

## **Minutes from the December Meeting of the Faculty Senate**

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, December 9, 2019 at 3:30 pm in the Faculty Senate Chambers (JUB 100).

### **Attendance**

#### **Present**

Sanjay Asthana, Sal Barbosa, Nita Brooks, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Trevor de Clercq, Andrew Dix, Latoya Eaves, Rebecca Fischer, Stuart Fowler, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Shannon Harmon, Michael Hein, Pippa Holloway, Rachel Kirk, Paul Kline, Marcus Knight, Darren Levin, Melissa Lobegeier, Alfred Lutz, Preston MacDougall, Dan Morrell, Pamela Morris, John Mullane, Susan Myers-Shirk, Kari Neely, Deana Raffo, Joan Raines, Patrick Richey, Brian Robertson, Garrett Salmon, Stephen Salter, Nat Smith, Raj Srivastava, Dennis Walsh, Zhen Wang, Andrew Wyatt.

#### **Excused**

Larry Burriss, Nancy Caukin, Song Cui, Chong Chen, Angela DeBoer, Rudy Dunlap, Seth Jones, Brian Parsons, Ariana Postlethwait, Mary Ellen Sloane, Elizabeth Wright

#### **Absent**

Christina Hiers, Scott Seipel

President Gardner called the meeting to order at 3:30pm and reminded everyone to sign-in. He also reminded Senators that missing 3 consecutive meetings will result in being removed from Senate.

Gardner recognized Faculty Trustee Martin. Martin reminded Senators of the Board of Trustees meeting on December 10 and encouraged them to attend or live stream the meeting. The BOT generally approves all items at this meeting since the work is done and decisions are made at the committee meetings. Martin sits on all committees except for the Executive & Governance Committee and welcomes questions from the faculty. She comes to Senate Chambers an hour before Senate meetings in order to talk with faculty.

A Senator asked about a quorum being met with a subcommittee at the last meeting. Martin shared that there was some confusion about the order of the meeting and that has since been resolved.

### **Approval of November 11, 2019 Minutes**

Gardner shared that the item regarding the off-campus location was adjusted before the minutes were shared with Senators. Pippa Holloway moved to approve the November 11, 2019 minutes and Latoya Eaves seconded. The motion carried.

### **Announcement**

Rachel Kirk announced that Walker Library has all General Education textbooks on reserve. One copy per course is available. Kirk suggested that general education faculty include a statement in their syllabus such as, "The required textbook for this course is available free of charge at the library reserve section."

### **Reports from Officers and Committees**

#### **Treasury Report**

Deana Raffo reported the Senate's budget. As of November 30, 2019, the balances are:  
Travel - \$1,527.14 and Operating - \$1,768.64.

## **MT Engage**

Rachel Kirk shared that more MT Engage classes are being offered and the program is ahead of their 5-year projection. MT Engage students doing well with higher GPAs.

## **Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics**

The committee submitted a written report. They provided an update on the November 12<sup>th</sup> BOT committee meeting. There were four items addressed: 1) approval of a P&T case, 2) discussion of an athletics policy, 3) discussion about a rule and student conduct, and 4) Open Educational Resources (OER), which is a new movement to save students money and improve retention by providing free education materials.

The committee has reviewed policies, particularly Policy 258 regarding approval of centers, bureaus, and institutes. They have also reviewed Policies 204, 205, and 206 regarding promotion and tenure. Recommendations for 204, 205, and 206 were made last year and appear to be stalled.

## **Finance and Personnel**

The committee provided an update on the November 12<sup>th</sup> BOT committee meeting. Phase II of the compensation plan was approved and will move forward for Board approval. The operating budget was approved.

Faculty Trustee Martin shared that she would point committees toward policies that are most relevant. It was suggested that committees focus on the policies coming up for review.

## **Executive and Governance**

The committee has not met and has no report at this time.

## **Audit and Compliance**

The committee reports on the November 12<sup>th</sup> BOT committee meeting. Two issues were addressed. The first involved ethical policies and how much time should be allocated for due process. The second issue involved an employee in the athletic department who bought items for personal benefit. There was concern that there was no structure in place to indicate troubling activity.

The committee will continue to focus on Policies 10, 12, 50, and 140.

## **Carbon Footprint**

The committee thinks that energy guidelines should be revisited and updated. They have observed that campus units work in silos which appears to be a barrier to making a substantial progress on campus. All buildings are evaluated in the Facility Services annual report. The committee reported that state allocations for capital maintenance have appeared to decline over the years. The committee will follow-up with Facilities Services. Gardner suggested David Edgar as a resource to better understand issues and solve problems.

The committee also met with the Aerospace Department regarding unmanned aircraft systems (drones) to identify maintenance issues and shared sustainability grant information with them to support this initiative.

## **President's Report (Steering, Academic Affairs Liaison, President's Liaison Committees)**

- Gardner asked for a volunteer to be the banner carrier for Saturday's graduation. Bob Gordon volunteered for the afternoon ceremony and Shannon Harmon volunteered for the morning.

- The Faculty Senate D2L course shell is active and Senators are classified as a “student” in the class. The Dropbox function is available to share documents, as are discussion boards to facilitate communicate within committees. This platform is intended to be a clearinghouse of working documents and reports. Senators are not required to use it.
- The Board of Trustees meeting is tomorrow, December 10, at 1:00 at the Miller Education Center. Senators were encouraged to let their departments know and to watch the live stream if they are interested. The BOT will be voting on Phase II of the salary adjustment.
- The Summer Office Hours policy requires 5 hours a week. While it does not appear to be widely enforced, the Steering Committee has discussed this with Provost to advocate a policy change.
- An update on the Chair Evaluation and Appointment Policy was provided. Last year’s proposal would have established 4-year terms and allowed faculty to vote on retaining their chair. The proposed policy is not moving forward. Gardner is unsure about how much support or lack of support came from the Deans and Chairs. Gardner shared that the Provost feels that the benefits do not outweigh potential problems it could cause.

A question was raised about viewing faculty evaluations of chairs. Gardner will check on this because faculty are not supervisors and faculty evaluations are not the same as performance evaluations which are protected by statute.

Pippa Holloway will send a letter to Faculty Senate with further thoughts on this that includes examples of similar department policies.

Sanjay Asthana moved to draft a resolution on the failure of the university to enact the Chair Evaluation and Appointment Policy and Susan Myers-Shirk seconded. The motion carried.

- Senators were asked to remind their faculty to meet the deadline to submit final grades. There was an inquiry about moving back the deadline for mid-term grades. Gardner will follow-up.

## **Old Business**

### **Adjunct Pay Schedule**

Adjuncts are currently paid 3 times a semester - Oct, Nov, Dec/Feb, March, April. The pay schedule could be changed to 4 times a semester. This would result in a September paycheck, but would also result in a paycheck late in May.

Senators requested that the university survey all adjuncts on their preference. Gardner will follow-up.

## **New Business**

### **Resolution in Support of Winter Term**

Gardner shared a draft Resolution in Support of Winter Term. Support from Faculty Senate may help administration move this forward.

Discussion ensued regarding the length and timeframe. Several Senators shared their experiences at other institutions. Study abroad and online classes are popular at other schools. ETSU and APSU have winter terms. There were questions about faculty compensation (summer rate, overload, reduced spring workload) and a concern about requiring faculty to teach in winter term.

Senators are urged to gauge interest from faculty and students before moving forward with a resolution. There are issues such as veterans' benefits, workload, compensation, etc. to consider. The Chairs Council is also discussing this.

Senators recommended that the Steering Committee study and discuss this further with a plan to vote on a resolution at the February meeting.

**Parking Concern**

A Senator brought up a parking concern and was referred to the parking committee and Ron Malone. No action is needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm.

Submitted by Deana Raffo, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary