

Faculty Senate Minutes, Wednesday, Sept 12, 2018

JCK 880, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Attending Senators: Augustine Agwuele, Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Janet Bezner, Natalie Ceballos, Michel Conroy, Rachel Davenport, Jesse Gainer, Lynn Ledbetter, Ting Liu, Vince Luizzi, Ben Martin, David Nolan, Michael Supancic, Diego Vacaflares, Alex White

Guests: President Denise Trauth, Provost Gene Bourgeois, Associate Provost Debbie Thorne, Selene Hinojosa (Library), Stephanie Korcheck (Staff Council), Malarie Ohrabka (University Star)

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

President's Academic Advisory Group

- **Vision for the University Diversity Initiatives.** President Trauth discussed recent changes in personnel and organizational structure for diversity and inclusion activities on our campus.
 - Chief Diversity Officer Ameerah McBride will Chair the new Council on Inclusive Excellence. The Council is composed of “thought leaders” -- faculty, staff and students from key constituent groups on campus. The function of this group will be to advise President Trauth and to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment at Texas State.
 - The Office of Equity and Inclusion (formerly Office of Equity and Access) has undergone reorganization. New positions include a Deputy Title IX Coordinator and a Manager of Diversity Initiatives.
 - Provost Bourgeois elaborated on the new position of Special Assistant to the Provost for Inclusion and Diversity. Dr. Scott Bowman will work as a “change agent” to enhance efforts within Academic Affairs related to faculty hiring and classroom activities related to diversity and inclusion.
- **Office of Sustainability.** President Trauth described the function of the new Office of Sustainability (led by James Vollrath). She reviewed Texas State’s history of eco-friendly practices including water re-use, recycling, and energy conservation efforts. The new Office of Sustainability will promote all these efforts and ensure that our university follows best practices for sustainability.
- **Voter Registration Efforts.** President Trauth and Provost Bourgeois provided clarification on the issue of voter registration efforts on campus.
 - Voter registration efforts must be nonpartisan, and faculty should be aware that the classroom is not a designated public forum. Dr. Bourgeois discussed various ways that faculty could encourage voter registration in their classrooms while remaining sensitive to these issues. For instance, faculty could distribute voter

registration forms in class, and then instruct their students to turn in the forms to the external, nonpartisan voter registration groups located at tables in the designated public forum areas outside of class.

- The possibility of introducing voter registration as part of US 1100 or other courses (as discussed in the September 5 Faculty Senate meeting) was also considered. Dr. Bourgeois noted that the faculty control the curriculum.

5:00 Break

Nontenure Line Faculty Reception. The NLF reception will be on September 20 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm in the Wittliff Gallery. Senators should RSVP to Janet in order to receive a name tag.

Meeting minutes from September 5th were approved with minor changes.

Selection of Senators for Summative Reviews of Chairs

- According to section 4.01c of AA/PPS 01.02.11, the faculty senate appoints one non-voting external observer to the summative review of a department chair. The final review is due March 30, but many deans meet with the faculty in late fall or the beginning of spring. Eleven senators signed-up to participate in this year's reviews.

Concerns Raised by Faculty

- **Policy for Uncivil Emails.** Academic Affairs and Student Affairs are teaming up this fall to work on issues relevant to student behavior problems in the classroom. Alex reported that the Assistant Vice President for Academic Services plans to meet with College Councils to discuss student conduct policies, PAWS alerts, and the Texas State Threat Assessment Tree. Senators made various suggestions, including the amendment of existing policies to provide a more expansive definition of the "classroom" to cover electronic communication. The Academic Freedom Committee will consider this issue, as well as cyberbullying policies.
- **Chicago Statement:** A faculty member has asked the senate to consider taking an official stance on the "Chicago Statement" on academic freedom. The chair of the Academic Freedom Committee suggested that the AFC review the statement to make a formal recommendation to the senate.
- **Parking:** A senate liaison relayed concerns about the reduced amount of parking in certain areas on campus, and Alex reported on Parking Service's response. Campus construction activities have temporarily reduced parking in some areas. An explanation of parking fees at various garages on campus was also provided.

Remaining agenda items will be discussed at next week's meeting.

6:02 p.m. Adjournment by Chair Alex White

Minutes Submitted by Natalie Ceballos, Secretary.