**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

**February 15, 2023**

**4-6 p.m.**

**Attending senators:** Taylor Acee, Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Stacey Bender, Dale Blasingame, Rachel Davenport, Peter Dedek, Farzan Irani, Jennifer Jensen, Lynn Ledbetter, Ben Martin, Roque Mendez, Andrew Ojede, Adetty Pérez de Miles, Michael Supancic, Alex White

**Attending guests:** Lisa Ancelet, Jesse Backstrom, Officer Brady, Chief Matthew Carmichael, Officer Kendra Marsteller, Colleen Myles, Aimee Roundtree, Karen Sigler, Sgt. Gregory Slade, Lois Stickley

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

**Safety Concerns and Emergency Procedures**

The Senate invited UPD Chief Matt Carmichael to discuss safety on campus and his vision for UPD now that he’s had a few months on the job.

Carmichael started by saying UPD is not Memphis, referring to the Memphis police officers charged in the death of a man during a traffic stop. He said it’s his job to demonstrate to the community why UPD is nothing like Memphis.

UPD is a full-service police department in San Marcos and Round Rock with a full-service dispatch center, which is located inside the Hays County Emergency Center. Carmichael said this is the poster child for responding to the 9/11 Commission on Interoperability. Multiple agencies are in the same, high-tech room.

Texas State is home to ALERRT, The Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center. ALERRT provides training across the country, and all members of UPD are trained at Level 1, which is training around response to an active threat. All UPD officers also recently took part in a simunition training with other Hays County and San Marcos law enforcement officers. (Simunition involves the firing of tiny paint pellets, so it’s a safe, live training environment.)

UPD personnel are also trained in first aid, CPR and AED – and the department is one of a small number trained with naloxone. Every member of UPD has been issued naloxone, which is an injection to help someone survive an overdose. Carmichael believes the injection is much more effective than similar nasal sprays. Two UPD officers have also received training to themselves become trainers with first aid, CPR, AED and naloxone. UPD is also trained in civilian response to active shooter events, which includes Stop the Bleed training on tourniquets and wound packing. UPD is willing to train any group on campus on any of these topics.

From an equipment perspective, UPD officers have side arms, long rifles, ballistic helmets and just added something called body bunkers, which are large, bullet-resistant shields.

Carmichael then provided some statistics regarding students in crisis. During the 2020-21 school year, more than 60% of college students met the criteria for at least one mental health problem. Many schools have turned to faculty to be “first responders” to identify students in distress. However, the people to respond to someone in crisis is police, and Carmichael believes there is no one better to do so. UPD Officer Marsteller is a dedicated, certified mental health officer. She works in partnership with Officer Brady, UPD’s therapy dog. Marsteller works hand in hand with the Counseling Center and the San Marcos Police Department. Carmichael recommended every faculty member have the Counseling Center’s phone number on speed dial for non-emergencies – 512-245-2208. In addition, the Counseling Center has seen better success with referrals when the student is aware that a referral is happening, so they feel part of the process. Carmichael recommends that if it’s safe and the faculty member feels comfortable with it.

UPD’s threat assessment team has also been certified through a scientific approach called WAVR-21 and have access to a 24/7 hotline to experts who deal with threat assessment. With the recent bomb threat on campus, UPD immediately contacted the Austin Regional Intelligence Center to assess if there were any similar threats on other college campuses. ARIC resources include direct connection with the FBI, Homeland Security and DPS, to name a few. Carmichael said he was in contact with parents during the bomb threat, and the parents helped connect the dots of what was being shared on Facebook. They then assessed whether the threat was specific of vague, which helped them determine the need to evacuate or not. He chose to not evacuate based on the threat assessment and took a three-day approach, instead. A command center was set up for three days, 24/7. UPD did a walk-through of each facility listed in the bomb threat, and all partners were called to assist. He understands that this caused some stress and worry to see heavy police presence without evacuating buildings, but he said the standard they follow didn’t call for the buildings to be evacuated.

A senator said he was teaching in a building mentioned in the bomb threat, and he had a hard time convincing students that the threat was minimal. He said there may have been a psychological benefit of evacuating and looking around for a half hour and announcing an “all clear.” Carmichael said he’s never thought about it from that perspective and thinks it’s something worth thinking about.

Carmichael said the bomb threat situation opened working relationships with other law enforcement. For instance, Austin PD and the FBI have recently come to campus to train with their bomb dogs. UPD is also in the process of getting its own bomb dog, which is standard for a university of size in the United States. The dog will be acquired through a partnership with the ATF. The university will receive the dog, training and certification at no cost, but it comes with a commitment of being an ATF partner at major events like the Olympics, for instance.

UPD also provides personal defense training for faculty or groups on campus. It’s a 90-minute course on how to take care in a bad situation and build confidence in options.

There is a new section of the police.txst.edu website called Faculty Safety Resources with all information a faculty member would need to report a threat or situation that doesn’t require 911 or request any of the trainings Carmichael mentioned.

On March 1, UPD will adopt a new policy manual that will compart with all federal and state statutes and best practices, which will be made public. Department training procedures will be included in this.

UPD responded to 16,365 calls in 2022. Eight of those incidents resulted in use of force. UPD has a duty to intervene policy. If anyone sees a fellow officer doing something inappropriate, that person is responsible to intervene, stop it and provide medical attention.

**Addition to Ombuds information on Senate Website**

The faculty ombudspersons have prepared a list of additional resources and links for faculty who are considering a grievance filing. The hope is for this information to be added to the Faculty Senate website.

Ombudsperson Colleen Myles joined the Senate to discuss how these resources were developed. Myles said she and Todd Jewell, her fellow ombudsperson, looked at their eight months in the role so far and what questions faculty ask during this process. These resources were already available, but they’re learned that faculty members are not always finding them or connecting with them as they currently exist.

A senator said Texas State modeled this dual ombudsperson trial after the University of Nebraska’s program, and he feels the Q&A section from Nebraska’s website is missing here. Myles said they wanted to wait until the end of this semester to have a discussion with the team at Nebraska so they could have more experience in this role. She agreed a similar Q&A section would be a great addition to the website.

A senator said it’s difficult to find information about the ombudspersons. A Google search will first take someone to the Faculty Senate website, which doesn’t contain a link to the ombudsperson services site. The two websites are not communicating with each other, so the senator suggested the ombudspersons work with the Senate administrator to work this out. Myles agreed it’s clunky right now and will ask Associate Provost Thorne on fixing this situation.

A senator asked if the ombudspersons have visited various departments and schools to introduce themselves and their services. Myles said they’ve participated in the Let’s Do Lunch Friday series for faculty and have been part of several email campaigns. They’ve also visited with the Senate, Council of Chairs and other bodies, as well – but they have not visited individual colleges or schools. She is open to that if the Senate would like.

 The Senate approved adding this new list of resources to the website.

**Faculty Senate Fellow Call for 2023-2024**

The Senate subcommittee on faculty and administrator salaries will present its findings on April 12, so the Senate chair will contact current Senate fellow, MiHyun Kim, to schedule a meeting to present her findings on the topic.

On this topic, a senator said he sat in on the Council of Chairs meeting last week, and Associate Provost Thorne said the timeline for faculty salary equity adjustments is early March. He questioned whether the Senate should wait until April to discuss this topic. Another senator said this was just the first step in the process regarding salary equity and salary conversion, so she wants the discussion to continue beyond March. Another senator agreed that the equity adjustment is a start, but it’s not enough.

The Senate will soon need to put out the call for its 2023-2024 fellow, so senators were asked to brainstorm themes. A senator said staffing has been a consistent source of conversation in the Senate. He suggested looking at benchmarking Texas State’s staffing needs against fellow universities. Another senator suggested looking at the process of academic advising for students, especially programs that need specialized advising. Another senator suggested a theme of ongoing threats to tenure and how this has played out in other states.

The Senate will continue discussions on this at next week’s meeting.

**Topics for Meeting with Liaisons**

The Senate meeting with liaisons is scheduled for March 1. Senators discussed whether the meeting should be held in person or via Zoom. A senator said if the meeting is held via Zoom, a good chunk of time should be set aside for breakout rooms and discussion. Another senator said she’d prefer for this to be the entire focus of the two-hour meeting. Another senator said liaisons in his college suggested this, as well. The Senate agreed to hold the meeting via Zoom with the liaisons for the entire two hours.

In terms of meeting topics, a senator suggested liaisons be asked which topics they are hearing about from their faculty. The chair will email the liaisons to solicit issues to discuss, but there will also be time in the meeting for open discussion.

**Topics for Joint Meeting of AAC, Council of Chairs and Faculty Senate**

The Joint Meeting of AAC, Council of Chairs and Faculty Senate will take place March 28 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. in Flowers 230. Senators were asked to begin thinking about agenda items they wanted to bring to the table. Two senators suggested staffing concerns as the primary topic of discussion.

**Other Business**

Institutional Research recently sent out reminders about the perception surveys for chairs, directors, deans, provost and president. Chair and director survey results (without names) go to the deans for use in the review process. A senator said she has heard concerns about the need to log in and whether these are anonymous – especially in small departments. IR uses an internally built survey tool for these but wants to switch to Qualtrics in the future. Another senator said she gets a sense of apathy with surveys like this, wondering if anyone thinks anything ever comes from them.

The idea of course releases for Senate leadership roles have been approved by Associate Provost Thorne. Right now, the Senate chair receives 12 hours of release, but the vice chair and secretary do not receive any. Specifics will need to be voted on by the Senate and sent forward for approval. The vice chair of the Senate said she doesn’t plan on resuming that role next academic year because of the workload coupled with the regular expectations of a full-time faculty member and suggested the vice chair and secretary could earn three hours of release (which can be a course release, or some other release of duties as negotiated with a chair or director) each long semester for their service roles as senate officers. The vice-chair pointed out that without incentive to take on additional workload, it may become more difficult to find faculty willing to volunteer their time in these roles.

The Senate will vote on this issue at the next meeting.

Minutes from the February 8 meeting were approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.