

WTAMU Faculty Senate Minutes
September 22, 2023

Attended: Senators Fisseha Alemayehu, Bill Ambrose, Christopher Baird, Brandon Bang, Priscella Correa, David Craig, Kenneth Denton, Nancy Garcia, Callie Hisek, Eric Hoffmann, Sean Humpherys, Roy Issa, Kenneth Leitch, Kelly McCauley, Ashley Pinkham, Blake Price, Leslie Ramos Salazar, Matt Reardon, Laura Reyher, Bob Smith, Brian Spencer, Troy Tarpley, Brigitte Whaley

Absent: Guglielmo Manfredi, Eric Meljac, Jim Rogers

Proxies: Ryan Brooks (FAH: EPML; Eric Meljac)

Guests: None

The regular meeting of the WTAMU Faculty Senate was called to order at 12:20pm by President David Craig in the Classroom Center #225 on the Canyon campus.

Minutes of the regular meeting from September 8, 2023 were previously provided and reviewed. David Craig moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed by acclamation.

Officers' Reports and Remarks:

President David Craig opened with comments and discussion of the deans' feedback that was sent to Dr. Wendler regarding the textbook initiative, including many previous faculty efforts to reduce costs. Governance, academic freedom, and law/copyright seem to be common concerns. SACS-COC and accreditation agencies may have additional concerns and regulations, including access and rigor. Faculty Senate is being called on to communicate these concerns.

Two student editorials have been published on this topic from Amarillo College and Texas A&M University at College Station. There are plans for administration to meet with companies (e.g., Kortext) to explore large scale access to textbook material.

The Provost is asking for ideas and requests for a comprehensive research complex on campus. Also, the VPAA's office will help our chosen Piper Professor nominee in updating materials. Faculty Development Leave will be announced via email soon, and nominations are needed by the end of this term. There is also a discussion coming up about issues and continuance of the Blackboard system.

David Craig also mentioned that the Faculty Senate will need to revisit the implementation of the change for the current Ombudsman term and extension of the term.

Vice-President Kenneth Leitch plans attend the administration's meeting with the textbook company mentioned above. There may be reasonable rates for online access, but this is case-by-case and with each publisher. Textbook development is arduous. Concerns were expressed about the result on faculty retention.

Secretary Kenneth Denton remarked on Dr. Wendler's messaging and timing on educational vouchers.

Committee Reports:

Faculty Handbook Committee

Ashley Pinkham was previously chosen as chair of the committee and provided updates on the review of the current handbook. Sections for review were Academic Freedom and Responsibility, Textbooks, Faculty Responsibilities, Termination of Employment, and Intellectual Property Rights, including a review of the chain of command.

Joint Faculty/Student Committee on Academic Affairs

Priscella Correa was previously chosen as chair of the committee and reported that the committee representative will meet with the Student Government this coming week. The committee will meet today to discuss a presentation with the Student Government as well.

Unfinished Business:

Textbook Mandate

David Craig reported that Dr. Wendler agreed to meet with the Faculty Senate, based on the previous meeting's motion. The presentation for the Student Government was acknowledged as well.

New Business:

IT Committee Nominations

Leslie Ramos-Salazar offered two nominations from the College of Business. Discussion was held on the nominations. Brigitte Whaley moved to appoint Jeffrey Babb. The motion was seconded and passed by acclamation.

Piper Professor Nominations

David Craig reported that the VPAA's office prefers to have the Faculty Senate provide a single nominee to put forward. Ryan Brooks nominated Andy Reynolds to put forward. Lesli Ramos-Salazar nominated Enyonam Osei-Hwere, and Matt Reardon nominated Marty Kuhlman. Sean Humpherys moved to hold a vote by show of hands, which was seconded and conducted. Ryan Brooks moved to eliminate the candidate with the lowest votes and hold another vote by show of hands, which was seconded and conducted. Enyonam Osei-Hwere was chosen as the Piper Professor nominee.

Textbooks

David Craig provided information on the possibility to change the venue for the upcoming Senate meeting with Dr. Wendler, depending on a larger faculty turnout. Discussion regarding the initiative was held on implications, such as students with disabilities, faculty morale, and public perception. WT Colleges reportedly will not be able to afford to provide the textbooks, even at a reduced amount. Other sources of funding were discussed, including the actual cost of books to students. The library likely has estimates from previous research regarding OER. David Craig mentioned his upcoming meeting with Dr. Wendler on 9/28 and offered to ask many of these questions.

Nancy moved to see if the Student Senate room is available, with the Fine Arts Recital Hall as a backup, and the motion was seconded. Discussion was held on the number of faculty in

attendance. Sean moved to substitute a motion and leave this decision to the Faculty Senate President while senators collect information on how many colleagues plan to attend, which was seconded and passed by acclamation.

David Craig invited Bob Smith to present information on OER and the textbook initiative, including faculty concerns. Discussion was held on what students would need to know. David Craig will ask to have Bob Smith put on the Student Government agenda at their convenience.

Administrator Evaluations

Discussion was held on the previous motion to pursue administrator evaluations. The handbook was reviewed, and a timeline is in place. David will review and update as unfinished business at the next meeting.

Sean Humpherys moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded at 2:07pm.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth Denton', written in a cursive style.

Kenneth Denton