

- a. Nothing to report
- C. Executive Committee (EC)
 - a. Chair Clark reported on the [recommendation on faculty pay and compensation](#) was presented to the administration on 12/23/20; the SE AAUP chapter submitted a letter of support for the Faculty Senate's (FS) proposal.

The EC met with President Newsom and VPAA Golden on 1/25/2021. Chair Clark shared that he had "lots of thoughts on the meeting," believes it was a good discussion, and that the administration demonstrated an openness to the FS's recommendations and proposals. Chair Clark added that he would like to see more "oomph" with the administration's enthusiasm in agreeing directly to the recommendations but understands the President's perspective and desire to gather more information. The President indicated he seems to be in agreement, having spoken with VPAA Golden, about these proposals and that we can expect one step increase, likely a second, and perhaps even a third. Chair Clark recognized Senator W. Fridley's suggestion of \$2021 as a worthwhile objective. Chair Clark anticipated the administration's hesitant response but still wanted to get this acknowledgment down in writing.

Chair Clark thinks a seven-day window is acceptable for the administration to draft a written response to these recommendations, adding that if we return to the next meeting without this in writing, we are going to face some issues.

Senator W. Fridley explained that he was unsure of how he'd characterized the meeting. He anticipated it with eagerness and dread and was worried about the intentionality of the administration – in other words, will their actions meet their rhetoric? Senator W. Fridley spoke to President Newsom and noted that he presented these recommendations as a "softball" - an easy sign of good faith. President Newsom responded with "I am still at the plate" – what to make of that?

Senator Althoff noted his appreciation of the use of "sternly" language in the request of a written response, believing it is important to emphasize how meaningful this written statement is to us as a FS. It was noted that committing in writing requires a different tone and investment from the administration. Senator Althoff also is appreciative of VPAA Golden's insistence that faculty salary remains a prioritized part of her agenda – it is critical to have her support. Senator Althoff reiterated others' statements that 7 days is a good window. Ultimately, the point was made – the F.S. was not unclear about its expectations.

Senator Gaffney asked a question regarding step-increases – asked for clarification if the President truly understands the history of issues with the salary card and that this requires more than simply step-increases? Senator W. Fridley confirmed that President Newsom is informed.

Senator Daigle explained that she believes the administration was certainly informed because of Senator W. Fridley's direct statements to the President during the meeting.

Senator Shannon noted her appreciation for the tenacious and determined attitude that the EC brought to the meeting (especially by Chair Clark and Senator W. Fridley). One thing that concerned her was President Newsom's claims that "We don't know his soul" and therefore we don't recognize that he is on "our side." This statement felt like a cheap shot, because we are professionals – we are simply asking about being TREATED as professionals. We don't need a meeting of the souls!

Senator Cotter-Lynch asked to follow up on a previous topic: the FS requested info about the professors paid on or off the salary card – did we ever get a response to that? Senator W. Fridley clarified that the Personnel Policies Committee put forth a motion requesting this information ([PPC Report 11/4/2020](#)). The motion was approved by the [F.S. on 11/4/2020](#). Senator Cotter-Lynch noted that Director of Human Resources Marjorie Robertson was working on it, but the requested data has not yet been returned. Chair Clark confirmed that the F.S. has not received this data yet.

Senator Shannon noted that VPAA Golden reassured that this document is being put together, but the data collection is ongoing and that we do not know when that will be completed. Chair Clark noted that he will be meeting with VPAA Golden soon. He intends to discuss this as well as lots of other issues with her – especially the Colleague Self-Serve migration. He reaffirmed that he personally felt that VPAA Golden was very interested in seeing this through.

Senator W. Fridley mentioned that a bright spot of the meeting with President Newsom, perhaps, was discussion regarding the aspirational concluding statement in the recommendations that stated "SOSU has earned a reputation as the top regional university in the way it supports and pays its faculty and staff." President Newsom was very complimentary of it, and he enjoyed this statement. Senator W. Fridley reminded him that such statements were not typical! Noted that we have new and different ideas, and they are winning ideas *should* an administrator choose to embrace them. Senator W. Fridley concluded by

stating how we should take care of our own so we can welcome people to SOSU in the future.

Chair Clark explained that he feels as if there is a sense of a stand-off between the FS and the administration, and that this feeling is “apparent” – the FS brings things up, and the administration immediately becomes defensive, like we are blaming them for administrative weaknesses. Chair Clark noted he has tried to convey that this is not the case to President Newsom, that the FS only seeks to impress on this administration that we have already begun conversations on these topics under previous administrations and we simply want to see these changes take effect at SOSU. Chair Clark voiced concern about how we can overcome this feeling?

Senator Althoff agrees, noting that Newsom came in during COVID, but also during a time in which the university is better positioned to address past mistakes – we should not blame the new administration for these issues. But Senator Althoff considers this as a moment of opportunity: record cash levels and record enrollment to build good will and make progress. Senator Althoff reiterates his hopes the administration will embrace this and that it does not work from a poverty-mindset. These are actually *good* times (at least for SOSU!). The FS needs to strike while the iron is hot.

Chair Clark recalled that in the E.C. meeting it was noted that Dennis Westman (Vice President for Business Affairs) is putting together a document for the budget and certain dates are important in structuring responses. He noted that June is when the budget is due to RUSO and July 1st is when the new budget begins each year. Chair Clark reminded us that it may be April or May before we hear anything definitive about our proposal. He recognizes this is not ideal, but legitimate. The President stressed that he wanted to go through the budget cycle first and reiterated his willingness to address issues with the NEXT budget cycle. Chair Clark noted how we as a FS need to be mindful of this timeframe – ultimately, we just want in writing that the administration will follow through on these recommendations.

Senator Cotter-Lynch asked about the \$4.1 million to the university is due to get from the Relief Bill (noted the amount was published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*). What are we doing with that money?

Senator W. Fridley responded that he recalled reading an email indicating President News said we had some plans – like improving internet infrastructure– for that. Senator Gaffney noted that a certain percentage

of that \$4.1 million amount needs to be spent on the students, but we also need to hear back from RUSO about some allocations.

Senator Cotter-Lynch noted that SOSU does have some agency in how the students receive the money (for example we have sent checks in the past), but other schools are more strategic with about what to do with the money.

Chair Clark confirmed that he will look into this will his future meetings with administration.

Dr. Frinkle (Guest) noted that as an institution we need to be mindful of some state legislation coming down the pipeline, namely, that funds cannot be allocated from the CARES Act in OK if it involves a revolving door budget item that universities like to tack on to future budgets.

Senator Gaffney asked if anyone is familiar with the fund under Mark Webb for students and others associated with the school for hardships – a program known as SHELTER FROM THE STORM. Senator Gaffney remembered some original messages that solicited faculty and staff to designate parts of salaries to be withheld for this fund but has not heard anything about it.

Senator Daigle confirmed that the Chairs Meeting discussed this money: \$4 million overall with \$1 million allocated to students and the rest as discretionary. Faculty involvement in deciding how this money is allocated is necessary!

Chair Clark spoke regarding appointment letters, finding it hard to believe that there is miscommunication between the F.S. and the administration on this recommendation? At the center of this is a misconstrued understanding of when those letters should be made available. The administration believed the FS was looking for these changes to be made for the 2021-2022 academic year; we of course want the changed immediately implemented There also was some confusions regarding the contents of those appointment letters. The President has spoken about salary and benefits information availability on Colleague Self-Serve, but that is not the same as an appointment letter. Colleague Self-Serve is not acceptable substitute.

Senator Alluisi noted that longer-term faculty typically received an appointment letter in February or March. He stressed we need to ensure that the timing of the letter is as early as possible (especially for those NOT receiving reappointment).

Senator Cotter-Lynch noted that our current policy is if they don't say anything by March 1 is that you still have a job - this works to our advantage. The administration therefore needs to be very proactive to NOT renew an instructor.

Senator Dixon noted that the school would not be able to put a specific salary in the letter at that time (March) because of the constraints imposed by the budgetary calendar. Senator Cotter-Lynch expands on this: faculty have presumed continued employment BUT the state of OK has stipulations about not being able to commit funds beyond the current fiscal year, which in turn hamstrings the university in some ways, especially in determining at what point in time the university can tell us what our salary will be.

Senator Alluisi circles back: salary and appointments are disconnected. In the F.S. specific request maybe we need to de-couple these topics. Perhaps settle on two separate letters?

Senator W. Fridley responds by agreeing that if faculty members are not going to be renewed, they need to know this by March 1. But importantly these appointment letters need to also include the TEACHING LOAD: this is vitally important and needs to be in writing.

Senator Cotter-Lynch follows up that an appointment letter with explicit teaching load detailed within gives faculty a clear paper trail to ensure that faculty receive overload pay that they have not gotten in the past.

- b. Actionable Item: Confirming the [FS Spring 2021 Meeting Schedule](#)
 - 1. Senator Dixon questioned whether having a meeting before Spring Break and immediately upon return from Spring Break is necessary. DIANE: we have a meeting on March 10, then spring break, do we need another meeting upon our return?

Senator Cotter-Lynch asked how far in advance the FS wants to prepare for the shared governance forum? Chair Clark suggest we use that meeting to prepare for faculty shared governance forum.

Senator Dixon asked about adding a meeting May (during exam week) to ensure that committees get up and running? Senator W. Fridley suggest waiting until we get closer to the end of the semester before deciding to schedule an additional meeting.

Senator Daigle clarified the potential necessity for an extra meeting: in Spring 2020 the Committee on Committees was never solidified because it got too far into the semester and was further complicated by COVID. Adds that we may be able to get Committees squared away early.

2. Move to accept meeting dates for 2021 spring semester?
 - a. Motion to approve – Chair Clark
 - b. Seconded – Senator Althoff
 - c. Voted to approve: Yes – 16; No – 0; Abstaining 0.
 - i. Chair Clark inquired whether the FS prefers individual email invites or a Zoom or Outlook invitation. Near consensus regarding the convenience of automated link to calendars; Senator Daigle suggested using SharePoint to include attached documents. Senator Boothe asked about the F.S. Blackboard page, but maintenance and roster turnover is too much to keep track of on that platform.
 - ii. Chair Clark clarified that he will send Zoom invitations but urged senators to NOT send a response (simply “accept”) as it would flood his inbox.

D. Personnel Policies Committee

- a. Nothing to report

E. Planning Committee:

- a. Have not met yet but is sorting through the nominations.

F. University Affairs Committee

- a. Did not meet but Senator Diaz notes the receipt of the information from the [COVID response survey](#). The University Affairs Committee spoke with the president about it yesterday. Senator Gaffney noted that the President asked for the comments, so the Committee produced the comments and have forwarded them to President Newsom.

Chair Clark reiterated how very appreciative the FS is for that survey.

V. Old Business

- A. Chair Clark noted that for the first time in a while all the positions in the Faculty Senate are filled – this speaks a lot towards the F.S. willingness to serve at SOSU.
- B. Senator W. Fridley mentioned what he referred to as “old and evolving business” regarding the Ad Hoc Committee for Policy on Policies (Ad Hoc PoP). Senator

Atchley (FS representative) noted that the Ad Hoc Pop subcommittee (Atchley, James Reed, W. Fridley) final draft of a policy on policies and it has been forwarded to the committee chair, Mike Davis. There is some more fine tuning, but there is a finished product in sight. She noted that it incorporates all aspects of shared governance across all stakeholder groups. She does not know when the ad hoc committee will gather again, but when the subcommittee is finished, the revised policy will be sent to Mike Davis and subsequently reconvene.

- C. Senator W. Fridley again thanked Senator Atchley for her work on this. As a reminder, Senator W. Fridley outlined the conceptual argument for these revisions: the A.P.P.M. is exemplar; the F.S. is an exemplar of shared governance – so where is shared governance lacking? Staff and student government. It is recommended that their respective manuals, staff and student government include the same guidelines as the F.S. – they are to submit policies to their specific Vice Presidents. One important revision is that we are now recommending that inter-body representation across university stakeholders. In other words, a staff and a student representative always have seats in the F.S. (and likewise). We also are including timelines and a direct path (exactly what Newsom wants). We have asked that the A.P.P.M. and its numbering system be preserved, either (1) as a standalone document or (2) in a discreet section in a larger policy manual that includes staff and students. From an AAUP chapter meeting we know that a Staff Senate is being formulated by Alisha Ridenour that they would have a direct line to Dennis Westman.

Senator W. Fridley concluded that the three-person committee responsible for this – Senator Atchley, Senator W. Fridley, and James Reed – have worked hard on this new policy on policies and reiterates his belief that they have drafted a sound document. He hopes that President Newsom will agree.

VI. New Business - None

VII. Announcements

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Adjourned at 4:30 PM CST
 - a. Motion – Chair Clark
 - b. Second – Senator Sparacio
 - c. Motion passes by acclamation.

Minutes submitted by Senator Matthew Sparacio, Substitute Recorder.