

Baylor University Faculty Senate Minutes
12 October 2021
Cashion 501
3:30pm-5:00pm

Present: Dwight Allman, Erica Ancira, Cassy Burlison, Gia Chevis, George Cobb, Holly Collins, Matt Cordon, Tisha Emerson, Christy Gantt, Brian Garner, Shelby Garner, Chris Hansen, Julia Hitchcock, Julie Holcomb, Kristi Humphreys, Mariah Humphries, Bob Kane, Karon LeCompte, Michael Long, Elissa Madden, Karena Malavanti, Laurenço Paz, Sam Perry, Stacie Petter, Coretta Pittman, Barbara Purdum-Cassidy, Scott Gibson, Denyse Rodgers, Keith Schubert, Carol Schuetz, Jennings Sheffield, Ann Shoemaker, Kathryn Steely, Lynn Tatum, Ann Theriot, Anzhong Wang, Lauren Weber.

Absent: Sara Alexander (sub Heidi Marcum), Gerald Cleaver (sub Andrew Brinkerhoff), Beth Hultquist (sub Lyn Prather), Joyce Nuner, Jamie Van Eyck

I. Call to Order: Chair Pittman

II. Invocation—Senator Gantt

III. Approval of Minutes—Senator Long

Sen. S. Garner moved to approve the Minutes of Sept. 14, 2021; Sen. Rodgers seconded, and the motion passed.

IV. Reports

a. Provost/Executive Committee (EC) Meeting—Chair Pittman

EC discussed no summer assignment for STEM faculty without grants, compensation for summer work, promotion tier for Senior Lecturers and Assoc. Professors, the invasive dual interest disclosure statement; Provost added subject of COVID management and the Health Management Team.

Provost Nancy Brickhouse (PNB) was unaware of the issue of summer teaching vs grants and asked for more information. Promotion tier for Senior Lecturers: PNB is supportive, asked what peer and aspirant institutions are doing, requested EC gather more data. Reminder: COACHE Working Group on Mid-Career Uncertainty is also working on this issue. Re: promotion tier for Assoc. Profs., PNB is supportive but stated that Assoc. Prof. cannot switch tracks. PNB amenable to both ideas pending more data, assembly of a committee to examine the issues.

Disclosure Statement: did not reflect a true request for “conflict of interest” or “conflict of commitment.” PNB plans to investigate; suggested the EC speak to Amanda Wallace. Senator comment: there was a unilateral decision in August 2021 to change the policy with no discussion.

PNB suggested that the Health Management Team speak to the Senate. Chair Pittman has invited the Health Management Team as guests for the November meeting.

b. Executive Committee meeting—Chair Pittman

Some discussion of Kevin Jackson's presentation on the LGBTQIA+ student group. EC discussed the dual interest disclosure statement and the approach to the promotion tier of Lecturers and Assoc. Profs.

c. Academic Leadership Council Meeting—Chair Pittman

PNB asked Chair Pittman to report to the Senate—tenured faculty going forward, will not receive contracts but a notification of pay; tenure track faculty will receive contracts. Senator asked: will academic professionals receive contracts; Various Senators comment: payment for minimester and summer split into various installments with no notice and no contracts.

Advisory Committee (AC) for OVPR: some STEM faculty already in conversation with VP Chambliss on an Advisory Committee. Chair Pittman asked for feedback on the proposal for the committee; Senators asked that Nursing faculty and humanities faculty also be included on the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee should be a standing committee. Senators commented that AC should be advising and consulting before the OVPR makes policy and decisions; OVPR should not be choosing members of AC; the Committee on Committees (COC) has a standard approach to committees to make sure the selection is diverse. Lively discussion of how and by whom the AC should be populated.

d. HR Meeting—Chair Pittman

HR has decided to move away from SmartBen to BenefitFocus for insurance benefits; all insurance benefits will need to be selected; opens October 19 and closes November 2.

e. Senate Policy Committee—Senator Collins

Ad hoc committee: Sara Alexander, Christy Gantt, Julie Holcomb, Holly Collins, and Laurenço Paz; new language for the By-Laws is drafted. Have communicated issues with the proposed Distinguished Professor policy; working on revisions to the grievance policy and the summer research award policy.

f. HR Advisory Committee—Senator Shoemaker

VP for HR Cheryl Gochis is proposing a change in the structure of the HR Advisory Committee. She'd like to add five people to the committee, combining the Wellbeing working group (not a formal committee) with the HR Advisory Committee, since both are advisory in nature and therefore serve similar functions. The current Wellbeing working group consists of 4 staff members and one faculty member: Dr. Jon Singletary – Garland School of Social Work, Van Smith-Davis – Campus Life, Lauren Vorderkunz – Baylor HR—Communications, Broc Edwards - Baylor HR—Learning and Development, Kristen Richardson – Spiritual Life.

This change requires the Senate and Staff Council approval. At this point, no further information regarding a timeline.

V. Unfinished Business

a. Vote on Revised Priority List

Chair Pittman incorporated feedback from Senate to the priority list presented at the September meeting.

Senator Collins moved to approve the Senate Priority List; Senator Perry seconded; the motion passed. Chair Pittman noted that she will need to call on volunteers to work on some items on the Priority List.

b. Discussion of Kevin Jackson's report on LGBTQIA+ student organization

Chair Pittman asked about the timeline for the Advisory Committee and asked whether students have been contacted. Jackson reported that one meeting has been held with students; Advisory Committee not yet assembled; President and Provost are vetting list of 25 faculty names; Chair Pittman advocated for having one Senator on the Advisory Council. Senators raised issues of approach to the Advisory Committee, including the validity of the entire approach, etc. Senator commented that Jackson declared that Gamma would not be chartered because of "advocacy" expressed in the proposed charter that doesn't align with Baylor's "values"; sole arbiter of "advocacy" is Jackson. Senators expressed concerns based on Jackson's presentation that the new group will be something similar to a conversion therapy group, dangerous for the mental health of the students; question why First Amendment Rights are respected and guarded for certain student groups but not for other groups such as Gamma.

VI. New Business

a. Baylor Line Foundation (BLF)—Senator Tatum

Sen Tatum representing the Baylor Line Foundation (former Baylor Alumni Assoc); BLF expresses appreciation for the faculty; proposes a reception for the Faculty Senate. Passed out copies of the 75th anniversary publication of The Baylor Line.

b. Announcement on behalf of Jason McGregor—Chair Pittman

Jason McGregor (School of Business); Baylor Dept. of Accounting and Business Law, asking for Senate volunteers to pack 50K meals. Faculty may invite students as well.

Senator announced: COACHE Working Group report released

Chair Pittman announced that Lori Baker forming a Council of DEI chairs from across campus, asking for a Senate representative.

VII. Adjournment

Senator Perry moved; Senator Hansen seconded. Motion passed.