

Minutes from the January Meeting of the Faculty Senate

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, January 28, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in the Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building.

Attendance

Present: Tyler Babb, Vishwas Bedekar, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Trevor de Clercq, Angela DeBoer, Andrew Dix, Paul Eubanks, Tricia Farwell, Rebecca Fischer, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Shannon Harmon, Pippa Holloway, Paul Kline, Rachel Leander, Darren Levin, Melissa Lobegeier, Alfred Lutz, Preston MacDougall, Pamela Morris, John Mullane, Susan Myers-Shirk, John Pennington, Joshua Phillips, Deana Raffo, Michael Rice, Patrick Richey, James Robertson, Stephen Salter, Mary Ellen Sloane, Rajesh Srivastava, Sherri Stevens, Moses Tesi, Elizabeth Wright.

Excused: Larry Burriss, Joey Gray, Joan Raines, Donald Snead

Absent: Kathryn Blankenship, Nancy Caukin, James Chaney, Mamit Deme, Marcus Knight, Ariana Postlethwait, Nat Smith

The minutes of the December meeting were approved.

Speaker

Provost Mark Byrnes answered questions about the new workload guidelines. He emphasized that only research active faculty should have course loads of nine hours or less per semester. While faculty teaching nine hours are eligible for overload pay, tenured faculty should not routinely teach three-hour overloads.

He summarized the new guidelines as follows: All faculty members begin with a workload of 15 hours. All faculty members receive a three-hour release for activities including service, student advising, and research. Research-active faculty may receive additional release time.

Senators voiced concerns that departments where twelve-hour loads have been standard will be unable to cover their classes while rewarding release time for research. The Provost said that the University has purchased a new platform that will help administrators determine where new lines are needed.

Senators voiced concerns that the workload guidelines do not meet the needs of some specialized departments, e.g. the Department of Music. The Provost acknowledged that it is very difficult to devise guidelines that work for everyone.

Senators asked questions about how credit hours are determined for graduate, undergraduate, and large lecture format courses. The Provost explained that the practice of awarding additional credit for graduate teaching was intended to provide graduate faculty with time for research. Instead, the new workload guidelines explicitly provide release time for research. A benefit of this change is that faculty in departments without graduate programs can now receive release time for research. In calculating workloads, the weight of a large lecture should be no greater than two. Instructors teaching courses with 80 students or more are eligible to receive double credit.

The Provost mentioned that transparency is an important part of workload reforms. Eventually faculty members should be able to view individual workloads within their own department and the average workloads of other departments.

Reports

- Rachel Leander reported on the Senate's budget. As of January 28, 2018, the Senate had at its disposal \$468.30 for the purpose of travel and \$2,903.99 for other expenses. At the start of this academic year \$1,600 and \$5,380 were budgeted for travel and other expenses, respectively.
- Laura Cochrane reported on behalf of the Academic Affairs, Student Life and Athletics Committee. The committee is investigating how the teaching and research balance varies across departments.
- Tricia Farwell reported on behalf of the Audit and Compliance Committee.
- John Pennington reported on behalf of the Finance and Personnel Committee.
- Alan Boehm reported on behalf of the Executive and Governance Committee. The committee will meet to discuss revisions to policy 32 on university committees.

Motions

1. Stephen Salter moved that (a) each candidate for faculty trustee should have 15 minutes to speak and/or answers questions at the February meeting of the Faculty Senate, (b) the candidate's written statements will be part of the official minutes of that meeting, and (c) the Department of Journalism will send an alternative representative to the February meeting. The motion was adopted.
2. Sherri Stevens moved that Bob Gordon should represent MTSU at the February meeting of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics. The motion was adopted.

Discussion

- Proposals from Sodexo and Aramark are being scored. Both vendors will present their proposals next week.

- Volunteers are needed to serve on the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee. Those interested should contact Joey Gray.
- Policy 404, which addresses conflict of interest for externally funded projects, is under revision. Senators noted that the revised policy applies to all interests, not just financial interests. Senators felt the revised policy would require increased transparency.
- The Steering Committee will reconsider the resolution on salaries.
- The Provost will ask the President if he would consider permitting Monday/Wednesday classes to meet in the morning. If so, the Provost is interested in forming a committee to evaluate this proposal and its impact on students. A previous committee report on a closely related proposal is available to the Faculty Senate.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 P.M.

Submitted by Rachel Leander, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.