**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

**March 9, 2022**

**4-6 p.m.**

**Attending senators:** Taylor Acee, Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Stacey Bender, Dale Blasingame,Rachel Davenport, Peter Dedek, Jennifer Jensen, Lynn Ledbetter, Ben Martin, Stan McClellan, Roque Mendez, Danette Myers, Andrew Ojede, Michael Supancic, Nicole Wesley

**Attending guests:** Janet Bezner, Gene Bourgeois (Provost), Kristy Daniel, Karen Sigler, Debbie Thorne (Associate Provost), Denise Trauth (President)

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

**President’s Academic Advisory Group (PAAG)**

* Ken Pierce, the VP of the Division of IT, will email retired faculty and deans/chairs to announce retired faculty will have access to the Microsoft 365 suite within the university’s licensing framework. All retired faculty will now be able to download the suite at no additional cost. This solves an issue previously brought to Senate from the Retirement and Benefits Committee.
* Regarding the summative reviews of deans, this is a process that started in the late 2000s. The Faculty Senate at the time worked with the provost at the time to develop the policy statement and to carry out summative reviews of deans every six years. Perry Moore, the former provost, wanted the policy to be non-specific, which is why there isn’t much guidance on the process to this day. Over time, the reviews have been done in a fairly consistent manner, but it has required senators to take the lead and figure out how to make that happen. Provost Bourgeois said he is not opposed to helping create a much more detailed format for these reviews. Associate Provost Thorne and Assistant Provost Brooks will work with the Senate to specify the role of the senators in the policy statement. The provost said he is also not opposed to using Qualtrics to conduct the summative review surveys through Institutional Research. Thorne said her office will want to meet with senators who recently served as chairs on a summative review committee.
* The provost said all approvals of Education Abroad programs are moving forward. The Regents changed rules at their last meeting to allow faculty and staff travel to Level 3 and 4 COVID areas. The provost said they are looking at creating a committee to provide recommendations on requests to Level 4 destinations. The provost expects to approve all requests beyond destinations in war zones and COVID hot spots.
* A senator asked for an update on making hiring policies between faculty and chairs/directors more consistent. He said faculty are concerned about what information they can share and what they can’t share. Thorne said this is on her to-do list. The new assistant provost will be brought into the loop in this policy update.
* A senator raised a concern from students and parents about the opening of the Planet 420 Smoke and Vape Shop across from Strahan Arena. President Trauth said the university tried to buy that property but was unsuccessful. She hopes the property will be on the market again soon, and she expects the university to be aggressive again in trying to buy it.

**PAAG Debrief – Senator Ledbetter**

Senator Ledbetter asked senators for thoughts regarding the PAAG discussion.

* A senator raised the point that IT’s statement regarding retired faculty and Microsoft licenses was very different from initial conversations they had with the chair of the Retirement and Benefits Committee.
* A senator asked where the money for the licenses came from, which was the original reason behind IT saying they could not help with a solution. Pierce told Senator Ledbetter there would not be any cost to the university since it was negotiated with Microsoft.
* Senator Ledbetter said Senators Dedek, McClellan and Wesley will be the significant contributors to the dean summative review policy statement revision since they have recently chaired or are currently chairing review committees.
* A senator said this clarification will be incredibly helpful with consistency in the data.
* A senator said there are two components to the summative review process – an objective part and a subjective part. He believes the objective part needs to be standardized. That way the data can be analyzed for the subjective part.

**University Lecturers Committee – Kristy Daniel, Chair**

Kristy Daniel from the University Lecturers Committee shared an update on proposal submissions. There were 12 proposals submitted, and the committee is recommending to the Senate that nine of them receive funding. The proposals recommended for approval cover a wide range of colleges. The total amount of recommended funding is $21,515. That is slightly higher than the expected budget, but Daniel is hopeful there was rollover funding from the previous semester’s cancellations related to COVID. If not, a proposal has been marked to be reduced for partial funding.

Daniel said her committee discussed three issues:

* The first was a lack of proposals at the original deadline, which she hopes will be fixed by making a standard deadline every year of 5 p.m. on the first Monday in February.
* Second, there was a new, fillable PDF application this year. Daniel said this helped with consistency, but there were a few issues with the budget. She has made some slight modifications to show you can only request the maximum request of $3,000. Any funding request more than that will have to be noted in a special area.
* Finally, Daniel said her committee had questions about a post-event report that is required from funded requests. The reports go straight to the Senate, and the committee never sees them. She wanted to know if the report should be tied into future eligibility and whether the Senate is currently doing that. Senator Ledbetter said it would be the role of the Senate to make sure the report was submitted in a timely manner.

Daniel said the committee is also working on different marketing efforts and workshops to create more interest and visibility to draw more applications in the future.

A senator asked about the purpose of the post-event report. Senator Ledbetter said she assumes it’s because money is involved. The senator said no one is reading these reports so he suggested the Senate remove this requirement.

**Standing Rules Change: Committees – Senator Acee**

The Senate is considering a potential change to the standing rules for committees. At concern are members who are not attending or not committing to the work of the committee. Standing rules state committee members can be replaced by the Senate if they fail to attend consecutive meetings or half the meetings in a year. However, there is no language regarding production during meetings and the process of how removal would occur.

Senator Acee shared his recommended change to the standing rules:

*The committee chair is encouraged to formatively inform committee members when they are performing below expectations regarding meeting attendance and successful completion of tasks. When a committee member fails to (a) attend three consecutive meetings or half the meetings in a year or (b) successfully complete three consecutive tasks or half of the tasks in a year, the committee chair may decide to email the faculty senate chair to (a) formally request replacing the committee member or (b) alert the faculty senate about the issue and request that the faculty member continue serving on the committee, but on a trial basis until the issue is rectified or the committee chair decides to formally request replacing the committee member. When emailing the faculty senate chair about such issues, describe the problem at hand and the proposed solution to the problem with a justification.*

* A senator raised the concern that some committees only have one task. She also said some committees are appreciative of anyone who shows up.
* A senator suggested changing the language to “a reasonable number” of absences and/or tasks.
* A senator said this issue came up because of the University Curriculum Committee, which he chairs. Every meeting of that committee is critical where decisions are made. He said a representative of a college not showing up at university level committee meetings or not participating at college level committee meetings are serious issues. Another senator said it is obvious when a member has not done the work, and it’s disrespectful to others who have done the work.
* A senator said more discretion should be given to the committee chair since every committee is different. Another senator said he is leery of estimating and evaluating performance as a committee chair.
* A senator said she believes issues with attendance and performance should be reported to the offending member’s chair, since faculty claim service on their CV. Another senator said this role should fall on the Senate chair.
* A senator raised concerns about the role of the Senate chair getting caught in the middle of a dispute over performance. Another senator said he believes that’s why the rules should be kept at an attendance level and not an estimation of work or performance. He said he sees nothing wrong with the current standing rules because they provide a metric to base the potential removal of a committee member.
* A senator asked if there should be an appeal process for the offending member. Senator Ledbetter said hybrid meetings make it easier than ever to attend and do the work.
* A senator said it’s important for members who cannot attend a meeting to send a courtesy email to the committee chair to let them know about the absence and allow a chance to explain or rectify the situation. Another senator said he believes it’s reasonable for a well-intentioned committee member to be temporarily removed if they can’t participate for some reason.
* A senator said he has concerns about making this punitive by telling a department chair. He said the situation resolves itself by the offending member being replaced. The goal is to get a member in the committee who will do the work. He also suggested changing the language to reflect attempts to communicate with the member instead of them missing meetings.
* A senator agreed with not making this process punitive with the department chair. She again stated that some committees only meet once, so the language should reflect leaving the language vague with wording such as “a reasonable number.”
* A senator said the current language does say missing half of meetings in a year could result in removal, so it does address committees that only meeting once or twice.
* A senator said there is no requirement that a committee chair actually take action if a member misses too many meetings, so he believes that does give the chair some discretion.
* A senator said the standing rules do not address performance on a committee. Another senator said that responsibility falls to the committee chair. Another senator said there is no way to force members to actually do the work, and it puts the chair in a tough spot.
* Senator Acee said he is open to adjusting his proposed language to include the option for a chair to remove a member who is not holding up their end of the workload. Another senator said he would not be in favor of that and would be in favor of leaving the standing rules as they current are written.

The Senate decided to leave the standing rules as is.

**Committee Updates – Senator Ledbetter**

* The Academic Freedom Committee sent the Senate a shortened version of its proposed survey to faculty. Senator Ledbetter suggested they wait to send the survey until the start of April since there are already a few surveys in the field.
* Senator Jensen said the Nontenure Line Faculty Committee discussed family leave with Associate Provost Thorne. Thorne told the committee the state legislature recently passed a law that facilitates paid leave, and the university is working on a policy related to that.
* The NLF Committee Reception is April 7.
* The Academic Freedom Committee requested the Senate look into concerns with the grade change policy. This came up at the last CAD meeting as an aside. Senator Ledbetter is requesting more information.
* The university’s ombudsman will now be called ombudsperson in appropriate policies and pages on the Senate website.
* Senator Bell-Metereau recommended suspending the Environment and Sustainability Committee but with the possibility of issuing a new charge after the announcement of the new university president.

A senator asked if there was an update regarding the quality of custodial services in multiple buildings. Senator Ledbetter emailed Eric Algoe to raise concerns and will share his reply with the senator.

Minutes from the March 2 meeting were approved.

The Senate went into executive session to discuss two items:

* The Senate approved funding recommendations from the University Lecturers Committee
* The Senate approved removing post-event reporting requirements for anyone funded through the University Lecturers Series

The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.