**Faculty Senate Minutes**

Wednesday, January 27, 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:** Peter Golato, M. Alejandra Sorto, Kelly Kaufhold, Judy Oskam, Tina Marie Cade (Senate Fellow), Karen Sigler, Scott Pope (Library), Aimee Roundtree, Christine Sellers, T. Gutierrez, Christian Lieneck, Ricardo Delgado Ahumada (University Star)

Meeting called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Senate Vice-Chair Ledbetter

Senator Ledbetter requested a moment of silence to reflect on the multiple challenges and losses people have experienced during the pandemic.

**Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)**
Drs. Peter Golato, Alejandra Sorto, and Kelly Kaufhold provided an update on the Quality Enhancement Plan and the focus on undergraduate research. A main QEP goal is to provide a pathway for all undergraduates who attend Texas State and have a desire to engage in research but are not sure how to seek out projects or mentors, conduct research/creative expression, etc. The plan is that students will be able to attend an informational event to learn about research opportunities with faculty and then participate in workshops on topics such as fundamentals of research, research ethics, etc. After completing the workshops, students will be able to register for two new/proposed courses: 3399 General Introduction to Research and 4399 Directed Research. In those courses, they will work closely with a mentor with the end goal of doing practical research or creative expression and disseminating the results. The QEP undergraduate research plan has a 5-year budget and space has already been allocated. Dr. Golato indicated that the current Faculty Workload policy includes the possibility for workload credit for faculty who work with undergraduates on research/creative expression, although the decision to assign workload credits is ultimately up to an individual’s department chair/director.

A senator suggested departments consider awarding scholarship credit for mentoring undergraduate research. An additional suggestion to offer workshops or training on how faculty should advocate for themselves with the concern that unless faculty self-advocate, they may not be granted workload release and therefore will not participate in QEP undergraduate research.

A senator asked where the 3399 and 4399 courses are housed. Dr. Golato indicated they would be provided through University College. To date, the courses are not yet in the CIM system.

A senator asked how the courses fit within existing degree plans. Dr. Golato said that for most programs, the courses do not fit but there is the possibility of course substitution/equivalency.

**Report from NLFC**
Senator Ledbetter provided an update from the NLF committee (NLFC). They decided against holding an in-person reception this year and discussed reinstating the BookCats Club to serve as an outreach/community style event. Senator Ledbetter requested the Senate help underwrite the cost of the BookCats Club book, however, since the NFL committee budget is within the Senate budget and the NLF committee earned the money through sponsorships, Senate Chair Bezner stated the NLF committee could spend the $350 as they see fit.
The NLF committee had a meeting on January 15, 2021 but it was not well-attended because of the turnover/additions to NLF positions. The NFLC is working on updating announcements and existing PowerPoints that provide NFL information. Senator Ledbetter concluded by conveying that Dr. Valarie Fleming will request a chair from each college to review the NLF career path proposal and provide feedback.

**TRIO Program**
Senators discussed the TRIO program information presented in a previous senate meeting. Many senators were uncertain about the specific expectations and engagement the program coordinators wanted from the Senate. Senator Bezner will follow up with the TRIO program to ask for more information on what specifically they are looking for in terms of faculty involvement in the grant writing process.

**Upcoming Deadlines**Valerie Anderson provided updates on upcoming deadlines including:

* February 1, 2020 - Distribution of Committee Preference survey
* February 1, 2020 - University Lecturers proposals due. To date, no proposals have been received. Some faculty have requested their proposal activities be delayed since they could not participate due to COVID-19. A senator suggested they resubmit their proposal for consideration this year. Senator Bezner will talk with VPSA Cynthia Hernandez about rolling funds over until next year.

Ms. Anderson urged senators to encourage faculty participation in both the Dean/Chair evaluation survey and the Committee Preference survey. A senator expressed concern from a faculty member about the timing of the Dean/Chair evaluation since the survey feedback is due before annual review decisions are made. Most senators did not think this was a major concern to address since there are similar situations throughout the university (e.g., student evaluations are due before final grades are posted).

**CAD Items from January 26, 2021**
Senators discussed comments by the Provost that classes coded FTF should transition back to classroom-based instruction on February 1, 2021. Senators expressed continuing concerns about this decision and reiterated that teaching modality should be faculty choice, there are no available data that suggest the majority of students want in-person instruction at this point in time, and that although there is no evidence of classroom-based transmission, other metrics used to determine whether courses should be offered in person are at an all-time high (e.g., positivity rates, hospitalizations, and hospital capacity).

**Create PAAG Agenda**Senators discussed potential agenda items for the PAAG meeting scheduled on February 2, 2021.

**February Senate Bulletin**Senators reviewed items on the draft Senate Bulletin.

 **Council for Inclusive Excellence**Senator Martin provided an update on the Council for Inclusive Excellence activities. The council has decided on three initiatives including: leadership development, developing a common language around Diversity and Inclusion, and addressing microaggression. Additionally, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training Task Force is working on surveying groups on campus about whether the university should have required diversity training on campus and if so, what the training should include. Senator Martin requested the Senate set aside time during a future meeting to provide feedback.

**Policy Review**
AAPPS 02.04.10 Honorary Faculty Titles (pen and ink) due February 10, 2021 (Senator Mendez)

**Approval of Minutes**
Senators approved the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm

Minutes submitted by Jennifer Jensen