**Faculty Senate Minutes**

Wednesday, March 4, 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, Lynne Litchke, 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), Angela Ausbrooks (director, School of Social Work), Corey Benbow (president, Student Government), 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:

* Mandatory diversity and inclusion training for university search committees.
  + The provost announced that he will make the training mandatory as soon as all the pieces are in place. Hopefully, everything will be active by spring 2021. Input will be solicited from deans, chairs, and directors.
  + The provost reminded everyone that there is already in-person training and a faculty development workshop in place. He foresees a three year cycle for faculty to renew this training.
* University plan for the COVID 19 virus.
  + Dr. Emilio Carranco, director, Student Health Center, has been in contact for some time with the Centers for Disease Control and is in charge for any medical issues arising on campus.
  + All official communication will be through e-mail and the university home page.
  + For travel, State Department rules will be followed. Three students have been to Level 3 countries and will be assessed by Dr. Carranco personally. He has a very well qualified staff that can take on this work. The students will self-quarantine. There are also facilities available to quarantine students on campus if necessary. Anyone returning from a Level 2 country will be asked to self-monitor.
  + The Dean of Students will be the conduit for official absence verification for students. Faculty are asked to be flexible with students concerning absences.
  + If there is a confirmed case from staff and faculty they should contact their supervisor as soon as possible.
  + The administration will review other study abroad programs heading to Level 2 countries.
* Faculty Work Group on Supporting Students Facing Mental Health Challenges.
  + The provost wants faculty to take the lead to develop a faculty perspective on how to best manage students facing mental health challenges. The work group will address any concerns and questions and create recommendations for how faculty can manage students in these situations.
  + The administration agrees that the counseling center needs more support but is concerned about enhancing faculty rolls and responsibilities concerning student mental health. They will examine funding and see if resources can be reallocated for the counseling center.
  + Dr. Ausbrooks stated that social work faculty are not student social workers, they are social work educators. Faculty need specific roles and responsibilities to make sure they don’t cross any boundaries. The work group will come up with a basic step by step process for faculty.
  + Senators discussed legal and litigation issues that may arise for faculty. The administration recommended that the working group meet with the Faculty Senate.
* Endorsement of the Chicago Statement.
  + The president stated that she intends to sign on to statement, but must consult with the Texas State University System and chancellor. The link for the statement will most likely be on the provost’s web page.
* Recent Election.
  + The president discussed the long lines for voting on campus and stated her intention to assist efforts to educate students on voter registration and early voting for the fall election. She stated that everyone who wanted to vote was able to vote on campus.

**Student Government**

Student Government (SG) president, Corey Benbow, presented information on the following agenda items:

* Zero Waste Plan and Environmental Awareness Day
  + Will be held on April 16 on the quad. Students will be able to trade in recyclable items, such as plastic grocery bags, and the item will be replaced with a reusable product. SG will pass out information flyers on how to be better environmental stewards.
  + SG is looking at a zero waste plan for the university and is working with Chartwells to make an investment in composting material. Chartwells is considering how they could make this happen.
  + SG needs support from faculty to contribute to zero waste. The next Faculty Senate fellow will concentrate on environment and sustainability issues.
* Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Dialogue and Series
  + SG continues to improve their diversity work and conversations around these issues. They are having dialogues with underrepresented organizations to create better allies that will positively impact the university. SG was pleased with diversity week, but not with student participation.
* National Pan Hellenic Council Memorial Yard
  + A memorial yard needs to resonate with black students to show that they are welcomed at this university. SG wants to have a permanent space on the university grounds that memorializes these organizations. There has been some pushback from the administration concerning equal representation of all groups and that any memorial should be inclusive. SG is currently looking for land and is hopeful the next SG administration will continue this work. A Senator recommended that the SG discuss this initiative with University Development, as it may be attractive for alumni to contribute to funding this initiative.

**Personnel Committee Draft Policy**

Senators discussed the personnel committee draft policy from the Academic Governance Committee. The associate provost thinks that this can go through swiftly if the senate moves fast. Some senators feel the new policy is too weak and there are areas in the policy draft that still need work. Senators will continue to work on the draft and will discuss the policy with senate liaisons at an upcoming meeting.

**Faculty representative for Mental Health Work Group**

A faculty representative to the Mental Health Work Group is needed. Senator Ceballos volunteered.

**Approval of Minutes**

The February 26, 2020 minutes were approved by senators.

Meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Minutes submitted by David Nolan