

Minutes from the 10 Sept. 2018 MTSU Faculty Senate Meeting

10 Sept., 2018

Faculty Senate Chambers, 100 James Union Building

Attendance

Present

Tyler Babb, Vishwas Bedekar, Kathryn Blankenship, Alan Boehm, Nita Brooks, Andrew Brower, Larry Burriss, Nancy Caukin, James Chaney, Laura Cochrane, Rick Cottle, Trevor de Clercq, Angela DeBoer, Mamit Deme, Andrew Dix, Jackie Eller, Tricia Farwell, Rebecca Fischer, Justin Gardner, Bob Gordon, Joey Gray, 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, Joshua Phillips, Ariana Postlethwait, Deana Raffo, Joan Raines, Patrick Richey, James (Brian) Robertson, Stephen Salter, Mary Ellen Sloane, Nat Smith

Excused

Michael Rice

Absent

John Pennington, Donald Snead, Moses Tesi

Visitors

Provost Mark Byrnes

Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Partnerships Faye Johnson

Agenda

Faculty Senate President Pippa Holloway called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

Provost Mark Byrnes addressed the Senate regarding the Quest For Success 2.0

Dr. Byrnes gave a brief presentation on the new Quest for Success, which is being drafted now. He noted that the original Quest, from 2010-2016, was a success and improved retention significantly. A committee has drafted a new proposal, which was circulated to chairs and deans in the spring, and to the faculty on Sept. 6 via email. Byrnes observed that the first Quest addressed the easier items for improvement, and that this second round would be more difficult to implement, and he wants broad participation from faculty in the process to generate and discuss ideas. He said that the circulated list of items will be filtered down to the four or five most important. Faculty may comment via open forums, an on-line forum, or by email to him. All feedback is welcome.

Byrnes asked Senate Past President Joey Gray (who served on the committee to draft the initial proposal) if she would like to say anything. Gray said that she was originally opposed to hiring the advisors brought on during the first round of the Quest, but that now she supports it. She said that this next round will be more difficult.

Byrnes noted that the budget for round 2 is unknown, but that it is a high priority for the university. He then opened the floor for comments and discussion.

Jackie Eller observed that some statements on the proposed action plan need to be better defined for clarity - for example, what is meant by "faculty development"?

Byrnes replied that a goal is to make it easier for faculty to work one-on-one with students.

Susan Myers-Shirk suggested getting student feedback in how the university runs, and making students partners in their educations.

Holloway asked about the meaning of enhanced research-based graduate programs.

Byrnes acknowledged that the Quest is mainly aimed at undergraduates.

Faye Johnson said that putting more dollars into research is part of the plan.

Byrnes noted that the first Quest sprang from the THEC funding formula, and that another category in that is the numbers of graduate students.

Senate Secretary Andy Brower asked if the main purpose of the new Quest is to improve numbers in retention, graduation and enrollment to improve the funding formula numbers.

Byrnes said yes, that is the ultimate reason. Enrollment may be dropping due to demographics, and we need to recruit, retain and graduate students. The model is not what it once was, with a constant flow of new students.

Brian Robertson asked whether the new Quest would be aimed at students at risk or the strongest students. Byrnes replied that the first Quest was to address the students at risk, and now how do we enrich experiences for students with finite resources?

Stephen Salter asked whether the first Quest made money for MTSU. Byrnes said that yes, Alan Thomas has run the numbers and it was beneficial, although causality is difficult to determine. Salter suggested that another alternative to improve university finances would be to raise tuition and then give back scholarships to needier students. Byrnes noted that there is strong political pressure not to raise tuitions, and that THEC imposes limits on tuition increases. Salter noted that more research interactions with students means more work for faculty, given that teaching loads for some have increased under the new workload form. Byrnes said that only double-credit for teaching graduate courses has gone away, and that there need to be incentives for working with students.

Brower noted that faculty are not utilized most efficiently due to the lack of large classrooms on campus. Byrnes observed that there are both architectural and pedagogical dilemmas on that front,

with not enough large classrooms to go around. Salter noted that online classes can be as big as you want, and Byrnes agreed that MTSU could be more aggressive regarding promotion of online courses.

The timeframe for comments on the Quest for Success 2.0 is the next month or so.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of the 30 April 2018 meeting were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Election of Recording Secretary/Treasurer and Parliamentarian

Rachel Leander was nominated as Senate Secretary to replace Andy Brower, who has announced his imminent departure from MTSU. Leander was elected by paper ballot, 43-0-0. Holloway thanked Brower for his service.

Holloway said that she hoped to follow parliamentary procedure a bit more closely this year, and nominated Patrick Richey as parliamentarian. Richey said that he would like to use the "soft" version of Roberts' Rules. He was elected by unanimous voice vote.

Treasury Report

Secretary/Treasurer Brower reported highlights of the Senate Budget (see attachment 1)

Senate Business - New Business

1. Senate Committee Lists (see attachment 2)

Holloway stated that each senator is assigned to a Senate Committee - either Steering, or one of the standing committees that mirror the structure of the MTSU Board of Trustees committees (Academic Affairs, Student Life and Athletics; Finance and Personnel; Executive and Governance; and Audit and Compliance).

2. Workload form

Holloway asked if there were any issues associated with the new workload form. Trevor Le Clercq noted that Chairs are put in a difficult position by the new guidelines and are hesitant to implement anything because of resistance to past workloads. Salter said that the new system will improve over time. He noted that both research-active and research-inactive people in his department received 3-3 teaching loads. Holloway is following up on some concerns from the English Department brought to her attention by Alfred Lutz.

3. COLA and Salary Adjustment

Holloway also asked if there were questions about the market-based salary adjustment which is due to go into effect on the October paycheck. Andrew Dix asked if faculty will receive a letter about the salary adjustment, or if it will simply appear in the Oct. paycheck. Holloway said that the chairs have received a spreadsheet, the data used to calculate these are public, and the Senate is requesting that they be released to the faculty. Lutz noted that the summer "raise" is really a cost-of-living adjustment, and Salter noted that the cost-of-living rose 2.8% last year. Brower noted that the Senate has been tracking faculty salary increases for several years, and the data are available in an Excel spreadsheet. Myers-Shirk observed that COLA adjustments are offset by increases in benefit deductions. Alan Boehm noted the recent survey that suggested there might be tradeoffs in benefit quality vs. salary increases. Holloway said that those interested in advocating for changes to state-administered employee benefits

should consider joining the Tennessee State Employees Association, which represents the interests and rights of state employees and seeks to improve the salaries, rights and benefits of state employees. Elizabeth Wright said that faculty members should find out how they are classified in the CUPA database and make sure that their classification is the most beneficial in terms of comparable salaries. The CUPA web site will be distributed to the Senate.

4. Other new business

Holloway said that the Senate needs to elect a new Faculty Trustee in the Spring. She has been scheduling meetings with potential nominees. Nominees are proposed by the faculty, and the Trustee is elected by the Senate. Gray said that candidates should be familiar with the operation of the Board, and the best way to gain that familiarity is by attending the Board Committee meetings. she suggested that Holloway would make a good candidate. Holloway said that we need to consider different kinds of candidates.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Brower
2018 Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Faculty Senate 2018-2019 Budget Report

(as of September 7, 2018)

Travel Budget: \$1,600

Balance: \$1,600

Operating Expense Budget: \$5,380.00

Phone yearly \$ 480.00

Decreased from \$720 last year/saved \$240/cut x line

Football tickets 730.00

Provost added \$1,080 to cover sporting events for Pres.

Miscellaneous 513.56

Blue Coast Burrito and Aramark/Retreat food

Print Management .34

Total Charges to date \$1,723.90

Operating Expense Budget Balance:

Accessible Balance \$2,656.10

\$5,380.00

-1,723.90

\$3,656.10

-1,000.00 (reserved for TUFS Conference)

\$2,656.10

Attachment 2: Faculty Senate committees

Faculty Senate Committee List

2018-2019

Steering

Pippa Holloway
Justin Gardner
Andrew Brower
Joey Gray
Paul Kline
Joshua Phillips
Rick Cottle
Kathryn Blankenship
Nita Brooks
Deana Raffo
Donald Snead
Shannon Harmon
Patrick Richey
Alfred Lutz
Bob Gordon
Mary Ellen Sloane
Pamela Morris

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics

Patrick Richey
Susan Myers-Shirk
Laura Cochran
Andrew Dix
Darren E. Levin
Melissa Lobegeier
Michael Rice
Sherri Stevens
James Chaney

Audit and Compliance

Rebecca Fischer
Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand

John Mullane
Larry Burriss
Tricia Farwell
Preston MacDougall
Mamit Deme

Rev. 9.11.18

Finance and Personnel

Trevor O. deClercq
Nancy G. Caukin
Moses Tesi
Tyler Babb
Angela DeBoer
Raj Srivastava
John Pennington
Stephen Salter
Elizabeth Wright

Executive and Governance

Jackie Eller
Ariana Postlethwait
Joan Raines
James Robertson
Vishwas Bedekar
Nat Smith
Alan Boehm

Unassigned

Marcus Knight