

Faculty Senate Minutes
Fall Semester, Meeting #6
Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Virtual Meeting 3:00-4:30 p.m.

As approved by the Faculty Senate on January 26, 2022

Attending:

Stan Alluisi	Steve Csaki	Andy Kramer
Laura Atchley	Kay Daigle	Chaehyun Lee
Cody Bogard	William Fridley	Kate Shannon
Randy Clark	Amy Gantt	Rob Shauger
Meg Cotter-Lynch	Srimal Garusinghe	Doug Wood

Absences:

Kathy Boothe	Matthew Sparacio
Rolando Diaz	Jeri Walker
Ashley Hampton	Mila Zhu

Guests:

Aaron Adair	Karl Frinkle
Jen Anderson	Jennifer Moore
Courtney Boise	Sondra Petty

I. Call to Order: 3:04

II. [Minutes from November 3, 2021](#)

- A. **Motion to Approve** the Minutes from November 3, 2021 – Senator Gantt Andy 14-0-1
 - 1. Second – Senator Kramer
 - 2. Discussion – n/a
 - 3. Vote to approve: Yes – 14; No 0; Abstaining 1

III. Committee Reports

- A. Budget Committee
 - 1. Did not meet.
- B. Committee on Committees
 - 1. Did not meet.
- C. Personnel Policies Committee
 - 1. Did not meet.
- D. Planning Committee

1. Did not meet. Senator Gantt relayed a message from committee chair Boothe that the nominations survey for the FS Awards is ready to go, should be rolled out by the end of the week, and will be available till Feb. 7.

E. University Affairs Committee

1. Did not meet. Senator Wood has agreed to chair the committee following Senator Diaz's resignation.

F. Treasurer Report

Stan Alluisi - no report

G. Executive Committee (Met on November 8, [Meeting Notes on file](#))

1. **Motion to Approve** Spring Meeting Dates – Senator Clark; Second—Senator Shannon; Vote to approve: Yes – 15; No 0; Abstaining 0.

January 26

February 9

February 23

March 9

March 30

April 13

April 27

Executive Committee Meetings

January 31, 2 pm

March 28, 2 pm

Executive Committee with the President Meetings

February 14, 2 pm

April 11, 2 pm

Shared Governance Forums

March 7, 2 pm (Topic from the Administration)

April 12, 2 pm (Topic from the FS)

2. Meeting with the President (November 15, [Meeting Notes on file](#))

- (a) The Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) is an initial step in a proposed framework for moving forward and will require study as we go. Work

will begin with the Advising Center in the Spring. Faculty will continue to advise, and the degree of participation in the QIP will largely be left to individual faculty choice. Advising, mentoring, scheduling software, and the ongoing reviews of online courses by CIDT were also discussed.

- (b) In regard to SB 1775, President Newsom noted that the university must comply with state law, and he affirmed his strong support for faculty's exercise of academic freedom. He does not anticipate problems at our campus, but noted the statute allows for whistle blowers and ethics complaints which would need to be addressed by the institution. As the case law develops, we will have a clearer picture of how this statute plays out.
- (c) President Newsom and VPAA Golden agreed in principle to the [Resolution on Faculty Hiring](#) (see Motion 1 from the PPC, approved by the FS on October 14, 2020) with some clarification of the language and flexibility in implementation to accommodate changing needs and special cases that will arise.
- (d) An extra day of Fall Break (in addition to Thanksgiving Break) will be added to next year's schedule. We will also begin working with a three-year calendar.
- (e) We are still awaiting HLC dates. President Newsom reported that we have entered agreements with [EAB](#) for marketing and recruitment and with Graduation Alliance (GA) on a one-year contract to contact and engage students who had applied to the university but did not enroll. President Newsom stated the agreement with GA is different from the one that was previously rejected. Past Chair Clark clarified that the "rejection" of the previous proposed agreement might better be described as a decision by the administration not to enter the agreement in light of the numerous problems, issues, and objections presented by the Faculty Senate (see [Motion number 3 from the PPC](#), approved by the FS on October 14, 2020).
- (f) President Newsom gave updates on vaccine mandate, graduation numbers, and the upcoming Fall Graduation with Chancellor Emeritus Glenn T. Johnson as the speaker.

- (g) VPAA Golden noted that there was some confusion amongst department chairs about the post-tenure review process (PTR) in those cases where a department chair is going through PTR. The Personnel Policies Committee will be charged with examining the policy (APPM 4.4.7.3, point C) and offering any needed clarification.
3. Shared Governance Forum (SGF) November 16 (topic chosen by the FS)
- (a) There was discussion of the SGF [“Growing Pains: Stories from the Trenches.”](#) Comments were made about Dean Blackwood’s commentary on recent articles about Academic Partnerships (AP), including [“College Finances are Being Eaten from the Inside: How online course contractors exploit vulnerable institutions”](#) *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 4, 2021, by Erik Gilbert, a professor of history at Arkansas State University. The article mentions Southeastern by name and identifies us as an institution (as with Arkansas St.) at which AP “brings in around 40% of all students.” Blackwood noted that it was an opinion piece and characterized it as the product of a disgruntled professor (at Blackwood’s alma mater). Blackwood likened the article’s claims to comments he has heard (primarily for those outside our university) that AP exercises curricular control. Blackwood dismissed these comments and maintained that Southeastern controls the curriculum for our programs.
 - (b) A senator mentioned that EIL had a Professional Education faculty candidate from Arkansas St. interview on campus in 2017. Southeastern, at the time, was on the verge of launching the accelerated online M.Ed. programs, marketed by AP. The candidate warned the search committee about the problems associated with the AP marketed programs at Arkansas State: overwhelming class sizes, overworked faculty burdened with tedious responsibilities, reliance on third-party *coaches*, and the resulting rigidity of courses built in toto, seven weeks prior to delivery. In other words, these potential problems have been known, have been raised and discussed, and as was documented and justified in the [SGF presentation](#),

are taking their toll on faculty at Southeastern: faculty are overworked and underpaid.

- (c) The severity of the toll was noted and explained by several faculty with statements that included “This is killing me.” “I can’t take this anymore.” “We’re drowning.” One senator suggested surveying faculty to see how many are planning on retiring in the next year or so, due to the workload.
- (d) There were several comments noting doubts that the administration understands or appreciates the gravity of the situation. There were some comments that the administration is engaging in “faculty blaming,” particularly in regard to the increasing number of courses taught as an overload (26% of courses in Fall 2021, [SGF slide 8](#)). This perhaps dismissive attitude finds expression in the phrase “you chose to teach the overloads.” Senator Fridley repeated his comments from the SGF, that while there is no formal requirement to teach overloads, there are de facto pressures for faculty to teach overloads due to concerns for the quality of courses and programs, and in some cases financial pressures due to low pay. Also mentioned were the compromises that inevitably result with high enrollment in accelerated classes (e.g., in terms of grading and providing meaningful feedback, and monitoring academic integrity) and the tension between the HLC mandate that coursework be 17 to 18 hours per week and the burden of assigning and grading that much work.
- (e) One senator recommended we take the administration at their word on overloads and asked what would happen if faculty chose to stick with a 4/4 workload with no overloads. A guest explained that many faculty have an understandable attachment to the courses they teach and, in some cases, created. They are our babies. However, sometimes we just need to say no and let it go. The guest recognized, however, that for junior faculty, taking this stand would be difficult, and in some cases involves a risk of disrupting unstated departmental expectations.

IV. Old Business: none

V. New Business

A. Election of a Parliamentarian

1. Past Chair Randy Clark nominated Senator Chaehyun Lee; Second – Senator Alluisi. Nomination carries by acclamation. Congratulations Senator Lee!
2. Guest Karl Frinkle posted a question on Chat: What is the Texoma plan for recruiting? Someone stated that it relates to a pipeline from community colleges in the area.

VI. Announcements

- A. Finals Week Faculty Luncheon? It was agreed to put this off until next semester. The deciding factor may have been the absence of Senator Fridley's fabled chicken wings!
- B. Past Chair Clark emphasized that we need to keep discussing and continue our focus on these inter-related issues of faculty pay and workload. The more these issues are allowed to drag along, the less likely it is we will arrive at acceptable resolutions. As long as we keep teaching overloads at low pay, administration will have little incentive to raise salaries. Urges the Salary Card Group (which will hold its first meeting Friday) to reach out for input, to push, and not to delay.

VII. Adjournment

- A. Adjourned at 4:01 p.m. CST
 1. Motion – Chair Daigle; Second – Senator Alluisi

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Archivist William Fridley, in the absence of Recorder Matthew Sparacio.