

Faculty Senate Minutes for May 2, 2014

Chair Julie Isaacson called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. The meeting was held at the Delta Center for Economic Development, Room 201.

Chair Isaacson formally announced that Senator Jollean Sinclair would be the next Senate Chair.

Approval of April 4, 2014 minutes (attached)

Senator Bill Humphrey moved that the minutes of 4 April 2014 be accepted. Senator Andy Mooneyhan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Guests:

Dr. Josie Welsh – Learning Outcome Advisory Council – “Using Technology”

Director of Assessment Services, Dr. Josie Welsh reviewed findings from indirect and direct measures of the university-level goals of critical thinking and global awareness. Correlates of high levels of critical thinking skills indicate that students report lower levels of required reading and writing in their courses. The Learning Outcomes Advisory Council (LOAC) is working to identify reading and writing-intensive courses. Faculty expectations of students, another correlate of critical thinking, is reported as high by A-State students. Preliminary results of the Critical Thinking Assessment Test (CAT) indicate that First Year Experience (FYE) students score higher than national norms in skills such as separating relevant from irrelevant information but lower than national norms when interpreting graphs.

The Office of Assessment received a \$6000 National Science Foundation (NSF) sub award from Tennessee Technological University to train more faculty to grade and use the CAT. Stipends of \$250 for training are available. The next grading session will be May 18 or May 19. Interested faculty should contact Dr. Bob Bennett at bbennett@astate.edu. Global awareness is measured by Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI). Preliminary findings indicate that A-State students engage regularly in conversations with persons of a different ethnicity or race; however, A-State students are less inclined to attend multicultural events. Faculty interested in having students tested on the GPI should contact Josie Welsh at jwelsh@astate.edu.

The goal of using technology has been difficult to measure because the student learning objective aligned with that goal, better represents what the American Library Association defines as Information Literacy; therefore, the LOAC would like to change the label of the third university-level goal from “using technology” to “information literacy”. The Faculty Senate supported this change.

Dr. Erik Gilbert & Dr. Andy Sustich – Graduate Council – “Graduate Faculty Qualification Standards” (attachment)

Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, Dr. Andy Sustich reported that in 2007 there was a change approved regarding Graduate Faculty status. Full and Associate Graduate Faculty no longer existed, but rather 6-year appointments would be made as Regular or Temporary Graduate Faculty Members. Lack of response from various departments regarding criteria for Graduate Faculty has caused the Graduate Council to lag behind with reappointments. The appropriate level of scholarly activity necessary for Graduate Faculty must be documented and sent to the Graduate Council from each discipline.

Senator John Hall (Psychology and Counseling) mentioned that his department had sent their criteria three times and had been rejected each time. Is it the right of the Council to disapprove? If approval is not granted, faculty would be appointed as Temporary Graduate Faculty. Tracking of the 6-year period and review of Regular Graduate Faculty would be monitored at the department level.

Senator Bill Humphrey inquired about the issues regarding disapproval of the proposed criteria for Regular Graduate Faculty. Sustich informed the Senate that some departments were considering bachelor programs as terminal degrees. Others didn't think a specific number of research projects or publications were necessary for Graduate Faculty. Not all areas fit a generic criterion, so the expertise of the various disciplines is needed to determine standards for Graduate Faculty in their departments. Music, for instance, has been approved, which does not fit a common model. Departments should not try to be generic.

Senator Amany Saleh suggested that a list be compiled of predatory journals (e.g. “Beall’s List” which offers updated reports by Jeffrey Beall). This list should be comprised of both online and traditional journal format.

Old Business:

Selection of Dept. Chairs & Deans (revisited 13FA-03), now 14sp-03 – under revision

Chair Isaacson reviewed that this proposal involves treating searches of administrative positions in keeping with the process for other positions on campus. Errors have been found in the process of proofing the proposal, which are currently being corrected.

Statement of Non-Discrimination (13FA-05) – under revision

Chair Isaacson shared that the authors of this policy are not comfortable with the suggested edits to the Statement of Non-Discrimination. Though it is in process, it is unlikely that University Council will approve it as is without these edits. The Senate could choose to remain silent on the matter. Senator Judy Pfriemer moved to vote. The motion was seconded by Dr. William Maynard (proxy for Alex Sydorenko, Humanities and Social Sciences). The resulting vote was 17 in favor of the proposal as presented, without edits; none opposed; and 6 abstentions.

UPRTC Recommendation on SGOC 14SP-02

The wording for the University Promotion, Retention and Tenure Committee recommendation was revised by UPRT after the Faculty Senate voted in support of 14sp-02. These additional revisions will be sent electronically for an up or down vote.

New Business:

Dr. Joanna Grymes

Senator Joanna Grymes reported serious concerns expressed by her colleagues in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. Several years ago there was discussion about structural changes amongst the colleges, which involved discussion campus-wide. Faculty members are upset about the current rumors of restructuring occurring without adequate discussion. Grymes provided two questions from her college: 1. Are we in such fiscal distress that restructuring is inevitable? 2. What is the process for such change? Senator Grymes brought up an additional issue concerning the idea of schools. ASU has a School of Nursing, which evolved from the Department of Nursing within the College of Nursing and Health Professions. Schools do not exist in the governance system currently in the Faculty Handbook.

The ensuing discussion revealed confusion regarding the possible merging of disciplines, the hiring freeze, and replacement of faculty positions. Senator Amany Saleh asked what the role of Shared Governance might be when departments are merged without faculty knowledge, and when degree program curriculum goes up online without faculty input. Senator Andy Mooneyhan (Chair, SGOC) offered that the Shared Governance Oversight Committee might also investigate issues. This process of Shared Governance is not put into use frequently. The merging of departments requires changes in the Faculty Handbook with certain new positions, which may be necessary. Chair Julie Isaacson mentioned that these would be addressed by the Faculty Handbook Committee.

Former Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education, Dr. Mitch Holifield communicated his experience with restructuring in the College of Education and Behavioral Science. The faculty felt they had an opportunity to give input on a decision that was already made. The vote of the faculty against the merging of Teacher Education and Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education, had no effect whatsoever. The result is the new School of Teacher Education and Leadership with an Interim Chair, Dr. Annette Hux.

Senator John Hall (Professor of Psychology and Counseling), also from the College of Education and Behavioral Science, provided another example from his area. Psychology, Counseling, and Health, Physical Education and Sports Sciences are now under a school. Again, not enough faculty input was permitted.

Regarding the role of the faculty in Shared Governance, Chair Isaacson remarked that the spirit and intent is definitely positive at the university level; however, the culture may not permeate at college and departmental levels. Many senators agreed that there are serious concerns regarding

the issue of things happening with little faculty involvement. That is for the Chancellor or Vice Chancellor and Provost to answer, who could not be here today. Chair Isaacson restated the options of meeting again in May; and/or sending an investigation through SGOC; or revisiting the matter in the fall.

Senator John Hall made the motion that the Senate meet again, and in addition, put an investigation through the SGOC. Senator Andy Mooneyhan seconded the motion. After discussion, both Senators Hall and Mooneyhan withdrew their motions. Senator Bill Humphrey then moved to meet with Chancellor Hudson and Vice Chancellor Cooksey to address the issues. Senator Mooneyhan seconded the motion. All were in favor. Submissions to the SGOC regarding investigation should be held until after this meeting. Senators who had particularly experienced some of the restructuring issues firsthand, were charged with gathering information for this meeting.

Committee Reports:

Faculty Senate Finance Committee

Dr. Ryan Peterson (Accounting) gave a detailed report with a PowerPoint presentation on the financial situation at A-State. Though there is an increase in college attendees, funding per student is down 1.2% in Arkansas, and future funding is uncertain. This is discouraging with 53% of our facilities over 30 years old. Last year we spent 7.2 million dollars more than what we took in, but we do have an expendable balance of \$16 million or so.

There is confusion regarding replacement of faculty who took advantage of the early retirement package offered this year. In general, those retirees will receive 25% of their salary plus 1% per year over 2 years, not to exceed \$50,000. Two-year temporary replacements approved by the Executive Council will receive a salary of \$30,000 with benefits while the positions are reviewed and/or restructured. Searches will take place during the second year in order for the tenure-track vacancies to be filled in the third year. The fear is that if departments fare well with temporary replacements for the 2 years, faculty lines may be lost.

Tuition has increased 3% a year over the past 6 years, which may seem excessive, but this is simply to keep up with inflation. Athletics are always expensive, with a deficit of \$8 million, the bulk of which is absorbed in athletic fees.

In comparing ASU salaries to other Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) colleges, our Full Professor (average salary of \$80,000) is about \$23,000 lower than the SREB average. The Instructor level at A-State is paid very poorly. We have increased them 13% over past couple of years, but it is still quite low. Arkansas is at the bottom of the SREB statistics, but ASU is catching up with the "Arkansas-3" (ASU, University of Arkansas and Arkansas Tech University).

More concerns include our advertisement of Student/Teacher Ratio at 19:1 on the website, which is not accurate. According to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, ASU has only 491 faculty; with an S/TR of 26:1. The salaries of administration as advertised in The Sun are also discouraging, even with the second article which came out clarifying that those salaries included compensation. On average the Vice Chancellors make about \$109,000 not including compensation/benefits. A-State has 66% more compensation than University of Central Arkansas or Arkansas Tech University for administrators. Finally, the growth of distance education (online courses) is very high. Statistics of the Society for the Study of Curriculum History (SSCH) within the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) show that Distance Education this spring was up to 62% of our total offerings.

In summary, ASU salaries are lagging in the SREB, but are second next to its peers in the state. The Student/Teacher Ratio is the highest in the state and the increase in non-traditional courses is extremely high. Administrative positions need to be justified. The Finance Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate continue to emphasize the need for both fully-funded internal equity adjustments; and a serious written plan to adjust salaries to SREB averages over 5 years.

Comments from the Chair:

Chair Isaacson will ask for a called meeting with Drs. Hudson and Cooksey.

Senator Bill Humphrey moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m. Senator John Hall seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Marika Kyriakos

Senators in Attendance:

Absentees:

Proxies:

Executive Committee:

Chair Julie Isaacson

Agriculture & Technology:

Bill Humphrey

Business:

Hyung Kim

Richard Segall

Media & Communications:

Pradeep Mishra

Education:

Minghui Gao

Joanna Grymes

John Hall

Andy Mooneyhan

Amany Saleh

Engineering:

Fine Arts:

Claire (Garrard) Abernathy

Marika Kyriakos

Bill Rowe

Humanities & Social Sciences:

Win Bridges

Warren Johnson

Hans Hacker

Thomas Ratliff

Nursing & Health Professions:

Brenda Anderson

Bill Payne

Judy Pfriemer

Sciences & Mathematics:

Hai Jiang

Fabricio Medina-Bolivar

Suzanne Melescue

University:

Nikesha Nesbitt

Military Science:

Library & Information Resources:

Wendy Crist

Jollean Sinclair

Larz Roberts

Joe Nichols

Shivan Haran

Cherisse Jones-Branch

Alex Sydorenko

William Maynard

Kat Carrick

Larry Morton

Debbie Shelton

Bruce Johnson

Cecil Clark