

**Faculty Senate (FS) Minutes**  
**Fall Semester, Meeting #3**  
**Wednesday, October 6**  
**Virtual Meeting, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.**  
*As approved by the Faculty Senate on October 20, 2021*

**Attending:**

Cody Bogard	Rolando Diaz	Chaehyun Lee
Kathy Boothe	William Fridley	Kate Shannon
Randy Clark	Amy Gantt	Matthew Sparacio
Meg Cotter-Lynch	Srimal Garusinghe	Jeri Walker
Steve Csaki	Ashley Hampton	Doug Wood
Kay Daigle	Andy Kramer	

**Not Attending:**

Stan Alluisi  
Laura Atchley  
Rob Shauger  
Mila Zhu

**Guests:**

Aaron Adair  
Dena Rymel

- I. Call to Order
  - A. 3:02 p.m. CST
  
- II. Approval of the Minutes
  - A. Minutes from September 22, 2021
    - a. **Motion** to approve - Senator Walker
    - b. **Second** – Past Chair Clark
    - c. **Discussion** – No discussion.
    - d. **Vote to approve:** Yes – 16; No 0; Abstaining 0.
  
- III. Committee Reports
  - A. Budget Committee
    - a. Did not meet.
  - B. Committee on Committees
    - a. Past Chair Clark announced CoC has a meeting scheduled for later this month.
  - C. Personnel Policies Committee (Minutes submitted)

- a. Met virtually on 9/29/2021.
- b. Senator Cotter-Lynch proved an update on the subcommittee's work on the university telework policy. The subcommittee read the revision suggested by the Staff Senate and found them to be excellent. Regarding faculty, there are still a number of concerns: (1) the telework policy as currently stated appears to remove the flexibility that faculty have traditionally enjoyed (we need to ask for permission now, whereas in the past it was not required). (2) The PPC proposes a revision to make clear the separate expectations for staff and faculty regarding telework. (3) Many members of the PPC found the OSHA requirement a degree invasive (Senator Cotter-Lynch used the example of working at home and having LEGOs on the floor, which would be a violation of OSHA policy). The PPC is currently working on revision and will meet next week to discuss to have a draft submitted for larger discussion with the FS by next meeting.
- c. Senator Cotter-Lynch also provided updates with her meeting with VPAA Golden regarding salary card breakdowns (namely, who is and who is not on the salary card) and wants the PPC to finish their work on the telework policy before shifting attention to this.
  - i. Senator Fridley asked what the overall gist of the breakdown was. Senator Cotter-Lynch replied that it is about 50/50. Many who are off the card are concentrated in certain departments. She noted that Occupational Safety and Health did an equity audit by themselves, and this is perhaps worth looking into and pursuing. Noted that some departments are using disciplinary salary surveys to triangulate their offers to be more in line with expectations.

D. Planning Committee

- a. Did not meet.

E. University Affairs Committee (Notes submitted)

- a. Met virtually on 10/5/2021
- b. Senator Diaz reiterated the committee's continued concern regarding the sharing of information across campus. Is there a way to address this inconsistency? Notes that Summer Teaching also complicates this process; many departments have a meeting only once a semester (some once a month), but there seems to be a bottleneck of information trickling down to individual faculty members. How do we circumvent that?
  - i. Chair Daigle asked for clarification regarding department meetings during the summer. Senator Diaz responded with the suggestion that departments can meet over the summer in order to be prepared for any changes \*before\* the beginning of the new school year. Chair Daigle notes that Department Chairs do meet over the summer and continue to meet weekly over the course of the academic year. Notes that when a Dean of Undergraduate Studies is finally brought on board this communication breakdown will be cleaned up.

- ii. Senator Wood reiterates Senator Diaz’s suggestion, noting that meetings at the beginning of the semester are not timely – they are either too reactive or they occur when the attention of faculty is being pulled in too many different directions with the start of the year. Senator Cotter-Lynch notes that several years ago the AAUP chapter discussed the propriety of holding summer meetings – because our contracts are 10-month contracts, we cannot be asked to commit to attending a meeting over the summer. Historically, the week before and when classes start, has been carefully dated to be within that 10-month range, hence the early semester meetings.
- c. Senator Diaz explained that the UAC is interested in the way the university as a whole has been reacting to the upcoming HCL deadline in 2023-2024. Explains that this process is putting focus on certain areas, such as Diversity and Inclusion, so boxes can be checked. He asks if this commitment will wane after accreditation – how do we establish long-term commitments to these initiatives?
- d. Senator Diaz also notes that members of the UAC were concerned by some of the statements made during the AP Informational Forum given on October 1. Most prominent was the announcement – perhaps unintentionally – by Dean Blackwood that one of the President’s goal is to grow student enrollment to 10,000. How will this happen?
  - i. Senator Fridley asks, “Were there to be ten thousand students, who among us will benefit from that? We already had to fight for back step increases.”
  - ii. Senator Cotter-Lynch calls for a cost-benefit analysis. This is an assessment that we can do right now. We need to know at what scale we are most efficient. It’s a math problem that someone should be working on. Historically, we have been told that an enrollment of 5,000 maximizes efficiency. We are already past that. What is the justification for increasing that to 10,000?
  - iii. Senator Shannon asks what number we are actually suited to accommodate? These are the terms we should be playing by. There need to be contingencies to allow the expansion of facilities, infrastructure, and faculty with this growth.
  - iv. Senator Csaki asks why we \*want\* to do this? What is the argument in favor for growing the enrollment?
  - v. Senator Bogard suggests that online enrollment is the likely focal point of the plan for growth.
  - vi. Senator Shannon referred back to comments made by the President Newsom at the meeting with the executive committee the previous week – namely that he mentioned 3-year, 5-year, and 10-year plans were in development. The target number of ten thousand may be the goal of the 10-year plan. Even so, this growth seems to be at odds with his message of increasing face-to-face enrollment.

- vii. Chair Daigle notes that VPAA Golden told her that we will hear the President’s plan soon – he may answer some of our questions when that announcement is made.
  - e. Also pertaining to the AP Meeting from October 1, Senator Diaz asks how many AP students are actually matriculating through their program?
    - i. Senator Fridley noted that at least in the M.ED. programs, that rate is very high. Says the question of retainment is not an issue with the M.ED. programs.
    - ii. Senator Cotter-Lynch replied that the number that Dean Blackwood was sharing, at least interpreted by her, is that students are finishing, and the current levels were part of an expected plateau. Senator Shannon suggests that all growth is not flattening out – some programs are static, and others are growing quickly. In her program, the numbers have increased from 47 when she began to 250 currently. The increase in enrollment from last year to this year is 20%.
  - f. The UAC also discussed the possibility of highlighting more departments in our overall marketing scheme for the school. How can all departments mimic or replicate the way that Aviation and Native American Leadership are positioned as “marketable”?
    - i. Chair Daigle notes that there is something in the works. She can’t reveal specifics but that the President will answer this.
  - g. Senator Shannon recalled comments made by Dean Blackwood that “no one wants to come to Durant.” This statement was also discussed during the most recent AAUP meeting. In other words, we are wholly reliant on marketing because of our reputation. Senator Sparacio agrees – the comment seemed harsh considered most of our growth is occurring in online programs that don’t require students to come to campus – what is the connection?
    - i. Senator Gantt unpacked this statement – “there is investment in campus, and then there is investment in its appearance.” We only do one of those things. Suggests that Dean Blackwood’s comments had more to do with the aesthetic of our campus – it needs a facelift. Senator Diaz agrees – Grayson College has state of the art facilities. So does the Kiamichi Tech campus in Durant.
- F. Treasurer Report
- a. No report.
- G. Executive Committee (Notes submitted)
- a. Chair Daigle reviewed the major points from the EC meeting with President Newsom on September 27, 2021.
  - b. REGARDING VACCINES: 309 of 599 faculty members are fully vaccinated. About 29% of our students are vaccinated. There is no way to breakdown or disaggregate that information because of the way that Blackboard was set up. Flu shots are available should you want one.

- c. REGARDING EARLY ALERT REPORTS: The President has scheduled a meeting to preview and determine different early alert software and add-ons to Colleague.
- d. REGARDING BAGELS: Einstein’s Bagels is scheduled to open on October 21.
- e. REGARDING STEP-INCREASES: Reviewed the President’s three-part process regarding faculty salary and compensation:
  - i. Re-engage the step increases (these steps would be formulated and built in for current faculty)
  - ii. Look at built-in base increases to the current salary card.
  - iii. Put together a working group to reexamine the appropriateness of the salary card (this will include HR and VPBA Westman)
    - a. Reiterated his desire to include insurance costs in any adjustments that are made to salaries as long as we can do it.
- f. REGARDING AD-HOC COMMITTEES: President Newsom stated that most have fulfilled their mission and are currently disbanded. He is still looking at the effects of the proposals before releasing results.
- g. REGARDING THE MASTER PLAN: Is using the responses (some 400) for the University survey released in September to help steer decisions and has secured an architect out of Tulsa who plans on setting up on Campus in the Spring semester (they will hold their own forum). Stresses that he wants a Master Plan that he can approach donors with. President Newsom identified a number of priorities:
  - i. Morrison will be completely renovated – envisioning it as the new center of fine and performing arts on campus.
  - ii. Expansion of the Student Union.
  - iii. Build an alumni fountain
  - iv. Upgrade the Loop.
    - a. Admitted that the University is still working on problems when it was hit by the “big freeze.”
    - b. Gave an additional update on the Rodeo Center as well: what was initially projected as a \$750,000 project increased by \$700,000 because the City of Durant demanded a paved road and parking lot at the site. Says the university can cover these unexpected expenses.
- h. REGARDING VACCINE MANDATES ON CAMPUS: President Newsom said he was handcuffed by the state about implementing any such policy.
- i. REGARDING RECORDERS: In this meeting, VPAA Golden says that a recorder for Chairs Meetings to streamline information access should be taken care of.
- j. REGARDING STUDENT RECRUITMENT: Senator Shannon noted that during the meeting we heard a lot about PLC and Honors recruitment but not about recruitment of students that are not represented now well on campus (which would fall under Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Senator Cotter-Lynch notes that, by state law, we cannot distinguish students according to race or ethnicity when it comes to scholarships – university funds cannot be used for

this purpose. Senator Diaz suggests that instead of thinking about DEI along race or ethnic lines, we focus on first generation students (there is a significant overlap in these target populations). This also will fit in our university mission and practice, as we already have a large contingent of first-generation students enrolled.

IV. Old Business

- a. None to report.

V. New Business

- a. Selecting a nominee for The Oklahoman Medal for Excellence in Teaching at a Regional University or Community College. This award is sponsored by the Oklahoman Foundation for Excellence. Senator Cotter-Lynch explains that this is a state-wide teaching award, and we should get in the habit of nominating faculty regularly. Explains that it is looked at more favorably by the committee if the university is united and there is consensus support for the nominee. It is rare for someone to win on their first nomination. Then again, if we don't nominate anyone, our nominee will never win! We should make a practice of nominating an individual each year.
  - i. Past Chair Clark says that obvious places to pursue this it to automatically nominate the Professor of the Year or the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award. Chair Daigle says that if we follow this process, we should nominate Riley Coker this year. She can begin putting that packet together, assuming she is receptive to the idea.
  - ii. There is a question of whether this should be our responsibility, or a new charge assigned to the FS Planning Committee?
    - a. **MOTION** - To charge the Planning Committee to take on the responsibility of nominating a candidate for the Oklahoman Medal for Excellence in Teaching at a Regional University or Community College – Past Chair Clark
    - b. **SECOND** – Senator Shannon
    - c. **DISCUSSION** – Senator Boothe asks where we can find more information on this award? Senator Cotter-Lynch says the deadline is always in late October (<https://www.ofe.org/>). There should be a letter of recommendation issued by the Faculty Senate, in addition to the letters from colleagues and students. The University president will also need to endorse the nomination. Chair Daigle notes that the process of nominating someone can get started as early as the Spring because that is when the Professor of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award recipients are announced – it will be easy to systematize this. Senator Fridley asks whether we can simply extend an invitation to Dr. Coker for this year because of the timing.

Past Chair Clark suggests this can be a **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT** if that is allowed (Parliamentarian Diaz approves).

d. **VOTE TO APPROVE** - Yes 16; No: 0; Abstaining: 0.

- b. HR and the hiring of adjuncts (email can be found in Blackboard under our meeting notes): a concern was brought forth to one of our senators about the onerous process for hiring adjuncts. This has been discussed in the Chairs' Meetings, but it doesn't seem that anything is being done. The process is still the same. This will be sent to the appropriate sub-committee for further review – now we must determine which committee that is.
  - i. Chair Daigle asks if this charge should be given to the Personnel Policies Committee? Senator Cotter-Lynch responds that there would not be movement on this issue because PPC is still working on telework policy and then will have to tackle the salary card.
  - ii. Senator Fridley suggests the Executive Committee take the charge. Chair Daigle agrees due to the fact that PPC is overloaded.

#### VI. Announcements

- a. Shared Governance Forum is Monday, October 11 at 2pm in CB 103 and via Zoom. An invitation was sent on Tuesday, October 5, 2021. The Quality Initiative will be discussed. We have recorded this in the past, for those that will be unable to attend.
- b. Promotion and Tenure Panel will be held for the Mutual Mentoring Meeting Friday 10/8 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. in Classroom Building Room 103. We are meeting in person and by ZOOM: <https://se-edu.zoom.us/j/8100r4ne>
- c. Faculty Senate was to be recognized at the Henderson State football game on October 2nd during the first media time out. These plans were cancelled due to the threat of inclement weather. Faculty Senate will now be recognized at the football game scheduled on October 30<sup>th</sup> against Arkansas-Monticello.

#### VII. Adjournment

- A. Adjourned at 4:02 p.m. CST
  - 1. **Motion** – Senator Wood
  - 2. **Second** – Senator Boothe

Minutes submitted by Senator Matthew Sparacio, Recorder