

Minutes from the March Meeting of the Faculty Senate

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on Monday, March 11, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in the Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building.

Attendance

Present: Vishwas Bedekar, Kathryn Blankenship, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Nancy Caukin, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Angela DeBoer, Trevor de Clercq, Andrew Dix, Paul Eubanks, (Jane Marcellus substituted for Tricia Farwell), Rebecca Fischer, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, 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, (Rachel Leander substituted for Mary Ellen Sloane), Nat Smith, Sherri Stevens, Moses Tesi, Elizabeth Wright, Dennis Walsh

Excused: Larry Burriss, Tricia Farwell, Mary Ellen Sloane

Absent: Tyler Babb, James Chaney, Mamit Deme, Joey Gray, Stephen Salter, Donald Snead, Rajesh Srivastava

The minutes from the February 11th meeting were approved. Sherri Stevens. Adopted.

Speakers

- Mary Hoffschwelle answered questions about the MT Engage Quality Enhancement program. A status report for the program, which has reached the midpoint of its five-year plan, was provided to the Senate in advance. Dr. Hoffschwelle clarified that the program, which is aimed at fostering engaged learning and improving student retention, progression, and graduation, is a platform that supports faculty members in their endeavors to implement high-impact learning practices. The program is somewhat unique in its breadth. Moreover, it is specific to MTSU. For example, MT Engage developed its own list of high impact teaching practices in collaboration with MTSU's faculty and staff. Faculty members support the MT Engage program by creating MT Engage designated. MT Engage supports faculty development through workshops and faculty learning communities. Faculty learning communities are administered through the LT&ITC. Faculty members are encouraged to reach out to Mary Hoffschwelle and other MT Engage staff with ideas for promoting engaged learning.

Faculty Trustee Election

- Dr. Mary Martin was elected to serve as the new faculty trustee to MTSU's local governing Board.

Reports

- Bob Gordon reported on his experience attending the February meeting of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) and UTK. 68 universities are affiliated with the program, which aims to improve relations between athletics and academics. The meeting was only lightly attended, however, representatives from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (<http://www.ncaa.org/themes-topics/faculty-athletics-representatives>), the Drake Group (<https://thedrakegroup.org/>), and the Knight Commission (<https://www.knightcommission.org/>) spoke at the meeting. Although the NCAA mandates that every university have an athletic committee, complete with at least one faculty representative, the role of the faculty in athletics is not well defined. Hence, faculty involvement in athletics is highly variable between universities. The NCAA is primarily concerned with how faculty can advocate for the health and well being of college athletes. For example, we should ensure that student athletes receive a quality education. The Knight commission on intercollegiate athletics provides a website which shows how each institutions funds its athletics program. Aside from benefiting students and academics as a whole, faculty involvement in athletics could help universities avoid scandals. Currently, MTSU's athletics committee does not include many faculty members. It was noted that Terry Whiteside is described as "the President's representative" to the athletics committee.
- John Pennington reported on a new resource for research, the Sensory Laboratory at Hop Springs Beer Park. The laboratory, which accommodates 10 participants and a researcher, is equipped with data management software, laptops and partitioned seating. This unique resource may be especially useful to faculty members interested in pursuing external funding for research, conducting business/community oriented projects, or collaborating with Hop Springs personnel. See <https://www.hopspringstn.com/>
- Rachel Leander reported on the Senate's budget. As of March 11, 2019, the Senate had at its disposal \$464.39 for the purpose of travel and \$1,829.86 for other operating expenses. At the start of this academic year \$1,600 and \$5,380 were budgeted for travel and operating expenses, respectively.
- John Pennington reported on behalf of the Finance and Personnel Committee. The committee is researching the importance of tenure. Each member will provide a 2-4-paragraph document, addressing the following questions: Are there measurable financial benefits to tenure? How has eliminating/weakening tenure impacted other universities?
- Brian Robertson reported in behalf of the Executive and Governance Committee. The committee has divided the university standing committees among its members, who will collect information about each of their assigned

committees including the recording of minutes, incentives for members, and attendance.

- Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand reposted on behalf of the Audit and Compliance Committee. The committee has completed a revision to the faculty ethics policy. The Senate will review the revised policy at its April meeting.

Motions

1. Vishwas Bedekar moved to accept the revised policy 32. The motion was adopted.
2. Alfred Lutz moved to amend the document on salary adjustments. The motion was adopted. The motion was adopted.
3. Nat Smith moved to defer discussion of the document on salary adjustments until the Senate's April meeting. The motion was adopted.

Discussion

- **Bold ideas:** President McPhee wants to select 10 ideas from the list of bold ideas generated at last November's strategic planning retreat, and he is soliciting feedback from the Senate. Senators proposed or expressed support for the following ideas:
 - Focus on faculty by ensuring resource and support to do their job.
 - Develop a center for citizenship and democracy that would be separate from the planned center for free speech.
 - Open an MTSU campus in Nashville that includes administrative offices and classroom facilities to build connections with the city.
 - Create a school of public affairs.
 - Make it easier to get new programs approved.
 - Require students to engage in at least one high impact practice before graduating.
 - Create a college of allied health sciences.
- **Market salary adjustments:**
 - There is concern that full professors will not like the proposal because it will lead to salary inversion.
 - In the long run this proposal would keep salaries at MTSU closer to market value.
 - If the proposal were in place this year, it would benefit more people being promoted to full than those being promoted to to associate professor.
 - The provost has voiced support for this proposal.
 - Could we add something to the policy to prevent inversions?
 - Should we make the wording strong or take a more diplomatic approach?

- Policy for the renewal of chairs: Under the draft policy for the renewal of chairs.
 - Department chairs would serve four-year terms.
 - At the end of a term, the department's faculty members would vote on the chair's renewal. The result of the vote would be public. It would represent a recommendation to the dean of the department's college.
 - The decision to renew the chair would rest with the dean of the department's college.
 - Senators should solicit feedback on this policy from their departments and be prepared to vote at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 P.M.

Submitted by Rachel Leander, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary.