

Minutes for the meeting of the Tennessee State University Faculty Senate, 3/24/2016

In Attendance:

Muhammad Akbar, Engineering, Mechanical Engineering
Dorsuren Badamdorj, CLPS, Mathematical Sciences
Beverly Brown, COHS, Nursing
Michael Catanzaro, CLA, LLP **Chair**
Sean Daniels, CLA, Music
Rita Fleming, Incoming Senator
Terrie Gibson, COHS, Speech Pathology
John Kelly, CLPS, Mathematical Sciences **Secretary**
Show Mei Lin, Education, Teaching and Learning
Kenneth Kungu (for Vaidas Lukosius, Business, BADM)
John Miglietta, CLA, Political Science
Mozhgan Mirani, CLPS, Mathematics
Joyce Radcliff, Library, Library and Media Services
Achintya Ray, Business, Economics and Finance
Ann-Marie Rizzo, CPS, Public Administration
Dr. Charles McCurry (for Sachin Shetty, Engineering, Electrical Engineering)
Blair Thornton, COHS, HPSS
Santosh Venkatraman, for David King
Eric Vogel, Education, EDAD
Suping Zhou, CAHNS, Center for Prevention Research

College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences (CAHNS), College of Health Sciences (COHS), College of Liberal Arts (CLA), College of Life and Physical Sciences (CLPS), College of Public Service (CPS)

I. Meeting called to order at 2:40 PM without a quorum.

V. Dr. Catanzaro starts with a discussion on item V, which states that chairs for Faculty Senate Committees will be elected during the April 2016. The members of the committees will be elected at Faculty Institute in Fall 2016. Anyone who wants to continue as Chair should contact Dr. Catanzaro. If you are interested in being Chair of a committee, please contact Dr. Vaidas. Dr. Miglietta asks about the operation of committees over the summer, and Dr. Catanzaro clarifies that the committees are dissolved at the end of the academic year. Appointing the chairs early allows the Executive Committee to contact someone if they need to over the summer. Dr. Kelly offers a suggestion that chairs of committees who are ending their term and who would like to could become their college member on the committee.

A quorum is achieved at 2:48 PM

II. Minutes are approved unanimously without discussion. (Ray moves and Badamdorj seconds.)

III. Chair hiring policy amendments: Dr. Catanzaro gives some background on the chair hiring policy to this point, reminding the Senate that we'd already done 6 rounds of revisions and voted on a final policy. The Chair's Council rejected some of the Senate's revisions and said so in a letter to Dr. Hardy. Dr. Catanzaro mainly clarified some aspects of the system; the Chairs were concerned about evaluating new chairs, but University policy already requires a new chair is evaluated twice in the first year, once in the first six months. Dr. Catanzaro held the line on the faculty of a department knowing the average scores on the survey question. However, his new proposal allows comments to be confidential. Dr. Catanzaro also removed the comment that says a chair may be removed and sent back to the faculty of the department, because it's redundant with existing University policy. Finally, the chair of the search committee for hiring a new chair will now be a member of the College's promotion and tenure committee for that year. The member cannot be from the department that is hiring the new chair.

Dr. Catanzaro stresses that the Senate needs to vote on this today. He notes that he already has an agreement from Dr. Glover to approve the previous version, but feels the changes clarify the document without giving up important accountability elements. Dr. Ray echoes those sentiments, and he feels the changes make the proposed policy stronger. He also likes the fact that one of the new changes puts a specific timeline on faculty receiving results from the survey.

Dr. Catanzaro also notes that the new revisions add language that requires a dean who retains a chair *against* the vote of the faculty submit a report with the reasons for retaining the chair. He also notes that chairs council doesn't like the proposal at all.

There are concerns voiced that end of October is too early to evaluate. Dr. Catanzaro clarifies that to make sure all chairs are evaluated at the same time, and because chairs must be evaluated in the first 6 months of their term anyway, it makes sense to simply have them evaluated by the end of October in their first semester.

Dr. Mirani asks which unit runs the survey. Dr. Catanzaro clarifies that Dr. Hardy's office runs the survey with the assistance of CIT. Dr. Mirani asks about the integrity of the survey, and who can manipulate the survey results. Dr. Catanzaro notes that the questions themselves is a very important task, and will have to be done after the policy is approved.

Another Senator asks about exactly how the results will be reported. There are clarifications made to the language that will ensure that the deans and the Chief Academic Officer will both get the results of the survey.

Dr. Badamdorj asks about the definition of voting members of a department, and wants some assurance that the survey will not go to non-voting members. Dr. Catanzaro states that in the Handbook and Constitution that it states that only tenure-track and tenured members of a department are voting members. It is suggested that some system be put in place so that a department can check the mail list for the evaluation to ensure that it only goes to voting members. Dr. Catanzaro asks if this is relevant to the matter at hand, and it is agreed that it is not.

Dr. Ray notes that the Faculty Grievances committee might be the right place to look into issues of faculty not getting evaluations or the wrong people getting evaluations. Dr. Catanzaro thinks it would be wise for the Senate to check every year who the voting members of each department are.

It is also clarified that the report will include how many people responded to the survey.

Dr. Ray calls the question, and Dr. Rizzo seconds. The motion is to accept the amendments as presented to the Senate with this addition: In the spirit of transparency, Deans will submit their recommendation to the Chief Academic Office and to the faculty with a justification report that includes: the mean average scores of the evaluation questions completed by the faculty and the percentage of faculty who responded yes or no to the question “Should the chair be retained?”.

The amendments are approved unanimously.

IV. The current chair-elect was only elected to a one year term, since that was the only policy in place at the time. The policy has now been changed, so the chair will now serve a two-year term. In order for Dr. Ray to be elected into a two-year term, the Senate needs to vote on that. Dr. Kelly moves that Dr. Ray be elected to a two-year term starting at the end of Dr. Catanzaro’s term, and is seconded. The motion passes unanimously.

V. Was discussed earlier, and Dr. Catanzaro offers a quick update

VI. Updates

a. Grade Appeals: Dr. Ray updates the Senate on proposed changes to the grade appeal process. Dr. Ray outlines the current process, and explains that the Senate would like to have a committee that examines the history of a grade appeal process and advises the CAO. He notes that grade appeal policies are not at all uniform from department to department. Dr. Hardy wants the Senate to work on a new policy that involves a new committee. Dr. Brown notes that there used to be a Senate Committee – Academic II – that dealt with grade appeals. That had been moved out of Senate and into Academic Affairs, but there were some problematic grade changes at the Academic Affairs level made since then that have renewed interest in a Senate committee. Dr. Catanzaro notes that there is not a policy ready to be voted on, and most likely would be taken up again in Fall 2016.

b. Book Bundle: Dr. Ray also discusses the status of the book bundle program. There are new federal regulations that say any book bundling system must be offered below competitive market rates. Also, they prohibit schools from requiring students to purchase online books – there must be an opt-out option. This could be an issue for the publishers – since they often negotiate a certain minimum volume to get the discount, what happens if TSU does not sell the minimum volume? Who is on the hook for when the discount goes away? Dr. Ray says that VP Jackson wants to know the opinion of the faculty on this issue. Dr. Catanzaro notes that some publishing companies do not participate, which can make problems for some departments. Dr. Ray notes

that someone needs to put in a lot of effort to make the book bundle work – there is a lot of negotiating involved. Dr. Ray notes some other concerns – students who can borrow books, or get cheaper used copies, etc. Given all the work involved in the program, does the faculty want the program enough to go ahead if the financial aspects fall apart if students opt-out at a high enough level?

Dr. Brown notes that it has worked well for Nursing. The online resources have been especially useful. While it does not serve all of Nursing's needs (as she colorfully explained) overall it has been good.

Dr. Mirani asks what we're voting on here, and if the faculty should vote first. Dr. Ray explains that this is just taking the Senate's temperature on the topic, and is not binding in any way.

Dr. Kelly moves that the Senate vote to approve or disapprove of the book bundle, Dr. Rizzo seconds.

Dr. Mirani explains that it has been good for the Math department, and the online homework systems in particular has been good. The eBook has been good because the teacher can bring it up on the projector and the students can pull it up on the phone. Dr. Catanzaro agrees that for freshmen the book bundle is good. Dr. Daniels notes that perhaps in particular for General Education courses the book bundle is good. Dr. Mirani notes that before Math was trying to create their own online homework system, and this has worked better.

Dr. Ray notes that the bundle program now has so many potential problems that the administration has communicated to him that unless we really love the book bundle program it may not be worth fighting for. Dr. Kelly notes that it might be possible for individual departments to make individual arrangements with publishers. Dr. Mirani asks how much discount an individual department might be able to get. Dr. Ray notes that his department has a negotiated plan where they get \$400 – 500 worth of books for \$130 over two semesters.

Dr. Radcliffe asks how we continue to get students to purchase books without the bundle, and Dr. Brown notes that you need to make it clear that getting the books is crucial to passing the class. Dr. Akbar also notes that the bundle goes away when the class is over, and students often need a copy for reference in later class.

Dr. Catanzaro notes that the original book bundle decision was made without any input from the faculty at all.

Dr. Kelly clarifies his motion to: The faculty senate resolves not to continue the book bundle exactly in its current form and wishes to study the matter further. The vote is Aye:17 Nay: 2 and Abstention: 1. Dr. Catanzaro notes that this vote does mean that there is some variance of opinion in this vote.

c. Faculty Handbook will be put on the web

d. Dr. Catanzaro will attend the upcoming TUFS meeting

e. Dr. Catanzaro requests that all committee chairs send him an updated list of members so the Webmaster can put the lists on the website. Please include the college of each member.

f. Agriculture and Environmental Sciences requests 5 senators from the current 2. Dr. Catanzaro notes that each College only gets 5 senators, so it is the business of the college to decide how they should be allocated among department.

VII. Committee reports

a) Academic Committee: no update

b) Alumni Relations: no update

c) Budget Committee: no update

d) Constitution and By-Laws: no update

e) Curriculum: Please make sure that all signature pages are in place when sending in CARFs

f) Executive: no update

g) Faculty Grievance: The previous grievant has obtained counsel, so it is no longer the business of the Faculty Senate

h) Faculty Benefits: no update

i) Information Technology: no update

j) Library: no update, other than report submitted by email

k) Nominations: no updates

l) Professional Development: no update

m) Research: Workshop series needs more faculty input in the opinion of the committee. Contract invoicing is becoming a significant problem with grant agencies complaining that invoices are late.

n) Student appeals: no update, other than earlier discussion

Dr. Miglietta asks if early senior exams are being considered, and Dr. Hardy said that they are not for this semester.

Dr. Catanzaro adjourns the meeting at 4:10 PM.