**Faculty Senate Minutes**

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

JCK 880, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Attending** **Senators**: Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Janet Bezner, Natalie Ceballos, Rachel Davenport, Jesse Gainer, Jennifer Jensen, Lynn Ledbetter, Vince Luizzi, Benjamin Martin, Stan McClellan, David Nolan, Michael Supancic, Diego Vacaflores, Nicole Wesley.

**Guests**: Denise Trauth (president), Gene Bourgeois (provost), Debbie Thorne (associate provost), Pete Blair, Kim Rossmo, Dan Tamir, Chase Rogers (University Star), Stephanie Towery (Library), Shannon Duffy (Senate Fellow).

Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Senate Chair Bezner

**President's Academic Advisory Group (PAAG)**

President Trauth presented information and answered questions concerning:

* President and provost's reactions to the National College Health Assessment data and report.
  + The administration has agreed to set up a task force consisting of faculty and professionals from student affairs to address results of the report. However, they have significant questions about the quality of the data. While the report shows that our students are worse off than the national norm, the sample size seems low.
  + Some questions raised are whether or not the university can disaggregate the data from the study. For instance, could the low scores be due to our large veteran population and any link with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or whether our students take advantage of mental health programs on campus? These are unknowns that could be explored through the data.
  + What is the role of faculty when it comes to mental health problems? There must be an understanding across the university about the role of faculty concerning student mental health. According to the provost, some faculty are not comfortable engaging students in certain conversations.
  + The administration pledged that mental health is an important issue and they are committed to tackling any problems raised by the report.
  + Senators discussed staffing issues at the counseling center. The administration stated that they understand the counseling center is understaffed but they are limited by our current budget. Resources need to be identified to support these issues, especially at the counseling center.
  + Bobcat peer support groups are being finalized. These support groups will look at team building, mental health, self-care, etc.
* Vice President for Student Affairs search.
  + Dr. Lisa Lloyd, vice president for University Administration, will chair the search committee. An outside search firm will be hired for the search. This is due to the large number of open positions in student affairs across the country.
  + The administration is also looking at the structure of Student Affairs and are reevaluating the division. They are trying to make sure that student success is being supported by the right organizational structure.
  + Clery Act issues are also a consideration for this search because Student Affairs deals with numerous Clery Act reports and concerns.
  + The administration asked the Faculty Senate to identify faculty members who might serve on the search committee.
* Response to [Chronicle of Higher Education article](https://www.chronicle.com/article/When-the-Culture-War-Comes-to/248016?key=6GN5vbBTWeO_wOewtnTLTtUPVP-vMc2s6ddnpGFShlC614HfRYgPtTGG5NjVlGkCSVMtc0dxVVNYbVV3TGZCYmM4eUkzcHdqYTJ0dnYxaTVHdzNyU2NwUHJmWQ&fbclid=IwAR3-Z19RAd2dc-Kg-QWAShyrWOwFthECCrSL2FoH6UEsbsXJUbyJfoHAp54).
  + The administration expressed overall concerns with the article. The academic unit and faculty have the right to make decisions concerning curriculum and that is what happened in this situation.
  + Senators expressed concerns for academic freedom issues and disruptive students. The administration supports faculty when it comes to teaching. The Behavioral Assessment Team (BAT) can help in certain situations. When other avenues don’t’ work, BAT provides the expertise in these situations. The first step is faculty engagement, then the chair, and conversations with the student.

**Personnel Committee Discussion**

Dr. Pete Blair, professor of criminal justice and executive director of the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center, and Dr. Kim Rossmo, University Endowed Chair in criminology and director of the Center for Geospatial Intelligence and Investigation in the Department of Criminal Justice brought forward a proposal to make changes to [AA/PPS No. 04.02.10 Performance Evaluation of Continuing Faculty and Post-Tenure Review](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/04-02-10.html). They proposed a shift in control of personnel committee membership to the individual department or school level to reflect their local conditions. They believe that personnel committee membership criteria is best set by the individual department where work responsibilities, faculty composition, and inclusive personnel decision-making are best understood.

Senators discussed and asked questions concerning the proposed changes. There is a new personnel committee policy being written by members of the Academic Governance committee. Senators decided to consider the proposal, but to wait until the new personnel committee policy draft is finished. Senators also discussed using distance technologies for personnel committee meetings. Both issues will be returned to the agenda.

**Student Government Cabinet Meeting**

Senate chair Bezner reported on a recent Student Government (SG) cabinet meeting.

* The cabinet discussed their accomplishments so far.
* SG will continue the diversity theme throughout the year.
* SG is interested in continuing their support for open source materials for students.
* Concerning a NPHC memorial, SG is trying to find a place on campus.
* Working on a food for fines program. Students who receive a parking ticket could pay for the fine by bringing food to the SG food pantry.
* Working on a change to Bobcat promise, a plan where students below $35k can get subsidized tuition. SG wants to change the limit to $ 50K, dependent on funding.
* Discussed student service fee issues. An 18% cut in fees is affecting student services.
* SG would like to repeat the campus climate survey aimed at students.

Senators discussed the merits of the SG plans and accomplishments and expressed a desire to pursue a faculty climate survey.

**Follow up from Academic Governance Committee Discussion with Faculty Senate Concerning Perception of Deans Survey**

Senators discussed the annual Perceptions of Deans survey. The comments about deans, but not the multiple-choice results, are hidden as per an informal agreement between the Faculty Senate and the provost. However, any voting faculty member could print a copy of the results for their dean, with comments, during the 90-day window when comments are visible.

Although comments are hidden, the senate has access to them from previous years. Senators tabled the discussion and will place it back on a future agenda.

**Policy Review**

Assignment of senators to review specific University and Academic Affairs policies:

* [UPPS 01.04.31 Access to Student Records Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/01-04-31.html). Due February 24, 2020. Senator Vacaflores.
* [AA/PPS 08.01.10 STAR One Space Management for Faculty and Staff](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/08-01-10.html). Due March 11, 2020. Senator McClellan.

**Approval of Minutes**

The February 12, 2020 minutes were approved by senators.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by David Nolan