

Minutes from the April Meeting of the Faculty Senate

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, April 29, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in the Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building.

Attendance

Present: Tyler Babb, Vishwas Bedekar, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Larry Burriss, Nancy Caukin, James Chaney, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Trevor de Clercq, Mamit Deme, Andrew Dix, Paul Eubanks, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Shannon Harmon, Pippa Holloway, Paul Kline, Marcus Knight, Rachel Leander, Darren Levin, Melissa Lobegeier, Alfred Lutz, Preston MacDougall, Pamela Morris, John Mullane, Susan Myers-Shirk, John Pennington, Joshua Phillips, Ariana Postlethwait, Deana Raffo, Joan Raines, Michael Rice, Patrick Richey, James Robertson, Stephen Salter, Mary Ellen Sloane, Rajesh Srivastava, Sherri Stevens, Dennis Walsh, Elizabeth Wright.

Excused: Larry Burriss, Angela DeBoer,

Absent: Kathryn Blankenship, Tricia Farwell, Rebecca Fischer, Joey Gray, Nat Smith, Donald Snead, Moses Tesi.

Patrick Richey moved to approve the minutes from the April 8th meeting. The motion was adopted.

Speakers

- Peter Cunningham briefed the Senate on proposed changes to MTSU's undergraduate degree requirements. He provided the Senate with a document that outlines the current and pending requirements along with those of our peer institutions. He said that changes in the requirements were necessitated, in part, by an increase in the number of transfer students at the university. The proposed changes would in some cases relax current requirements. For example, the number of upper division hours required would be reduced from 42 to 36. Other changes would strengthen current requirements. For example, the amount of additional MTSU coursework required for a subsequent degree would increase from 15 to 30 hours. Finally, some changes would replace existing requirements with alternatives. For example, the requirement that students complete 30 upper-division hours in residence would be replaced by the requirement that students complete 12 hours within their major in residence. Changes that make looser current requirements would be retroactive. Dr. Cunningham noted that these requirements are the minimum requirements for obtaining an undergraduate degree at MTSU. Individual degree programs could implement additional and/or more stringent requirements. Also, the

proposed requirements are still under development, and could change before submitted to the entire university for review.

- Peter Cunningham alerted the Senate that the dates of the semesters could change in 2020. There is discussion of ending the fall semester earlier in order to create a winter semester. Dr. Cunningham noted that the records office needs time between semesters to process grades. More information on this plan will be available after Wednesday, May 8th.

Motions

1. Rachel Leander moved that the report on the importance of tenure go back to the Finance and Personnel Committee for further development. The motion was adopted.
2. Dennis Walsh moved that the Senate adopt a resolution regarding the name of the ROTC building. The motion was adopted after amendment with 20 yeas, 12 nays, and 1 abstention. The motion is included in the appendix of these minutes.
3. Patrick Richey moved to table the discussion on expanding the University recreational center hours until the Senate's next meeting. The motion was adopted.

Reports

- Rachel Leander reported on the Senate's budget. A new budget update was not available at the time. As of April 8, 2019, the Senate had at its disposal - \$152.27 for the purpose of travel and \$2,586.96 for other operating expenses. At the start of this academic year \$1,600 and \$5,380 were budgeted for travel and operating expenses, respectively.
- The Academic Affairs Student Life and Athletics Committee submitted a written report summarizing concerns that faculty members have about the new workload policy. That report is included in the appendix of these minutes.
- John Pennington reported on behalf of the Finance and Personnel Committee. The committee submitted a written report on the importance of tenure. The report is an important first step toward ensuring that the Senate and the Board are cognizant of the important role that tenure plays in maintaining the health of the university. Pippa Holloway noted that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is an excellent resource on this topic.
- The Executive and Governance Committee submitted a draft report on university standing committees. The report includes a summary of committee structures and a list of concerns related to university committees.

Discussion/Information

1. Updates from meeting with President McPhee

- a. Salaries – This year the administration will continue to work toward achieving the 2014-2015 market value. State employees will receive a 2% salary increase. A separate mandate was not issued for university employees. The administration has plans to increase the salary pool by 2% nonetheless. The current idea is to implement a 1% across the board salary increase (effective July 1st), leaving the remaining 1% for market adjustments in October. The administration would then put an additional 2 million dollars toward market salary adjustments, thereby bringing all tenure/tenure-track faculty members to their 2014-2015 market value, provided enrollment is strong. The administration invited feedback from the Senate on this plan. In case enrollment is strong, several senators thought it would be nice to see a more substantial across the board salary raise in order to offset the increasing cost of living.
 - b. The administration proposes increasing adjunct faculty pay by \$700-\$1000 per course. This increase in pay would be partially funded by an increase in tuition.
2. Other updates
- a. Enrollment consultant report: The report has not been delivered. It is being written.
 - b. Chair policy: The chairs' council proposed some minor changes to the policy. It is currently with the provost.
 - c. Policy 204, 205, and 206 revisions: These policies impact tenure, promotion, and appeals. Their revision began last summer. Mary Martin and Alan Boehm plan to discuss these policy revisions over the summer.
 - d. Campus recreation hours: MTSU's recreational center hours are limited in comparison to those of other universities. In the fall, the Senate might move that the administration expand these hours.

Transfer of Senate Leadership

- Leadership of the Faculty Senate was transferred from Pippa Holloway to Justin Gardner. Dr. Gardner adjourned the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 P.M.

Submitted by Rachel Leander, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.