

Minutes for Sept. 22 Faculty Senate meeting.

Minutes from last meeting approved (Meljac moved, Hindman seconded.)

Dr. Shaffer was our guest at the beginning of the meeting.

President Ambrose filled in Shaffer on senate discussion from last meeting and asked questions about:

- 50% merit issue (President Wendler's change)
Shaffer: doesn't think he would have problem with acknowledgement of problem with senate. Wendler says his change to system is not a mandate. Wendler concerned high performers not being rewarded enough.
Shaffer will reach out and ask for acknowledgement, perhaps for Oct. 13 meeting.
- Automatic X issue: (students avoiding academic integrity issues, etc.)
Shaffer related an incident with X drop for a cheating student. Could return to graded (XF) system. Original change was due to students not being assessed until late in semester.
Meljac: was freshmen vs upperclass issue with this issue in past?
Shaffer: was due to first year experience, original first drop date was early in class. XF could be reinstated. XF was 0 for gpa etc. Could make a change to academic integrity policy revoking right to take X grade.
Lust: doesn't like idea of imposing extra grading on all students for a few gaming students. But we do need ways to punish cheaters, etc.
Ingrassia: is there a way to generate an XF, etc, by Provost office?
Shaffer: is possibility. Must be careful modifying grade by instructor. No problem if instructor approves. Must have communication. Remember that the student has appeal.
Davis: Student chose X, so this would not really be a change of the grade given by an instructor.
Shaffer: Must have a notification to the student (by code of life, etc.)
Meljac: How would this affect advising, with early alerts, etc.?
Shaffer: Would need to involve them. Shaffer contacted Office of General Counsel about aforementioned case, and they said language needs to change. Need to revise language, policy on this.
- Part-time administrators, Tenure & Promotion problem:
Shaffer: This is a thorny issue. (Read the language in handbook.) Language was put in by Chapman. Chapman thought 50% reassignment would be of teaching role only. Have administrative positions for non-full profs now. Difficult to get faculty to take admin role with all faculty T&P requirements. This came to difficult cases last year in T&P process.
Pinkham: How to define direct supervisor? (vs. cases like prog director)
Shaffer: Must look at definition of part-time admin, etc. carefully.
Direct supervisor is defined as person who conducts annual evaluation. All for better language as needed. This part of the process should not be used as cover for weak faculty member.
- Instructor promotion issue:
Ambrose: Advice on how to improve system?
Shaffer: Fixed-term faculty can go up for promotion, instructors can't. Issue was brought up last year for instructors. Deans complicated it: 100 or so instructors, financial issue with salaries, worried it could make new faculty position acquisition difficult. Some deans supported, some didn't. Business has 'clinical faculty.' Mallard has moved faculty from instructor to fixed-term. There is language that no more than 20% can be in fixed term, must have specific skills. Fixed-term is for specialized roles.
O'Brien brought in fixed-term, but not as many were hired as expected. How to take care of instructors? Shaffer open to changes but need to work on deans.
Seward: There are also people who have done labs, teams, etc. Ingrassia: There is a presumption in fixed-term description that they have to be exceptional. Does job security, etc. have to be so exclusive? Craig: is T&P system "blocking" instructor promotion? (3 divisions of academic activities, etc) Shaffer: could change language to "outstanding faculty" in fixed-term positions, etc.
Ingrassia, Seward: Were adding a new parallel track.
Blanton: Good idea to revise fixed-term language. Publicize.
Shaffer: It is probably time to re-evaluate fixed-term, revise description, etc. (There followed a bit more discussion of T&P "tripod," etc.)

Shaffer:

- WT 125 is opportunity to articulate vision for after you leave.
- Please take seriously and speak up. Opportunity for faculty influence.
- Let Shaffer know if interest in being on WT 125 committee. Wendler is very open to faculty input, discussion.
- Other questions:
- Blanton: when will stuff around Activities Center be finished?
- Connecting underground tunnel system, should be blocked most of academic year, important for future bldgs, etc.

Comments by president (see handout):

- Ombuds officer application is out.
- Craig to attend TCFS fall meeting.
- No policy updates from Spaulding
- Nothing yet on athletic reports.
- Extended pay plan:
 - Can still get pay on 12-month basis for this academic year.
 - Next year: insurance deducted on 9-mo basis, you have to decide how to use Save for Summer system that is incoming.

Meetings with Wendler: first meeting was getting to know him, talking about WT125. Ambrose will address changes in merit

No guest next week

Old Biz:

- Ombuds position survey (King+ committee)
- Survey out, made as succinct as possible. Asking for input.
- Professionalism as mediator is a very important issue for position.
- King moved to accept survey, Hindman seconded, voted, no opp., Motion passed.
- Accommodations Appeal Committee: Frank Goode (nominated by Hindman) meets the special requirements for this position.
- Senate vote to accept Goode, no opposition.
- Committee reports:
 - Tenure & Promotion: Doing research.
 - IT issues: Just getting started.
 - Instructor Promotion: Needed input from Shaffer, etc. Meredith is chair (see discussion above.)

New Business:

- New university committee: Foster Care Advisory Board
 - Need member for next week. Possibly someone with foster care experience, etc. 1 person for faculty representative.
- Need nominee for Piper foundation award. (due to them by Nov. 17)
 - This has an application form required.
 - Please think of people from requirement to encourage for this.
- Request from Jarvis Hampton to eliminate Alumni Evaluations in T&P process
 - Craig: I thought alumni evals were encouragement
 - Bartlett: We are always looking for metrics. Got many returns on hers.
 - Ingrassia: Valuable for reflection. Is common in TAMU system? Davis: was contacted for distinguished prof position at TAMU as alumnus.
 - Davis: Can we refine delivery of survey?
 - Pinkham: could be more targeted way (mentored students, etc.)
 - ?: has been done via email recently, so how high cost?
 - Lust: How are these used in tenure evaluation? Probably is lot of work for Jarvis.
 - (Discussion of how these are used followed.)
 - Ambrose: Will investigate how these used with Provost Shaffer.
- Bartlett: Announcement: 9/26 AIRROSTI is coming to campus.
 - Ergonomics and wellness help for faculty.
- Bartlett: New two factor authentication. Faculty have concern about limits on data plan.

DeButte: What about faculty without cellphone?

Babb: It's only for mail and VPN, and not with wtclass.

Babb: Need to ask at least for use of other devices than cell phone, etc., the edge cases.

Bartlett: need to know what to do for email, data limits.

Babb: Suggest we ask James Webb who can come to discuss this next meeting. Senate IT committee will look at it.

Adjourned.