**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**Minutes**

**August 23, 2023**

**4:00-6:00 pm**

**JCK 880**

**Members Present:** Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Stacey Bender, Dale Blasingame, Bill Chittenden, Rachel Davenport, Peter Dedek, Dave Donnelly, Farzan Irani, Jennifer Jensen, Bill Kelemen, Lynn Ledbetter, Jo Beth Oestreich, Adetty Pérez de Miles, Michael Supancic, and Alex White

**Guests**: Susannah Broyles, Lauren Goodley, Scott Kruse, Roque Mendez, A. Miles, Colleen Myles-Baltzly, Kathleen Padilla, Piyush Shroff, Reagan Sims and Lucia Summers.

Chair Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Chair Ledbetter introduced the **2023-2024 Faculty Senate Fellow** **Piyush Shroff.** Shroff will

present his insights on his selected proposal for this year, *Artificial Intelligence in Education,* at

the next Faculty Senate meeting. Shroff shared his appreciation for this opportunity and looks

forward to working with the Senate this year.

The next item on the agenda was for the Faculty Senate to identify one Senator from the

College of Science and Engineering (COSE) and one Senator from the Applied Arts (AA) to

serve on the Academic Program Organizational Review Task Forces.

**MOTION** to recommend Senator Michael Supancic to serve as the AA representative for the Academic Program Organizational Review Task Force**. PASSED**.

**MOTION** to recommend Senator Dave Donnelly to serve as the COSE representative for the Academic Program Organizational Review Task Force. **PASSED**.

Senators Supancic and Donnelly will be put forward from Faculty Senate to serve on the Academic Program Organization Review Task Forces. The initial meetings for both task forces with President Damphousse and Provost Bourgeois will be on Sept. 5, 2023.

The next item on the agenda was to address concerns raised by the Academic Freedom Committee related to changes to the **AAPPS 04.01.32 Management of Funding and Faculty Fellowships.** Dr. Thorne asked the Senate to review the policy changes. Chair Ledbetter asked Senators to take the next couple of weeks to review the policy posted in TEAMS and use track changes to suggest any changes to AAPS 04.01.32.

The next item on the agenda was a request from Chair Ledbetter for clarification on when **the**

**AAPPS 04.02.32 Faculty Grievance Policy** will be up for review. This policy will be up for

review April 1, 2024. Ledbetter reiterated the Senate will be able to review the policy. Ledbetter

reminded the Senate at the July 2023 Faculty Senate meeting, the Senate reviewed the

proposed policy wording change and wrote suggested changes (see below):

*The proposed pen-and-ink change to paragraph 03.01, the reference to “appropriate party” means a faculty member may wish to talk first with a faculty colleague, staff member, or other person with whom a disagreement has arisen. In other words, a resolution would be sought directly with the relevant party before going to the department chair, etc*.

At the July 2023 Faculty Senate meeting the senate suggested the policy read**: “*…chair, director, dean or appropriate party.” This was in place of “and/or appropriate party.*”**

After a brief discussion of the two policy changes above, one Senator asked if it was possible to get a copy of Nathan’s comments from the Academic Freedom Committee. Comments were available on a previous detailed agenda. Chair Ledbetter shared the process on how policies are reviewed in Canvas.

Relating to policy reviews on today’s agenda, a concern was raised by a Senator regarding the graduate student salary employment policy (**UPPS No. 07.07.06).** The policy was up for review July 1, but it is unclear if it came through to Ledbetter or if this policy review was accidentally overlooked. Senators were interested in possibly revisiting this policy. Ledbetter stated she would look back through her emails to check on when the policy was sent or not for review from this past July. The Senator will initiate a discussion with Dean Golato to clarify if there is still an opportunity to review the policy for these students. One area of concern the Senator noted from the policy is related to the graduate students’ workload. These students are technically faculty when they are teaching as the instructor of record. There is a high workload expectation on those students who are also taking full-time graduate courses. The policy requires graduate students to teach 2 courses (50%). The policy uses workload calculation for work but there is no workload calculation for course work.

**Around the Table. Chair Ledbetter** reminded Senators to contact the Chair if there are items they might wish to add to the agenda. Ledbetter tries to keep the agenda fluid enough to include and address items that arise. For example, next week at 4:00 pm Dr. Thorne and Dr. Brooks will discuss post tenure review. Additionally, Senators are encouraged to remind faculty to utilize the online contact form to submit concerns to the Faculty Senate. It is important to note that there is a section in the submission form that asks what the concerned individual has done to seek information or remedy. Ledbetter also shared concerns communicated by Senators related to the fast-paced schedule of writing, development and review of new doctoral program proposals from this summer: poor communication, weight on faculty responsibility, etc. Conversations with the upper administration are ongoing to avoid this process happening again in such an accelerated manner.

**Items brought forward for Around the Table**:

* Due to the university dropping the University College, we will update the information on the Faculty Senate website in Standing Rules Article 5 and remove University College from the language. This will be voted on during the August 30 meeting.
* There was a question concerning the FAQ section on the Dean of Students website about freedom of speech. The Senator that shared the language needs clarification and will reach out to the Dean of Students about this item.
* Vice Chair Davenport shared the two August New Non-Tenured Line Faculty (NLF) orientation sessions had more than three times the turnout from previous offerings. Vice Chair Davenport sent session information to all chairs to send out as an invitation to new NLF faculty to attend one of the sessions. The extra communication resulted in the highest attendance for these new orientation sessions (almost 70 attendees).
* A Senator will contact Dr. Thorne to clarify if the Workload Release Program permits NLF faculty serving on the NLF Committee to be eligible to apply for this opportunity. One suggestion offered by the Senator is to have the member recuse themself from reviewing the workload release applications. A question was asked if NLF serving on Faculty Senate were eligible to apply for the Workload Release Program and it was clarified that they are.
* There are concerns related to SB17 and SB18 impact on faculty. The university is addressing the compliance aspect of the new laws. Currently, the university is adjusting and reorganizing, and the Texas State University System Counsel’s office is working on addressing these laws. The Texas Council of Faculty will be meeting in a few weeks and there will be conversations about how they are addressing these laws. As information is provided, the conversation will continue. The Faculty Senate may invite Dr. Gigi Secuban to visit with the Senate on this issue or if time permits ask President Damphousse about this issue at our first PAAG meeting in September.
* There were several Senators who shared concerns by faculty and students related to the rollout of the ‘opt-out’ process of the new Follet book purchase program. Some Senators shared information presented by the Follet representatives last year on this new process did not occur, i.e., if textbooks were not available as an E-book, the bookstore would have a hard copy of the text. This did not occur this term. There are some departments whose students do not have textbooks. Another issue is faculty having difficulty with the activation of books on Canvas sites. There were some faculty who were able to activate the books on Canvas, and others who could not. Another point raised on this issue related to an additional fee for students who want to have books shipped (hard copy of texts) to them if students could not drive to LBJ to pick up their books (Round Rock students). This additional fee is above the $250 fee. This discussion revealed the disconnect between the Round Rock campus and the San Marcos campus in terms of accessing non-E-textbooks by students. The final comment on this round table issue focused on the lack of communication and support to faculty on the implementation of the new ‘opt out’ book system prior to the beginning of the fall term. The Senate will continue to monitor this new system, and there will be a subcommittee to gather specific data on this issue.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

TheSenate moved into Executive session to discuss and approve Committee appointments and procedural protocols.

**Committees:**

A **MOTION** to approve University Committee members and Faculty Senate Committee member changes. **PASSED**.

**Procedural Discussion.**

**Chair Ledbetter adjourned the meeting at 6:04 pm.**

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 30, 2023, 4:00 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted

JB Oestreich, Secretary