

Shared Governance

Meeting 4.22.2020

3:00 p.m. – Zoom meeting

Attendance: 25 participants

Kate Shannon, Randy Clark, Jeri Walker, Randy Clark, Doug Wood, Amy Gantt, Liz McCraw, Stan Alluisi, Rolando Diaz, Meg Cotter-Lynch, Kathy Boothe, Mike Davis, Christala Smith, Jake Pruett, Dan Althoff, Kay Daigle, Kathy McDonald, Charla Hall, Diane Dixon, William Fridley, Carolyn Fridley, Chaehyun Lee, YingChou Lin, Bryon Clark, Teresa Golden,

Welcome from Chair Randy Clark

Welcome from Moderator, Senator Dan Althoff

Guests for Sabbatical discussion: Dr. Charla Hall, Dr. Meg Cotter-Lynch, Dr. Doug Wood, Dr. Jerri Walker

Senator Althoff reminded us what Shared Governance is and also the mention of sabbatical from the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM)

Each panelists will give a five minute discussion of their sabbatical:

Dr. Meg Cotter-Lynch: Spring 2016; finished a book; signed a contract for the book with a list of deadlines; could not have finished the book without her sabbatical; apply for sabbatical a full year before you can get sabbatical; it was the second time to apply; the first time she got no response.

Dr. Charla Hall: Spring 2013; was not notified until December of 2012 of approval which limited options; professional development focus; training as a counseling psychologist; one week of first aid and mental health the Red Cross after the Moore tornadoes; attended the anatomy class and lab for two weeks; worked with University of Oklahoma and Chickasaw Nation and met people working with faculty, counseling and the Nation; made relationships that she was able to bring back to campus for continuing education for faculty; went to Colorado and met with professionals at University of Colorado; worked for a month for a local therapists on mental health assessments at the hospital; a number of powerful experiences that enhanced her training and her teaching.

Dr. Jerri Walker: Alfred Barnes – had been studying him for several years; there is a foundation in Philadelphia where she was able to go and spend some time; she applied late but because of the opportunity she was able to get the sabbatical for spring, 2019; went into the archives and enroll in a foundation course at the Barnes Foundation; they taught visual art; John Dewey and Alfred Barnes architect; reading widened in several areas; attending a conference in Louisville Kentucky; and then went back to Barnes Foundation. Sherman Symphony worked with them. Built a greenhouse from the ground up. Served as the College Music Society – South Central Region – program coordinator for a conference; member of the turning point coalition and was able to work with them end Bryan County for a healthier Bryan County. Flew to Madrid, cruised to Spain and visited cultural sites and gardens.

Dr. Doug Wood: a long term data set from a museum in McKinney Texas; banding birds for about 30 years; the initial data set had 600,000 pieces of data; applied for a one semester sabbatical – one semester of full pay; department had previously covered classes for each other and they did this for him; spring, 2016; spent time in his office crunching numbers; generated two manuscripts that were published; two more – one written but no finished and one more with a collaborator; involved undergraduate students in one of the manuscripts; needed time to process the data and start doing the analysis; typically no grants for work like this; allowed him to get back into the current literature on topics related to research; then brought this research back into the classroom after sabbatical

Questions:

Senator Dan Althoff: What was unexpected about the sabbatical experience?

Charla- on the positive side, not expecting the number of connections that carried forward until now; negative side – frustration with the process; notification was delayed; lack of information on what was supposed to happen at the end – expectation of the report; never got the information of the expectation.

Meg – overall, great experience; negative – budget cuts happening, became Honors Program coordinator and had to come up to campus to get through the transitions.

Doug – positives – allowed to breathe from teaching nonstop for over 15 years; faculty and students respected his desire to have quiet time to work; worked with relevant and important data and was able to connect with scholars; negative – getting rejected the first time he applied, that year no sabbaticals were approved.

Jeri – John Dewey, Albert Einstein experience was positive; downside was the cost of returning to Philadelphia for a few weeks

Senator Dan Althoff: No signs that fiscal difficulties in Oklahoma will abate any time soon. Do you have suggestions for administration on how to make this work financially?

Doug – with the move to online, it might be easier to fill in for faculty while they are on sabbatical; maybe need an external revenue stream;

Meg – difficulty in current environment, other members of the department are willing to step up, but to do that we need a little more flexibility built into our schedule; right now many faculty are teaching heavy loads and we would need more faculty

Senator Dan Althoff: At many universities, sabbatical is normal and regularly scheduled, SOSU is not one of these. In light of this, do you have suggestions for faculty?

Jeri – followed her curiosity, took an opportunity to visit before the sabbatical and that began her journey of study; follow something

Doug – sabbatical helped him bring new things back into his teaching and getting up to date and reinventing their courses; contacted former professors and most had guidelines that sabbaticals be taken every seven years; a survey at Southeastern would probably show otherwise; the APPM asks for six years of fulltime employment

Charla – sometimes we limit ourselves in what we think a sabbatical should look like; be creative in what a sabbatical looks like, the APPM gives some flexibility; keep a list of things somewhere on things you would do if you had time

Meg – we really don't have a culture at Southeastern of taking sabbaticals; just apply, if you don't get it, apply again

VP Golden – approved one for this year; submitted and approved

Senator Dan Althoff: If research depends on receiving sabbatical, what backup plans do you recommend?

Meg – would figure out to do it regardless but it would not have been easy, extensions for deadlines, etc. In the past, did not apply for grants when a sabbatical would have been needed to complete the research.

Doug – sabbatical was opportunistic, make sure young faculty know that sabbaticals are an option

Senator Dan Althoff: We live in a difficult time, and people already see tenured faculty as overprivileged, what do you say to those who say it is a paid vacation?

Jeri – give me a person in another profession who spends all this time studying and teaching who makes personal choices to earn the right and then we will discuss it.

Meg – so many different kinds of labor; intellectual labor you can't really see; we are constantly thinking about our work and it takes many different forms; difficult to see from the outside but it is very real; hard to communicate to people what this kind of work looks like.

Charla – it's a privilege to work in higher education; it's important to remind ourselves of this.

Doug – we get two months of unpaid vacation every summer where we still work on scholarship, teaching prep, etc. Paid to do our craft, just not teaching; many people are very uneducated about what college professors do; we put in 10-12 of undergraduate and graduate education for this privileged situation – we worked hard for this

Senator Dan Althoff: Based on your experience, would you have done anything differently regarding the sabbatical process?

Jeri – would not have agonized over leaving advises

Meg – things were hard, but nothing that she would change

Charla – given the amount of time for planning, would not have changed anything

Doug – should have taken a full year, even with the salary reduction; needed more time; hired right out of graduate school and did not have time to get manuscripts published like many colleagues did since he was teaching; with sabbatical plan ahead and be prepared before it starts; a full year would have been a much better experience.

Senator Stan Alluisi: Did someone from your department pick up your classes? No additional cost for adjuncts?

Doug – worked with colleagues and students to take his classes the year before to spread out the load; no additional cost at all; when Tim went on sabbatical he took one of Doug's classes and it was good to see each other's classes.

Jeri – one graduate class was taken over; the other class is offered every other semester and they were flipped so she could take the sabbatical; no one else was hired

Meg – additional adjuncts hired; faculty shifted and adjuncts hired for composition classes

Charla – used adjuncts to cover her classes

Chair Randy Clark: In terms of being able to discuss your sabbatical with the campus community, how did that work out?

Doug – has not until now, worked his findings into his classes; not a good venue to present results of sabbatical; in the past there were presentations on research but that has not been done lately; would be good to bring it back

Jeri – a lot of what was learned was pedagogical, and she was able to bring that back into the classroom

Charla – was not a formal mechanism, but did a presentation for the psychology majors and faculty after the sabbatical

Meg – incorporated it into the classes; did a few lectures for general public and other universities but not Southeastern

Bryon Clark – comments – moving forward some anticipation from faculty about taking sabbatical – who will take classes, who will take care of students; some sabbaticals were done last minute for Fulbright scholars in special situations; some faculty may not have ever felt the need to take a sabbatical; some schools require sabbaticals every 6-8 years and some faculty do not want to take sabbaticals; studies on how what we do in creation not meeting the expectations of the general public; we should likewise be wise on how we advertise our time while on university paid trips including sabbaticals. Sabbaticals are important, but not always supported by everyone in higher education. Be persistent in applying for sabbaticals if you are denied the first time.

Doug – met with Dean Scoufos and felt some concern that a sabbatical might be a spring board out of the university; and even though we might not cite research, we may use it in classes, etc.

Meg – one of the risks is that we might take our profession for granted; not self evident about what we do; be prepared to share what we do related to our research, education, etc.

Chair Randy Clark – thank you to panelists; thank you to all who joined Zoomed shared governance forum; meeting ended at 4:10 p.m. – meeting was recorded on Zoom.

Notes submitted by Rhonda Richards, Faculty Senate Recorder