

## Faculty Senate Minutes

March 3, 2023

**Attended:** Ambrose, Bill; Bang, Brandon; Brooks, Mary Liz; Correa, Priscella; Crosman, Eric; Denton, Kenneth; Ghosh, Nabarun; Hoffmann, Eric; Leitch, Ken; McCauley, Kelly; Price, Blake; Ramos Salazar, Leslie; Spencer, Brian; Unnikrishnan, Vinu; Whaley, Brigitte; Yarbrough, Jason; Pinkham, Ashley; Issa, Roy; Tarpley, Troy; Smith, Bob; Reardon, Matt; Sibley (in place of Callie Hisek)

**Absent:** Manfredi, Guiligliemo; Brown, Trisha; Humpherys, Sean; Meljac, Eric

**Guest(s):**

---

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 by President Ashley Pinkham. The minutes were considered from the previous meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from 2/17: Eric Meljac, Second: Yarborough, Vote Passed

### CURRENT BUSINESS

#### *Handbook Committee*

*Yarbrough says the committee was asked to review election procedures, and the issue was that the language did not align with current practice. Some changes were made and made available today for the Faculty Senate to approve. The first change no longer requires the vote to be held online. The second change now only requires one Faculty Senate member to reside over the vote. Another change allowed for both a mixture of in-person and online voting, as well as the timing of the deadline as to when changes would be accepted. Meljac comments that point 6 may be unclear concerning whether e-mail may be employed in voting/nominations. Yarborough replies that any suggested changes can still be considered. Blake Price points out that the requirement of four members may conflict with the fact that some colleges already have more than that, and asks whether this is supposed to mean a "minimum of four". President Pinkham mentions that this is technically not a conflict due to At-Large members, but that the language may need to be cleaned up. Because these are minor changes, a vote is held as to whether to accept these changes.*

*Motion to vote: Ken Leitch, second by Meljac*

*Vote to approve: All in favor, none opposed.*

#### *Joint Student/Faculty Committee on Academic Affairs*

*Erik Crosman mentions that survey results and discussions with students are being processed to draft a report about the food quality at WTAMU in general. He mentions that further conferences and zoom calls will be had throughout the rest of the semester in order to gather*

*more information. Priscella mentions that students at the Amarillo Center are not able to use dining dollars. Crosman mentions that he will definitely bring this issue up with the student government and Pinkham will bring this up with Academic Affairs.*

### ***Ad Hoc Travel Committee***

*Kenneth Denton shared the committees findings with the Faculty Senate today. Although there is no official "Call to action", it was brought up that we might make suggestions about where we want to take this issue in the future. Vinu mentions that it should be included that external funding for travel is basically non-existent.*

*Meljac motions to advance the document to Academic Affairs as is; Second Reardon.*

*Vote passes unanimously.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Some new information regarding the "Beat the Offer" program was offered. President Pinkham mentioned to Dr. Wendler that the Senate had questions as to where the money was coming from to finance this program. Dr. Wendler said that none of the money is coming from colleges, but rather from rarely-used scholarship funds. The Senate raised the question as to why such money is not being used to its full extent already. Denton explained that there are some valid reasons why not all of the scholarship money is used each year, including factors such as students deciding not to come here after being awarded the money and there not being enough time for it to be re-awarded. Pinkham mentions that as far as she understands, the program amounts to trying to match out of pocket expenses after other things such as scholarships and federal loans are considered.

This morning at 10:00 the Senate had Zoom meeting with representatives from the library concerning journal access being cancelled from some sources. A typed summary was distributed to Senate members. Some specific points of interest was an acknowledgement of a lack of communication regarding how databases are evaluated. Pinkham suggested to the representatives that this may be improved upon through more direct updates on any changes being shared directly with the Senate, as well as university-wide emails. It was also mentioned that there may be a big change regarding a change from EBSCO to GALE, and that this may affect access to some journals. Meljac mentions that the conversation was very productive and that he believes that communication will be better in the future.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The student government is discussing creating academic partnership awards between recognizing partnerships between faculty and students. Pinkham mentions that she mentions that she supports

this endeavor, but does not want the Senate to have a role in the voting and rewarding of these recognitions. Priscella volunteered to take part in this effort.

Yarbrough mentions that there are issues surrounding the policy of the awarding of “incomplete” as a grade within the Registrar’s Office. For example, the issue was raised as to whether there should be a dictated time limit that goes beyond the discretion of the faculty, after which the student receives an automatic “F”. The point was raised as to whether or not the Registrar’s Office should have so much power to award such grades in light of the fact that they are seen to reflect the student’s performance in class, which is what the instructor is more familiar with. It could be that the student is currently sitting at a C in the course, but are rewarded an F due to the fine details and timing issues dictated by the Incomplete Contracts. A concrete example is whether the student is absent due to healthcare reasons and are unavailable to respond within the 14 day window. The Senate was encouraged to look this topic over in order to pick up discussion concerning it on a later date.

May 5<sup>th</sup> is the tentative date for the Faculty Senate appreciation lunch between noon-1:30 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Meljac  
Meeting adjourned at: 1:35 pm

Respectfully,

Eric Hoffmann