

Faculty Senate Minutes, Wednesday, March 6, 2019

JCK 880, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

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

Guests: Selene Hinojosa, Ken Pierce, Oren Renick, Debbie Thorne, Denise Trauth

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

President's Academic Advisory Group (PAAG). President Trauth, Associate Provost Thorne, and Mr. Pierce (VP, Information Technology) discussed the University's academic computing programs. At the end of the PAAG session, senators described plans to celebrate the diamond anniversary of the faculty senate.

- **Academic Computing Program.** *This is a follow up to an issue we discussed last year. The Academic Computing Committee evaluates proposals to fund computing resources for academic labs available to Texas State students. The funds for this program have remained constant for many years despite increased enrollment and the changing role of computing at Texas State. For the last several cycles, all funded proposals involved replacement of existing computers. As the university continues to grow, but the funding of the program does not, this trend will become permanent. The senate would like guidance about how this program fits in the larger vision for funding teaching laboratories. To some in the senate, the process seems turned around. Decisions about new labs and computers are made through other university mechanisms, and refreshing of old computers is decided by a university wide committee of faculty.*
 - VPIT Pierce briefly described the structure and function of the Academic Computing Committee (ACC), which was established more than 20 years ago. VPIT Pierce suggested that the senate might ask the ACC to broaden the program's scope. President Trauth then asked the senators to identify specific examples of technology needs that might not be met because they do not fit within the current ACC guidelines.
 - Several senators suggested broadening the scope of the ACC to accommodate not only computer needs, but also Zoom rooms, interactive learning classrooms, technology for remote interviews of job candidates, 3-D printers, and maker spaces.
 - A senator asked about the replacement plan for the technology in new STEM-focused buildings, such as Ingram Hall. VPIT Pierce indicated that the ACC will be one source of funds to refresh technology in these buildings, but there are also other sources of internal funding available to refurbish classrooms.
 - President Trauth, Associate Provost Thorne, and VPIT Pierce described the role of the Higher Education Assistance Fund (HEAF) in supporting new and existing technology on campus.
- **Diamond Anniversary of the Faculty Senate:** *The faculty senate wants to host an event celebrating 60 years of the senate. Over a year ago, Michel Conroy donated art work to be installed in the Faculty & Staff Room at Jones Diner. We would like to incorporate the unveiling of the installation into our event. However, we are concerned about the timing. The installation has been long delayed due to some structural issue in the building. Recently, the project has been put back on track, but we are wondering if it will be completed in time.*
 - Renovations to the space are complete, and the artwork will be installed. The senate event-planning committee will now work to establish a date for the celebration.

Academic Governance Committee (AGC) Report. AGC Chair Oren Renick reported the committee's progress on their project examining academic governance issues via the perception survey of Deans. He asked the senate for feedback on three issues: continuing the project to facilitate multi-year comparisons, working with Joe Meyer (Assistant VP for Institutional Research) to improve the survey instrument, and providing clarification as to the committee's charge. Senators and Dr. Renick discussed the feasibility of including the AGC in the review of relevant university policies. Senator White indicated that these issues would be discussed at the next senate meeting, and he would return to Dr. Renick with some recommendations.

Academic Freedom Committee (AFC) Report. Senator Luizzi reported the AFC's progress on the proposed cyberharassment policy, their recommendation for policy changes regarding termination of Nontenure Line Faculty, and the possible use of senate liaisons to gather information about academic freedom issues.

- **Cyberharassment PPS.** Dr. Luizzi distributed a draft of the policy. The document compiled current policy statements, definitions, laws, and rules, and identified existing means of dealing with the problem of cyberharassment. It included a list of campus resources that may assist with confronting incidents of cyberharassment, noting that victims of cyberharassment should first contact the University Police Department. Senator White indicated that the proposed policy will be discussed further at the next senate meeting.
- **Recommendation for policy change regarding termination of Nontenure Line Faculty (NLF).** Dr. Luizzi reported that the AFC is concerned about the plight of NLF. Senators discussed existing procedures for termination and non-renewal of NLF. The potential influence of these procedures on NLF's pursuit of fellowships and the workload release program were also considered. Senator White recommended that this issue be referred to the NLF committee with AFC consultation as needed.
- **Possible use of liaisons to gather information about academic freedom issues.** Dr. Luizzi noted that there is an interest in collecting information from faculty about actual or perceived threats to their academic freedom. The AFC is interested in using the senate liaisons to collect information, perhaps in conjunction with the NLF survey. Discussion ensued.

Policies. Senator Supancic will review UPPS 01.04.05 Student's Rights to Know, which is due by 3/19.

Around the Table. Senator White will meet with the Commencement Team to discuss strategies to improve the flow of faculty seating during the ceremony.

Minutes from February 27 were approved.

6:00 pm Adjournment by Chair Alex White

Minutes submitted by Natalie Ceballos, Secretary