

Baylor University Faculty Senate Minutes
Virtual Meeting
12 January 2021
3:30pm-5:00pm

Present: Sara Alexander, Dwight Allman, Cassy Burlison, Gia Chevis, Gerald Cleaver, Holly Collins, Matt Cordon, Derek Dodson, Nathan Elkins, Tisha Emerson, Renee Flippo, Christy Gantt, Brian Garner Chris Hansen Julie Holcomb, Beth Hultquist, Kristi Humphreys, Karon LeCompte, Michael Long, Elissa Madden, Horace Maxile, Joyce Nuner, Maxey Parrish, Lourenco Paz, Sam Perry, Coretta Pittman, Tom Potts, Nicci Price, Barbara Purdum-Cassidy, Brian Raines, Angela Reed, Denyse Rodgers, Keith Schubert, Carol Schuetz, Jennings Sheffield, Ann Shoemaker, Kathryn Steely, Josh Strakos, Lynn Tatum, Mark Taylor, Ann Theriot, Anzhong Wang.

Substitutes: Alan Schultz (for Sara Alexander); Laurie Burney (for Gia Chevis)

Guests: Sinda Vanderpool, Lynn Wisely, Christopher Richmann, Vice Provost Jeff Hamilton (CGE), Penelope Pynes (Am. Council on Education)

- I. Call to Order: 3:30pm
- II. Invocation—Senator LeCompte
- III. Guest Speakers—Sinda Vanderpool, Lynn Wisely Christopher Richmann (ATL)

Addressing needs of Low-Income Students

Christopher Richmann presented PPT on Low Income Student Success. Reference to food insecurity, but addressed needs of low-income students generally, for example, cost of textbooks.

Low Income Student Success (LISS) team of 11 members, including Sinda Vanderpool, Michelle Cohenour, Lynn Wisely, Wes Null, Christopher Richmann.

Low Income Students—comprise 19% of total enrollment (2018-2019), approx. 2,300 students; graduate at 8% lower rate compared to other students (Pell and non-Pell students). Clear, that economics determines academic outcomes. Baylor is committed to the success of all students. Provost Brickhouse has established goal of improving success of Low Income Students at BU.

Goal: reduce 6-yr graduation gap between Pell and non-Pell students from 15% to 5% by 2027; on average n= 55 students.

Student Success Initiatives, Dir. Michelle Cohenour, Asst. Dir. Austin Morell; established The Store, a food pantry (basement of Sid Rich)

Senator question: Could honor society in School of Education use available funds to support Low Income Students, especially help with textbooks. Richmann: would not turn down money. ATL will work with faculty and groups for solutions.

Senator question: has LISS team conducted research relative to theological stance that “god will provide,” as evident from survey conducted by Truett Seminary; when it appears that “god is not providing,” sometimes leads to crisis of faith. Answer: Up to now, have not.

IV Guest Speaker—Vice Provost Jeff Hamilton (CGE); Penelope Pynes (American Council on Education [ACE])

Internationalization Lab of Intern’l Council of Education:

Two documents: list of Steering Committee members, all schools/colleges represented; broken into six sub-committees.

Cohort 18: a project of ACE has been involved with for 18 years.

Comprehensive Internationalization:

Dwight Allman, Chair of Faculty Council for Global Engagement.

Hamilton and Allman are points of contact.

Admin on board: Pres. Livingstone is on Board of ACE; Provost Brickhouse also on board with goals/objectives.

V. Approval of Minutes—Senator Long

Senator Rodgers made motion to approve Minutes of the 8 December 2020 Faculty Senate meeting; Senator Hansen seconded. Motion passed.

VI. Reports

a. Executive Committee meeting—Senator Cordon

Discussed Dependent Benefits Audit. Action on-going.

Also discussed policy on romantic relations between faculty and graduate students. No policy language available; EC recommends using UT—Austin statement as template. EC asked Provost Brickhouse to allow review of any policy.

Title IV compliance: related to attendance policy. Federal regulations require that BU report students who receive federal funding but who are not attending. Requires better communication between the administration and the faculty about the necessity of reporting student absences.

Timing of Faculty Contracts: Jim Bennighof asked Senate Chair Cordon, whether there was a particular reason that faculty contracts needed to be issued by April 1. EC discussed with Provost Brickhouse; no particular reason for the April 1 date.

Senator comment: will check whether April 1 date is compliant with AAUP guidelines.

Senator question: will delayed contracts have any bearing on contracts for new-hires. Sen Cordon will ask.

Elsevier Contract: Senator comment: negotiations on-going.

Promotion Guidelines: to be addressed at later date. No new information.

b. Provost's Office Meeting—Senator Cordon

Health issues: everyone expects COVID infection numbers to increase over the next several weeks due to more frequent testing. All faculty, staff, students will be tested weekly. Baylor never turned down doses of vaccine as reported in Waco Tribune Herald. Number of doses will increase up to 35K by next several weeks for the 1B category; prediction that doses for others will be available by March.

Senator question: is Baylor advocating for university professors be designated as “teachers” for receiving vaccines? Sen Cordon: will ask, follow up.

Senator question: is there a clear metric to determine when shift to online will take place in view of increased infection numbers. Senator Cordon: no numbers have been discussed; will follow up; does not expect an answer different from what we have heard since last July.

Senator comment: there is no plan to delay start-date; BU taking steps to increase the number of classrooms available for streaming.

VII. Unfinished Business

a. Low Income Students—Senator Cordon

EC heard today's presentation in November. EC examined ways to address food insecurity, concerns about textbook costs. Worked with Vanderpool and others to establish a fundraising effort: set Senate goal of \$3,000. Webpage designed for donations. Immediate funds to go toward meal cards in BU dining facilities—BU has reached an agreement with Aramark that one card-swipe will cost only \$5.00. EC feel strongly that 100% of funds raised should go directly to students.

The fundraiser is sponsored by the Faculty Senate, but senators should feel free to send the fundraiser link to anyone.

Senator question: are grad students included? Senator Cordon: yes.

Senator comment: supports/advocates for a campus-wide effort to reduce the cost of textbooks. Other comments: there are publishers/organizations that have

alternative textbooks at a lower cost; Rice project of Open Stack, for example—offers textbooks from the last 10 years for basic science classes.

Senator comment: negotiated cost of textbook with a publisher, low-balled the cost proposal and the publisher accepted. Encouraged faculty to negotiate, let publishers know that you are considering other sources.

Senator comment: it's often possible to allow students to use earlier editions at a much lower cost than the "latest" edition.

Senator comment: would love for the Senate to advocate for "low-cost, no-cost" textbook alternatives.

b. Faculty Evaluations and Course Evaluations—Senator Cordon

Provost Brickhouse asked the Senate EC to consider the draft of a statement regarding student course evaluations (SCE) in faculty performance evaluations. The next stage is to communicate with the dept. chairs. The motivation for the message is how to handle SCEs as factor in faculty performance evaluations during the pandemic, but also has relevance for the long-term culture of the use of SCEs at the university.

Put forward as a motion from the EC, a joint statement from Provost Brickhouse and the FS; no second required. Motion passed. Sen Cordon will forward approved draft to Provost Brickhouse immediately.

c. Senate Election Commission Update—Senator Long

Senators with terms ending have already been polled to determine who will stand for reelection. Next step is to conduct a census of eligible faculty voters. Email asking for senate nominations will go out around Feb 1.

VIII. New Business

a. Communications regarding Dependent Benefits Audit—Senator Cordon

Senator Cordon reported he does not have answers to all the questions he received. In communication with V.P. for HR Cheryl Gochis, set up a meeting with faculty—L. Wright (COACHE TF), Senators Pittman, Elkins, and Cordon to meet with HR Benefits Team on Thursday 14 January. Feb 12 deadline for submission of documents has been pushed back. Main goal: no one with valid dependent will lose insurance benefits due to inability to provide required documents, e.g. marriage certificates, birth certificates, tax returns. Roll out of communication was poorly timed.

Senator comment: Staff Council has not had much traction with HR Benefits Team; interested to know what the FS can achieve.

b. Shared Governance Issues at the University of Evansville (IN)—Senator Elkins

Sen Elkins provided background on the issue, including the University of Evansville's President's proposal to cut several academic programs; the UE FS has been denied data or input in the process. The UE FS requests for input and data have been ignored by the UE administration. 25% of faculty received termination notices.

Presented draft of statement from FS in support of shared governance to be sent to UE FS. Presented as a motion; seconded by Sen Strakos. Motion passed.

Statement as follows:

Statement from the Faculty Senate of Baylor University

The Baylor University Faculty Senate expresses support for our colleagues at the University of Evansville in their bid for shared governance. At Baylor, we understand shared governance as “a communication process which encourages responsible participation and open discussion, and provides opportunities to present diverse points of view resulting in increased advice to the University administration for enhanced quality in decisions” (Faculty Handbook). We believe that institutions of higher education benefit from the robust practice of shared governance with the faculty

IX. Adjournment. Senator Rodgers moved to adjourn; Senator Collins seconded.