**Faculty Senate Minutes**

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

Zoom Meeting, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Attending Senators:** Taylor Acee, Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Stacey Bender, Janet Bezner, Dale Blasingame, Rachel Davenport, Jennifer Jensen, Lynn Ledbetter, Vincent Luizzi, Benjamin Martin, Stan McClellan, Roque Mendez, Andrew Ojede, Michael Supancic, Nicole Wesley

**Guests:** Aimee Roundtree, Amy Benton, Asha Hegde Niezgoda, Christine Sellers, Danette Myers, Edwin Piner, Emily Brunson, In Hyouk Song, James Keefe, Jason Reed, Joni S J Charles, Kathy Ybanez-Llorente, Kyong Hee Chee, Lisa Chrans, Lucia Summers, Luis Intersimone, Megan Trad, Moonis Ali, Peter Dedek, Piyush Shroff , Pratheesh Omana Sudhakaran, Ranjini Mohan, Ricardo Delgado (University Star), Robert Rutledge, Ron Haas, Ruth Taylor , Scott Pope (Library), Shetay Ashford-Hanserd, Sherri Mora, Thomas Patterson, Tina Marie Cade (Senate Fellow), Valarie Fleming

Meeting called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Senate Chair Bezner

**Meeting of the Full Faculty Senate with Senate Liaisons**

Senators and liaisons met in breakout rooms to discuss the university plan to offer most courses in person for Fall 2021 and to solicit feedback about tracking student attendance in the Spring 2021 semester.

Reports from individual colleges included the following general concerns and remarks about the university plan for Fall 2021:

* Broad confusion among faculty about what the plan is and if there are any contingency plans in place.
* Concerns about lack of social distancing, especially if CDC guidance calls for distancing. Many programs are not prepared to provide social distancing if classes are scheduled for full capacity.
* Concerns about assumptions being made regarding vaccination rates/participation.
* Preference for another semester like Fall 2020/Spring 2021 or returning to campus with reduced classroom capacities.
* Faculty like the hybrid class modality because they can schedule classes more intentionally.
* Many faculty do not like the A-B hybrid mode. If the trend is toward social distancing in Fall 2021, faculty prefer classes capped at 50%.

The Faculty Senate has heard from faculty and observed firsthand that students in hybrid and face-to-face classes in which there is an option to attend class via Zoom are choosing not to attend in-person. However, the university administration has told the Faculty Senate that students want to attend face-to-face classes and are requiring faculty teaching hybrid and face-to-face classes be physically present in the classroom. Senators and liaisons discussed the advantages/disadvantages of collecting data directly from faculty teaching in-person classes this semester.

Reports from the various breakout sessions indicated strong support for collecting attendance data. The senate will work to develop a standardized survey for faculty to collect data on student attendance directly from faculty teaching this semester.

In addition to general support for data collection, there were additional comments expressed regarding tracking student attendance including:

* Faculty are tired of completing surveys if no actions come out of the results.
* Concerns that university administration makes decisions without using existing data or collecting data when appropriate/the data do not yet exist.

After the breakout session reports, senators and liaisons discussed the following items:

* Requirements for making up classes missed due to the delayed reopening after the February winter storm. Faculty should refer to the guidance sent by email from the Provost on February 19, 2021 titled, “Further Information on Winter Storm Disruption and Completing Spring 2021 Semester”.
* ODS modifications for Summer 2021 and Fall 2021. The senate does not have information about the status of ODS modifications for future semesters.
* Concern that the face covering policy is not required for campus visitors. Concerns reported about visitors without face coverings are managed on a case-by-case basis.
* Questions about the expectation for faculty and SCH, office hours, etc. Senator Bezner explained that the university has a policy that office hours can be on Zoom/Teams, but if a specific college has a different policy, then faculty need to work with their college to determine how their office hours may be held.

**Senate-Liaison Meeting Debrief**
Senators discussed the outcome of the senate-liaison meeting. Specific concerns included the reliance on the opinion of student government, which many believe is not a representative voice for students on campus. Additionally, some senators are concerned that the data collected by the university and used to justify teaching modality (i.e., face-to-face instruction) may be based on surveys from incoming freshman, a cohort of students not representative of the larger student body.

A senator suggested that the senate provide visual evidence that students are not attending class, despite the administration’s insistence that they want to. Senators agreed to contact their liaisons to request pictures of classrooms during face-to-face instruction.

A senator voiced support for broader acceptance from the administration for the hybrid course modality as the format allows faculty to pivot to different instructional methods more easily as the need arises, although senators agreed that we do not want to become an online university. Senators voiced broad support for more timely decision making and communication if the university plans to change the Fall 2021 schedule and course modalities.

**PAAG Agenda**

Senators discussed topics for the PAAG meeting scheduled for March 3, 2021.

**Joint CAD Faculty Senate Meeting**

Senators discussed potential dates to reschedule the upcoming Joint CAD Faculty Senate meeting and agreed to request a meeting date of March 9 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. with March 23 1:00-3:00 as the second choice.

**Policy Review**UPPS 04.04.37 Texas State Inclusive Excellence Showcase Awards (formerly the Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Awards), due March 5 (Senator Ojede)

AA PPS 08.01.11 Reservation Policy – Conference Room at the Spring Lake Hall, due March 9 (Senator Jensen)

**Adoption of Minutes**
Senators voted to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2021 meeting

**Miscellaneous**

Senator Supancic provided notice that the senate will need to schedule time on March 10 and March 31, 2021 to hear from department and school representatives about curriculum changes.

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 pm

Minutes submitted by Jennifer Jensen