**Faculty Senate Minutes**

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

JCK 880, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

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

**Guests**: Vedaraman Sriraman (associate vice president for Academic Affairs), Dana Willett (director of Distance and Extended Learning), Lisa Garza (director of University Planning and Assessment), Chase Rogers (University Star), Stephanie Towery (Library), Shannon Duffy (Senate Fellow).

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

**Affordable Student Learning Materials**

Affordable Learning Committee members Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman, associate vice president for Academic Affairs, and Dana Willett, director of Distance and Extended Learning, presented information on affordable student learning materials. The committee is seeking faculty support for their initiative and is requesting that the Faculty Senate consider adopting a resolution that articulates this support.

Some of the issues presented were:

* The impact of textbook and other learner materials cost on student success.
* The average amount spent by students for textbooks at Texas State is approximately $300 per semester. This can result in a number of hardships for students.
* Textbook costs are rising faster than any other student costs.
* There are strategies being used by students to bypass these costs and there are also initiatives by the university to help students deal with these issues.
* The committee asks faculty to consider cost when updating materials.
* The use of Open Educational Resources (OER) resources are encouraged.
* The committee is looking at best practices.

Senators discussed the issues concerning costs, the campus bookstore, OER grants, curriculum, software, etc. The Affordable Learning Materials Committee is looking at a two tier grant system to support faculty to adopt OER materials or to develop textbooks. The committee plans on informing students and listing course that use OERs and will be launching a website that will contain information on these issues. Senators expressed their support for the committee’s work and their request for a senate resolution.

**Gender Neutral Language in Policies**

Dr. Lisa Garza, director of University Planning and Assessment, answered senator’s questions concerning gender neutral language in university policies and a path forward to revisions in current and future policies. Senators discussed the review process with Dr. Garza, especially during SACS accreditation, and the process to make changes to policies concerning gender neutral language. Dr. Garza stated that the senior reviewer is ultimately responsible for policy language, but that her office can make some changes to language and grammar. Locked down policies for SACS accreditation will not be reviewed until after accreditation is finished. The senate can still submit new polices and refer other policy changes to senior reviewers.

**Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan to Build Capacity Goal Discussion**

Senators discussed Goal 2 of the [Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan to Build Capacity](https://inclusion.txstate.edu/updates-and-initiatives/campus-climate-capacity). Discussion focused on the [Bobcat JEDI Program](https://www.txstate.edu/oei/justice-equity-diversity-inclusion.html) that offers faculty and staff the opportunity to build competencies that will support a more inclusive environment at the university. Senators discussed the [Multicultural Curriculum Transformation and Research Institute](https://www.txstate.edu/cdgs/MCTRI0.html) (MULT), which is still active, and faculty are encouraged to apply. Senators also discussed the proposed mandatory diversity and inclusion training for search committee members and the support offered by deans and chairs/directors. This item will be placed on the upcoming PAAG agenda.

**President’s Academic Advisory Group (PAAG) Agenda**

Senators discussed the agenda items for the March 4, 2020, PAAG. Proposed agenda items:

* Diversity and inclusion training for search committees.
* University plan for the COVID 19 virus.
* Faculty Work Group on Supporting Students Facing Mental Health Challenges.
* The Chicago Statement and Academic Freedom.

**Senate Liaisons Meeting Agenda**

Senators discussed the agenda for March 11, 2020 senate liaisons meeting. Proposed agenda items:

* Discussion of faculty use of Open Educational Resource (OER) materials.
* Discussion of the draft Personnel Committee policy.
* Discussion of mandatory diversity and inclusion training for faculty search committees.

**March Senate Bulletin Review**

Senators reviewed proposed items for inclusion in the March Senate Bulletin which included:

* Senate Election
* Part-Time Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award
* Perceptions of Academic Administrators
* Green Cat Challenge Awards
* Committee Preference Survey
* University Lecturers Series speaker
* Next Senate Fellow Announcement
* 61st Faculty Senate 2019-2020
* Contact the Faculty senate

Senators approved the March bulletin items.

**Approval of Minutes**

The February 19, 2020 minutes were approved by senators.

Meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Minutes submitted by David Nolan