

Faculty Senate Minutes

September 9, 2022

Attended: Brooks, Mary Liz; Brown, Trisha; Correa, Priscella; Crosman, Erik; Denton, Kenneth; Ghosh, Nabarun; Hoffmann, Eric; Humpherys, Sean; Issa, Roy; Leitch, Ken; Manfredi, Guiligliemo; McCauley, Kelly; Pinkham, Ashley; Price, Blake; Ramos Salazar, Leslie; Reardon, Matt; Smith, Bob; Spencer, Brian; Unnikrishnan, Vinu; Meljac, Eric; Welch, Reed; Whaley, Brigitte; Williams, Leslie; Yarbrough, Jason

Absent: Ambrose, Bill; Tarpley, Troy;

Guest(s): Kelly Polden, Assistant Vice President, Communication and Marketing

The meeting was called to order at 12:16 by President Ashley Pinkham. *Minutes of the 8/26 meeting were considered.*

- *Motion to approve: Whaley, ESS*
- *Second: Meljac, English*
- *Motion passed*

CURRENT BUSINESS

Reports from Faculty Senate committees

- **Handbook Committee** Yarbrough mentioned a number of recommendations that were made last year that did not make it into the handbook this year. He mentioned looking into possibly resuming those efforts. He also mentioned outdated library information and recommended reviewing the handbook pertaining to library information.

Motion to review the handbook pertaining to the library:

Motion to approve: Yarbrough, Chemistry and Physics

Second: Ghosh, ANS

Motion passed.

- **Joint Student-Faculty Committee on Academic Affairs** Crosman discussed committee discussions concerning delegating responsibilities among the committee concerning who would attend student events.
- **Ad-hoc travel committee** Denton reiterated the discrepancy of travel funds across different departments/colleges in the university and discussed compiling a list to summarize this information in order to formulate a gameplan. Ghosh reiterated how unfair the discrepancy is, and Issa called for more transparency. Meljac asks where

unused travel funds go, and asks whether there is a discrepancy of funds available depending on the point in time in the semester when the faculty member travels. Humpherys mentions that in the COB, professors are asked in the beginning of the semester to notify the college about future travel plans so that the money can be allocated accordingly, and advocated for this system. McCauley points out that in the COB, funding depends on the rank of the professor and that funding is transparent to all professors of each rank how much money is available to them. Reed said that funding can be dependent on how much individual deans decide to allocate towards professor travel in their respective departments. Leslie Williams mentions that in FAH:ATD, professional development/travel money often goes towards recruiting for the department. Humpherys suggests that a flat rate (for travel funds) across the university may not be the correct solution, and that different colleges may have different needs. Meljac seconds this sentiment. Unnikrishnan mentions that in engineering, travel is not only required for research but to maintain standing in professional organizations.

- **University-wide committee vacancies**

- **Faculty Development Committee**

Reed nominates Ming, Xie in political science. Kenneth Denton nominates Feline Franklin. Vote for Xie: 8. Vote Franklin: 14. Abstaining: 1. Franklin wins.

Colleague feedback

- **After-hours support**

Concerning colleague feedback relating to after-hours support for students. Mary Liz Brooks suggests extended IT support, especially for students taking online courses. Meljac recommends offices such as financial aid do a trial period for extended hours, possibly concentrated in the beginning of the semester. Pinkham mentions that she was informed that the University was now being treated like any other illness and that there will be no after-hours testing and or support for COVID related issues.

- **Blackboard/WT Class**

Hoffmann mentions that members in the COB would find it a significant amount of work to change platforms, Leslie Williams seconds this sentiment. Yarbrough says that he's heard similar things from AMS, saying most people in his college were against change. Blake Price says people in NHS were neutral, and says any change that might occur should be accompanied by a sufficient warning ahead of time. Denton recommends compiling a list of the main problems that people have with Blackboard, and figure out if competitors do better in those categories. Ghosh suggests that even if we don't switch from blackboard, students need more help and access to IT. Correa says that NHS:Nursing was largely indifferent, but mentioned that being able to proctor exams online is of utmost importance to her department. Reed says that some students prefer Canvas, but this may be because Canvas is used widely in some high schools. Humpherys suggests everybody email their faculty and solicit blackboard complaints.

Motion to proceed with Humphreys' suggestion above:

Motion to Approve: Humpherys, COB

Seconded: Denton, ESS

Motion Passed.

President Pinkham makes a reminder that the Piper Professor applications due by 11/18/22.

NEW BUSINESS

Inviting Dr. Terry to the Senate

President Pinkham raised the question as to whether the Senate would like to invite Dr. Terry to the Senate. Meljac recommended that we ask our respective colleagues as to whether there would be any question we would like to pose to Dr. Terry. Crosman suggested that maybe the Executive Committee meet with him in private instead of bringing him to Senate.

Faculty Development Leave

President Pinkham mentions her having talked to Dr. Terry about faculty development leave. She asked how many positions are available, and was told that there was one guaranteed position per year. She read the following passage from the faculty handbook:

p. 124 of Faculty Handbook: *The Faculty Senate shall establish an application timeline and shall publish an application form and a format for the development leave application. An applicant for a faculty development leave shall be required to describe the nature and proposed use of the leave.*

It was mentioned that there was no current standard application form and that one should be developed in order to be in line with the handbook. Pinkham mentioned that she would make a draft for an application which she would present to the Senate for review.

Faculty Senate night at WT football game

President Pinkham requested whether the Senate could be invited to the President's tailgate party, and this was approved for the game on Saturday, 10/22. She mentioned that in order to attend, faculty members should RSVP at rsvp@wtamu.edu.

GUEST SPEAKER, Kelly Polden, Assistant Vice President, Communication and Marketing

Polden discussed strategies that have been used for University advertisements, and how messaging can change depending on the location and time in which the ad is placed. An example was given from the Amarillo magazine, and compared it with advertisement made in the Dallas

Cowboys program. She also mentioned an e-mail campaign, specifically for adults who are seeking the opportunity to go back to school, as well as parents. She also mentioned digital billboards that have been placed around the state of Texas, as well as in New Mexico. She mentioned that she would like feedback from the faculty Senate and whether the latter thought that there should be specific things that should be emphasized.

Mary Liz Brooks and Salazar presented a list of things that they acquired from their respective colleagues containing suggestions about altering the ads. She also suggested emphasizing HSIs (Hispanic Serving Institutions). Polden replied that she is cognizant of the fact that WTAMU is an HSI and plans on emphasizing this fact in the future. Correa wants to know if there was a second QR code which leads to information about WTAMU in Spanish. Polden replies that at the current moment, this is not an option that is offered, and says that she would like such a version in the future contingent upon them being able to find a translator.

OPEN DISCUSSION/COMMENTS

None

- Motion to adjourn: Meljac
- Second: Leslie Williams
- Meeting adjourned at: 1:34 pm-+

Respectfully,

Eric Hoffmann