

Faculty Senate Survey Report (FSSR) Committee Minutes

Spring Semester, Meeting #1

Friday, February 11, 2022

Virtual Meeting, 1:00-2:00 p.m. CST

ATTENDING

Andy Kramer

Matthew Sparacio

Kate Shannon

Jeri Walker

I. Call to Order – 1:01 pm CST

II. Agenda

- a. Committee Members were charged with reviewing the 2020-2021 FSSR and consider the following questions:
 - i. Take note of the topics of the questions and what kind of information they are trying to gather.
 - ii. If there are any questions you consider redundant on first glance, flag them so we can start the process of compiled a list of questions that should be revised, combined, or removed entirely.

III. Discussion

- a. Senators Shannon and Kramer offered question-by-question assessments, noting redundancies and possible revisions to increase effectiveness; Senator Walker constructed an overall outline of the FSSR *as it currently stands* by topic (Addendum I)
- b. Senator Sparacio began by posing the question of what other information, if any, do we need to know in addition to the current Faculty Senate Survey (FSS) to help us complete our charge?
 - i. Senator Walker asked if administrators and staff personnel have a similar survey?
 1. Senator Sparacio will email the following people to try to answer this question:
 - a. Jennifer Moore to ask if Staff Senate has a similar survey they complete.
 - b. Liz McCraw and the SGA Executive Committee to ask if students have a similar survey they complete.

- ii. Senator Kramer asked if there are survey available from other universities that we can compare SE's to. Senator Shannon suggests reaching out to members of the AAUP regional group we previously met with to discuss concerns about the COVID return to campus plans in Fall 2020.
 - 1. Senator Sparacio will email AAUP President Karl Frinkle and FS Chair Kay Daigle if they still have this list of contacts.
 - iii. RATIONALE FOR THIS CORRESPONDENCE: to see how other stakeholders on campus and other Faculty Senates go about this kind of assessment.
- c. General Recommendations by the committee:
- i. We should begin the FSS with the [University Mission Statement](#).
 - ii. All members of the committee share concerns about the way that the “neutral” response is used in the 2021 FSSR. “Neutral” is often group in an answer range to analysis the responses, even though neutral by definition means impartial. The report should not include neutral or neutral adjacent responses to make claims that a group either agrees or disagrees with particular statements – they should be kept as a separate group.
 - 1. For example: Question 5 of the 2021 FSSR asks: “*I believe the morale of the faculty is...*” (choices ranging from Getting Noticeably Worse, Getting a Little Worse, Staying the Same, Improving a Little, Noticeably Improving).
 - a. Analysis includes the following statement: “*Overall the faculty perception is that the level of morale is staying the same or improving (63%, 45 of 71 responses).*” Based on the graph, approximately 32 of the 71 responses in this group were “staying the same.” If 32 responses were added to the 26 responses ranging from “Getting Noticeably Worse to Getting a Little Worse,” then an overall *negative* response would be the statistical majority. These are obviously conflicting results. We ask that responses that are meant to convey neutrality always be interpreted as such.
 - iii. All members of the committee share the opinion that the questions directly focusing on individual administrators (Q37-44 in the 2021 FSSR) do not need to be included. Instead, there should be questions about faculty members’ relationship with the administration in general.
 - 1. All members agreed that a question related to grievance procedures be included instead of the individual satisfaction surveys for administrators, something along the lines of: “*If you have a grievance with administration are you aware of the protocol or procedures to address that challenge?*” (a question like this would ideally include a link to the document that the grievance chain of command).

- iv. As Senator Walker noted in her topic outline (Addendum I), we start the survey by discussing resource allocations. There is concern among the committee members that bringing up the topic of compensation at the beginning of the survey may unintentionally influence subsequent responses. In other words, negativity breed negativity.
 1. Senator Shannon suggested a reformatting of the questions: “let’s go from macro to micro” with the topics of the questions.
- v. Our discussion came to focus on the overall language throughout the survey, which emphasizes *perception* (for example, Q4 *The morale of the faculty is...?*). It is the committee’s opinion that perception is of secondary concern. We want faculty to answer for themselves, about *their own* experiences, **not** others. This is the information that we should be trying to measure.
 1. To highlight the difference, we would use the example cited above – Q4 – and suggest a revision to have the question ask: *As a faculty member, you would characterize your morale during this past year as...?*
 - a. The committee also suggested include more finite time frames in the questions, hence the *during this past year* in the revision above.
 2. One case where perception may be worth asking about is faculty members’ perceptions of how students are performing. As Senator Walker noted in her initial analysis: “The biggest red flag to me was the emphasis of the entire survey. It is certainly slanted toward faculty, rather than students. Note that student services are listed at the end of the financial list.” We are here to teach students; we should ask about them in the FSS.
 - a. This prompted a conversation about the recent messaging pushed by SE administration about creating a “student ready college” as stated in the [HLC Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal](#) signed by President Newsom in October 2021.
 - b. We would like to have more consistent messaging from administration regarding this strategic shift for the university.
 - i. Senator Shannon noted that this language was lifted from a work published by the [American Association of Colleges and Universities](#) titled [Becoming a Student-Ready College: A New Culture of Leadership for Student Success](#) (2016).
 - ii. If this is the strategic vision for the university going forward, it would be a good idea is both faculty AND students knew the definition of “student ready.” The idea was proposed that this is perhaps a book worth adopting as part of a common book program across campus to

further emphasize this message (this is unrelated to our charge but worth further discussion).

- vi. Senator Walker suggested a drop down menu to have all the questions on one page instead of having a survey that needs to be “clicked through” – thoughts?
- vii. The committee drafted terse questions regarding consistent messaging, information sharing by the FS, and the collegiality of administration. To be finalized later.

IV. Plans Looking Forward

- a. Senator Sparacio will contact FS Chair Daigle about gaining access to the FS Survey Monkey account, which will allow any future revisions to the FSS.
- b. Senator Sparacio will combine the suggestions of the other committee members and update the FSS for a new 2022 draft by completing the following actions:
 - i. eliminate/combine redundant questions
 - ii. rephrase questions for more direct focus
 - iii. update initial drafts of questions discussed in this meeting
- c. This updated 2022 FSS draft will be emailed to the rest of the committee members no later than Friday, February 18.
- d. Next Meeting: The FSSR Committee will meet at 12:30 pm on February 23 over Zoom (right before the full FS meeting that afternoon at 3 pm) to discuss the proposed revisions and any new questions.
 - i. ZOOM link: <https://se-edu.zoom.us/j/97212958135>
 - ii. Meeting ID: 972 1295 8135

V. Adjournment – 2:09 pm CST

ADDEDUM 1

I. Resource Allocations

Institutional Mission

A. Financial

1. Faculty
 2. Administration
 3. Facilities
 4. Technology
 5. Student Services
- B. Faculty Retention
1. Pay (see A.1.)
 2. Workload
 3. Travel Funding
 4. Morale
 5. Assessment
 - a. Tenure & Promotion
 - b. Performance Review
 - c. Post-Tenure Review

II. Shared Governance

- A. Forums
- B. University Leadership
 1. President
 2. VP Grad School
 3. VP Tribal Relations
 4. Assoc. Dean Research & Records
 5. VP Student Affairs
 6. VP Enrollment Management
 7. VP CFO
 8. VP AA
- C. Faculty Senate

III. Miscellaneous

- A. Online vs f2f
- B. Program Assessment
- C. University fulfills its Mission

Southeastern Oklahoma State University provides an environment of academic excellence that enables students to reach their highest potential. By having personal access to excellent teaching, challenging academic programs, and extracurricular experiences, students will develop skills and habits that promote values for career preparation, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning.

<http://www.sosu.edu/about/history/>

Minutes submitted by Senator Matthew Sparacio 2/11/2022