

# Minutes from the February Meeting of the Faculty Senate

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, February 11, 2019 at 3:30 P.M. in the Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building.

## Attendance

**Present:** Present: Vishwas Bedekar, Kathryn Blankenship, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Larry Burriss, Nancy Caukin, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Trevor de Clercq, Andrew Dix, Paul Eubanks, Tricia Farwell, Bob Gordon, Joey Gray, Shannon Harmon, Pippa Holloway, Paul Kline, Marcus Knight, Rachel Leander, Darren Levin, Melissa Lobegeier, Alfred Lutz, Preston MacDougall, Pamela Morris, John Mullane, Susan Myers-Shirk, John Pennington, Joshua Phillips, Ariana Postlethwait, Deana Raffo, Joan Raines, Michael Rice, Patrick Richey, James Robertson, Stephen Salter, Mary Ellen Sloane, Nat Smith, Donald Snead, Rajesh, Srivastava, Sherri Stevens, Moses Tesi and Elizabeth Wright.

**Excused:** Angela DeBoer and Justin Gardner.

**Absent:** Tyler Babb, James Chaney, Mamit Deme, Rebecca Fischer and Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand.

## Speakers

- Charles Apigian (Professor of Information Systems and Analytics), Lara Daniel (Professor of Accounting), Tricia Farwell (Associate Professor of Journalism and Strategic Media), and Mary Martin (Professor of Mathematics) spoke briefly and answered questions. The major points made by candidates in their presentations, plus answers to a few questions, are summarized here. More information about the candidates can be found in their written statements.
- Charles Apigian
  - He says that energy and enthusiasm are some of his strengths.
  - His leadership experience, as chair of the Department of Information Systems, for example, has prepared him to communicate effectively with the other trustees.
  - He loves to tell the story of MTSU and how its faculty members contribute to the community.
  - He is an active member of the community, with experience serving, for example, on the Nashville Technology Council Board and the Special Kids, LLC Board.
  - He intends to be an involved board member; he plans to attend all events and committee meetings.
  - He plans to keep the faculty informed via weekly or bi-weekly emails.

- When asked how he would communicate the importance of tenure, Apigian emphasized that tenure is needed to recruit and retain high-quality faculty. In arguing for tenure, he said it is important to tell the story of the faculty.
- Lara Daniel
  - Daniel has been a faculty member at MTSU for over 30 years.
  - She wants to be involved in the board and the progress of the University.
  - She has a good working relationship with the president and the administration.
  - She values procedures, goals and objectives.
  - She is comfortable with formal procedures and by-laws and would be ready to speak out if she felt the board had violated procedure.
  - She has listened in on many board meetings. There were times she felt she could have made valuable contributions to their discussions. However, she felt there would also be times when she would need to say, "I don't know." She views her willingness to do so as a strength.
  - When asked how she would communicate the importance of tenure, Daniel said we must educate board members about what tenured faculty members do, about the time and energy invested in shared governance and research.
- Tricia Farwell
  - Farwell would apply the knowledge she gained serving as faculty reagent of the TBR while serving as faculty trustee.
  - When asked how she would communicate the importance of tenure, Farwell said she was ready to make a case for tenure. She has felt emboldened to speak out without fear of reprisal due to the protections of tenure. Tenure enables faculty to say things that are controversial. There are parallels that can be made to the world of businesses.
  - As faculty trustee Farwell would continue to attend faculty senate meetings.
  - As faculty trustee, Farwell would be both a representative of the faculty and a trustee.
  - Farwell's background in public relations has prepared her to be a channel of communication between the Board of Trustees and the faculty.
  - Farwell would take advantage of opportunities to talk with board members one-on-one.
  - The Board of Trustees has the potential to influence statewide priorities by working through THEC. Farwell has some experience working with THEC.
- Mary Martin
  - Martin served as faculty senate president during the transition from TBR.

- She read and commented on every policy while senate president.
- She attended every board of trustees meeting and every committee meeting.
- Her knowledge of policy is a strength that she would use to support the faculty's mission.
- When asked how she would communicate the importance of tenure, Martin said tenure is critical because it enables faculty members to tell the truth in difficult circumstances. Also, tenure is essential for recruiting and retaining faculty. Tenure is not a guaranteed job for life. Tenure is in the best interest of the institution.
- The board must remember that it is responsible to the University.
- Martin said the faculty trustee must exhibit sincerity and integrity. The other trustees should regard the faculty trustee as their most reliable source of objective information.

## **Reports**

- Rachel Leander reported on the Senate's budget. As of February 11, 2019, the Senate had at its disposal \$464.39 for the purpose of travel and \$2,839.38 for other operating expenses. At the start of this academic year \$1,600 and \$5,380 were budgeted for travel and operating expenses, respectively.
- Laura Cochran reported on behalf of the Academic Affairs, Student Life and Athletics Committee. She thanked those who have shared information about their department's implementation of the new workload guidelines. The committee continues to collect this type of information.
- Tricia Farwell reported on behalf of the Audit and Compliance Committee. The committee has drafted a new ethics policy for the student handbook, which includes an anti-bullying statement.

## **Motions**

1. Alan Boehm moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting. The motion was adopted.
2. Susan Myers-Shirk moved to table the resolution on salaries and market adjustments until the Senate's next meeting. The motion was adopted.

## **Discussion**

- The Senate will hold a special meeting with Dr. McPhee at 2:30 PM on February 25.
- To prepare for the upcoming trustee election, senators should share their personal notes and/or the mini-minutes from today's meeting as well as the candidates' written statements with their departments and solicit feedback. Faculty members should contact their senate representatives with questions or comments about the candidates and their positions.

- Next week Pippa Holloway will meet with Provost Mark Byrnes and Becky Cole about the resolution on salaries and market adjustments. The draft resolution is not ready to share, but senators should solicit feedback on the idea of implementing market adjustments at promotion.
- The non-financial aspects of the food service proposals have been evaluated and scored by the responsible committee members. These scores are confidential. The financial components of the proposals will be evaluated by the administration and made public once the contract is awarded.
- Digital Measures is a new electronic system for archiving documents and information for the purpose of tenure/promotion and annual review. It will replace the Outline of Faculty Data. Numerous training sessions will be held.

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 P.M.

Submitted by Rachel Leander, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.