't look at it as percentages. Can change from year to year and your percentages can change.

- Issues with classes for international students (Renee Sumler)? Students trying to take courses with low caps; it's a scheduling problem, a "false wall". International is very important too. Need Gen Ed, or developmental courses; Comp I. Sarah Scott mentioned that she could add Oral Com in 2nd POT. If other gen ed directors knew this, we could try to fix this. December interim is a possibility too.
- Retention and graduation- we do have a problem with these. Graduation rate of 56% in 6 years is embarrassing. Meeting higher qualified students and still not graduating them. Some of it is industry and internships (big promises/bonuses). They need microloans (\$800)-we are asking people to donate funds for this. Some fail a class 3 or 4 times and give up. In 1988 & prior, academia was to dump knowledge—not teaching them anything. Our world is now learning. That was 50 years ago. If we don't deliver learning, they are going to go somewhere that does. They are transferring somewhere that will. DFW rates above 60% in some places on campus. We don't want to be punitive. This is a whole different group of kids; not easy, but not impossible. Some are good, some are not. Some need training. If you are having trouble with students, don't lower the bar, get them there. Help them get there. Let's let them learn so when they leave (graduate), they can succeed. How can we get you training to help you? That's a change in thinking. How are we structuring classes to set students up for success? Deans are looking at this. ACUE training, active learning training. Want to incentivize and reward teaching and research.
- AI- how to use it? Taskforces, best practices to implement here. Struggling because it is moving so fast. Ruth is working hard on this. We aren't alone in this struggle though.

Provost Update/Q&A- Dr. Calvin White:

- This weekend, Pack Preview (2nd) as of yesterday, 1800 parents and students are scheduled to be on campus. This is a record on campus for this event. Usually about 700-850 perspective students. Not all will show. About 70% will show. Talked to Deans. Putting out best foot forward. Welcoming home alumni for homecoming. Not taking gas off pedal to put more students on this campus. Already behind others; didn't start until August and others started in June/July. If the trend remains TODAY, we will have more students who have applied and been accepted than this time last year. As of Thanksgiving if this trend continues, we will have admitted more than we did all last year—face to face students. This would be the largest at Thanksgiving since 2015 in the entire calendar year. Those are the dividends of A-State Promise Plus. In the newspaper in 75 counties, A-State Promise Plus—talking to parents and grandparents with the newspaper. We will not forfeit any territory anymore. Do we have the infrastructure? A lot of people are asking. We have problems, but infrastructure is not one of them. If we do encounter this problem, it's a good problem to have. People asking, are you putting the proper amount

of money into University College for additional support? That is an assumption that we are accepting students who are not academically qualified. Academics should actually get better. We are losing students with a 3.8 GPA and 27/28 on ACT. We do not get those students. Those students are going to UCA, Ole Miss, U of A and don't receive a scholarship. If you don't have a 30 on the ACT at other schools, you don't get a scholarship. We believe it will capture the student body we are losing and will capture a better overall quality of students.

Guest Speaker- Lori Winn, Human Resources to discuss Retiree Benefits:

- You can retire when you meet the “rule of 70”: 55 years of age and years of service. You have the ability if under 65 and you can retain healthcare; dental and vision can be retained as well at cost you pay today. Also receive lifetime pass at athletic events, library privileges and free parking pass annually. 9-month employees- pay out sick leave; based on state formula and caps at \$7500. 12-month employees- paid out leave time at an hourly rate. You do not have to have A-State email to use the library--can use personal email for access. Sponsored email account- can retain A-State email as long as you are active- which are monitored for activity. After 65 would qualify for Medicare and can't get our healthcare. TIAA- if you retire and are 59.5, you can withdraw without penalty.

New Business:

- Handbook (section IV and V)
 - Previous sections were sent to shared governance; decided it wasn't a shared governance issue. Shared governance continued that for these sections and deferred consent to us. Not voting yet. Send them to departments and colleges and vote next time.
- Faculty Senate committee to address AI
 - If interested let Ed know (Alexander Sokolov, Sarah Scott, Jessica Curtis, Karen Graham, and others)
 - Could work with Ruth's group and Center for No-Boundary Thinking

Old Business:

- Please review the Team-Teaching Proposal and provide comments by the next meeting.
 - This went to shared governance and went to groups for comments. Will go back to shared governance with all comments and come back to Faculty Senate with comments. Can address, and then send out for up or down vote. Then it will go to the Chancellor.

Other Business:

- None

Ed Salo adjourned the meeting at 4:28 pm.

