

## Faculty Senate Minutes

September 23, 2022

**Attended:** Ambrose, Bill; Brooks, Mary Liz; Brown, Trisha; Correa, Priscella; Crosman, Erik; Denton, Kenneth; Ghosh, Nabarun; Hoffmann, Eric; Issa, Roy; Leitch, Ken, Humpherys, Sean; Manfredi, Guglielmo; McCauley, Kelly; Pinkham, Ashley; Price, Blake; Ramos Salazar, Leslie; Reardon, Matt; Smith, Bob; Tarpley; Troy, Unnikrishnan, Vina; Meljac, Eric, Welch, Reed; Whaley, Brigitte; Yarbrough, Jason

**Absent:** Spencer, Brian; Williams, Leslie

**Guest(s):**

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The meeting was called to order at 12:20 by President Ashley Pinkham. *Minutes of the 9/9 meeting were considered.*

- *Motion to approve:* Yarbrough, ANS
- *Second:* Ghosh, ANS
- *Motion passed*

### **CURRENT BUSINESS**

#### **Reports from the Faculty Senate Committees**

*Faculty Handbook Committee:*

Yarbrough spoke with Dr. Robert King and was sure that our proposals were received, but not yet considered. Considerations concerning the structure of the library will be available to discuss during our next meeting.

*Joint Student-Faculty Committee on Academic Affairs:* Crosman spoke with the leader of the student committee, and confirmed that they will be in touch with the student delegation in the coming weeks.

*Ad-hoc Travel Committee:* Denton says that a list of travel funds for similar/peer universities has been established. He says that emphasizes that the committee was still in very exploratory phases. Humpherys says that these exploratory steps have gone on long enough, and that it's time to either take action or close the committee. Denton agreed that the committee had lacked a clear goal from last year, but felt that closing the committee would be premature until the committee was able to discuss actions or next steps. Ghosh adds that the university needs to provide more money for student travel.

#### **Feedback on Blackboard/WT Class**

Each college documented the feedback that they got from their respective departments concerning whether or not we should consider switching away from Blackboard. In general, while there were some complaints about Blackboard, there was no strong push to considering any change to an alternative platform. President Pinkham proposed tabling this issue until further issues arise.

Motion to table this issue: Humpherys, COB

Second: Reardon,

### **Reminders:**

*Piper Professor Applications:* A dropbox has been created for Senate members to access the material for this.

*RSVP ([rsvp@wtamu.edu](mailto:rsvp@wtamu.edu)) for WT football game (Saturday, 10/22):* Those who are hoping to attend should RSVP via the email above provided.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS):** President Pinkham points out that we are automatically a member of this institution, but not a voting member unless fees are paid, which are \$400 a year. She mentions that Dr. Terry has discouraged us from joining this organization, mentioning that our time would be better spent concentrating on our own problems. Crosman agrees with this sentiment. Welch and Reardon mention that they find the message coming from administration that we should not be communicating with peer institutions troubling. Denton suggests that being connected to larger organizations helps to raise awareness and establish professional connections, in addition to influence. Humphryes says he is certain that Dr. Terry has only trying to be pragmatic. Welch mentions that he would like more information regarding the costs and benefits of joining this organization. Reardon agrees with this sentiment. Abrose recommends that we send a representative.

Motion to send a representative: Ambrose

Second: Ghosh

16 for, 2 against, 4 abstain.

**Faculty Development Leave:** President Pinkham reminds us that the faculty Senate is responsible for soliciting and giving recommendations on applications for Faculty Development Leave. She mentions that she has looked across peer institutions for examples in order to establish a standardized application form for this process, which the university did not previously have. She has presented the Senate with a copy of a draft of this application which she has created. Humphryes says that he likes the content that is in it. Revisions were solicited by President Pinkham. Salazar mentions a typo. Vinu and Pinkham jointly agree that the CV should not count towards the page limit. Pinkham mentions that Dr. Terry has requested that we develop

an "emergency" review plan in order to expedite applications for faculty members who receive invitations or grants from institutions at times which would prevent that faculty member from applying for leave according to the standard deadline. McCauley mentions that the Senate's role in this entire process is not needed. She asks whether the emergency process could exclude us. Humphryes and Reardon emphasize that it would be needed to properly define what defines an emergency. Meljac says this pursuing this issue is like going down a rabbit hole, because there are too many questions and no clear solutions.

Humphryes motions that the proposed document be used for the normal process, but that it does not yet count for the emergency process.

Meljac seconds.

In favor: 22, opposed: 0, abstain: 1. Motion passes.

Meljac motions that we revisit the emergency process in the future.

Yarbrough seconds.

In favor: 22. Opposed: 0. Abstain: 1. Motion passes.

### **Faculty Ombuds Officer quarterly report**

Pinkham reminds us to remind our faculty that we do have an Ombuds officer, and that going to the Ombuds officer, unlike going to a dean or administrator, does not qualify as a formal complaint.

### **Keywatcher/classroom access**

President Pinkham points out that e-mail was sent out that custodial staff is no longer responsible for unlocking classroom doors, and that keys will be available via "keywatcher access" in order that faculty can unlock their own classrooms.

### **Open Discussion/Comments**

*Motion to adjourn: Meljac*

*All were in favor of this.*

*Meeting adjourned at 1:43*

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

Respectfully,  
Eric Hoffmann