

Baylor University Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda
Foster 250

February 20, 2024
3:30pm-5:00pm

Reception with Board of Regents Chair Mearse, President Livingstone, and Provost Brickhouse preceding meeting, 3:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Absent: Matthew Laube, Jeremy Counseller, Haylee Beard, Adrienne Duvall, Jamie Van Eyck, Haylee Beard, Stanton Greer, Erica Ancira

- I. Meeting Called to Order: 3:30 p.m.
- II. Invocation: (Senator Bostick) 3:32 p.m.
- III. Discussion with Board Chair B. Mearse (BCBM), President Linda Livingstone (PLL), and Provost Nancy Brickhouse (PNB)
 - a. Thoughts from President Livingstone, Provost Brickhouse & Board Chair Mearse
 - Expressed thanks to those who serve as Senators
 - b. Q&A
 - Thoughts about enrollment cliff:
 1. PLL: strong academic reputation with unique niche and focus. R1s and uniquely niched will be more successful. The more we can do to grow our academic profile will help us buffer and manage the enrollment cliff. Lean into unique position to Christian mission, quality of academics, mid-size which allows for connection and engagement, and big-time athletics. This will help us strengthen our yield in the pipeline.
 2. PNB: Diverse faculty and staff is increasingly important as we continue to attract and enroll diverse UG students. Also paying close attention to distance/OL/non-traditional/ grad programs growth. Continue to be innovative.
 - 10-20 years from now, what will this look like?
 1. BCBM: Strategic plan will set the direction of the university. Directional instead of destination. “See where God wants us to be.” Envisions Baylor as R1 Christian-mission centered university that has eliminated the debate about research being counter intuitive to Christian mission. Producing resilient students. Holistic view of faculty. Baylor at the forefront of solving the world’s problems. Perhaps some organizations join us in the Christian mission. Let’s see how big God is.

- Financial Outlook and upcoming strategic planning
 1. PLL: Very strong financial outlook. Endowment returns and cash positions are strong. Upcoming enrollment cliff is definitely concerning. 2 large classes are being graduated, and this can impact the bottom line since we are tuition-driven. However, the Board has a plan for moving forward and this is being worked on this year. Operating budget (tuition), Endowment (and its returns), Fundraising (very successful!) are areas that can fund strategic plan.
 2. PNB: Strategic plan tried to continue to raise aspirations for Baylor. Make sure programs are in high demand by students that are high-quality, by programs that cannot be had anywhere. Long-term reputation in academic excellence pays off. Christian mission is a niche for us. Graduate and professional education programs help us raise funds to invest into strategic initiatives. Where can we add high-quality programs that can help us with building maintenance, etc. High academic quality and high aspirations excited donors.
- Concerns from the Board about the future of Baylor?
 1. BCBM:
 - a. Future of religious liberty-- concerns come from all different areas (culture, Gov). Christian mission is our calling and identity.
 - b. Fiduciary – we never take things for granted (tuition-driven could be limitation. Finding new revenue sources will be important).
 - c. Advocates for Baylor’s family—Mental health/ spiritual health and well-being for students and Faculty who have influence over our students, Administration and University Staff, and Baylor Family (Alumni, parents, friends)
- 2 items of investment: additional classroom space, competitive salary/compensation for faculty
 1. PLL: Facilities plan will accompany the strategic plan. Academic supports (classrooms, teaching/learning, research space), student life space (more space for students), community space (dining, campus outdoor space).
 2. PNB: Every year, faculty compensation is benchmarked against national data. Ongoing process, it part of every year process. Try to stay ahead of it. Provost office will do everything possible to

stay market competitive. High ability staff compensation have to be compensated well.

- Partnership between Faculty Senate and BOR
 1. BCBM: Communication is a good place to start. Awareness of faculty accomplishments is important. Perhaps explore visibility to see some of the research and applications, especially when students are involved and getting to see the impact.
- Question from the floor: GPE— thoughts on attracting military students to graduate programs (non-traditional) such as MA Env Sci.
 1. All: Very supportive. Baylor-Army program is pretty strong, as well as Veterans support (good infrastructure).
- Question from the floor: GPE—Astounding growth in GPE, what does this look like for strategic plan? It doesn't quite fit in R1.
 1. PNB: Strategic plan is inclusive of graduate students. Their needs are being addressed. Also, Nursing building in Dallas is being used for grad programs in Business, etc. We want to make sure any new program should have good job placement indicators (growing demand). Are there areas that because of our faith mission that could be a unique place in the market and have need, opportunity, and demand?
- Question from the floor: Texas Government, DEI and the preservation of tenure. Are you monitoring this?
 1. PLL: Yes, we monitor Austin closely. Heavily involved in ICUT, which does a lot of advocacy work on these issues (funding and to help protect us). Lege only meets every other year. We try to stay supportive of state institutions as appropriate. Board is kept updated at state or federal level.
 2. BCBM: Board received higher education updates daily. We keep tabs on it and stay aware. There is a PAC that is independent and helps advocate for Baylor at the state and federal level.
- Question from the floor: Faculty should be recognized. Awareness: Annual review system: 1 person is allowed to be outstanding. Dept chair is put into a hard place. This affects raise.
 1. All: This is not something they are not aware, and they will look into it.

IV. Approval of January Minutes (Senator Malavanti): 4:20 p.m. unanimously approved

V. Reports: 4:22 p.m.

a. Executive Committee Meetings (Senate Chair)

- We identified a need for clarity. Do clinical track at rank vote on lecturer track promotion at rank and vice versa?
 - Topics/agenda for next meeting discussed
- b. Provost/EC Meeting (Senate Chair)
- University wide committee for promotions. Provost open to hearing more about this. Would, of course, introduce *more* work and *more* levels of review. Idea: Maybe start with teaching professor promotions since no one is at the Teaching Professor rank yet. Wanted to continue discussion. Already part of MidCareer Committee discussion.
 - Student microaggressions. Reiterate that these actions would violate BU-PP024. EC asked for clear reporting process and what happens when violations occur.
 - Concerns about the role of research in teaching professor guidelines. VPFA sent guidelines to Deans. Some Deans/Units sent the exact VPFA guidelines to Chairs with a request for departments to work on departmental guidelines. A&S guidelines have been distributed with some differences between University-level and College-level guidelines. VPFA: “Dept or unit may not require or privilege research....” The intention: Research can’t be required. A&S Appendix A Item 2. “Research will not be considered...” because the focus is on teaching. Feedback from VPFA is that this is a teaching-track as evidenced by workload assignment. Senior Lecturers can craft a promotion narrative on *how* discovery research (even not SOTL) impacts teaching. Doesn’t require pedagogical research only. Stresses mentorship for senior lecturers to craft this message. Senator commented that this is encouraging but not the message the Deans have sent. Senators asked where the mentorship should come from and where guidance on the narrative comes from (department level or in guidelines from Provost’s Office. Senator noted lecturers do not get travel budget every year, but they should be enabled to present at conference if it included as a suggestion of these criteria. Senator objected to lecturers having to justify research since other faculty don’t.
 - Preliminary info about Merit raise asked about at this meeting. Response: Not yet set. Significant effort to address staff (to aid in hiring and retention). Some bonds will be due, which make for a tough couple of years financially.
- c. HR Meeting (Senate Chair)
- Curtis Reynolds –new hires are auto-enrolled at 3% to encourage retirement savings, but they can change it and a change won’t affect Baylor’s contribution.
 - Staff Ombudsman has been appointed

- Faculty search committee for Ombudsman
- d. Business Office Meeting (Senate Chair)
- Update to procurement policy to align it to what is actually done
 - Financial priorities for the upcoming year include compensation, financial aid, capital plan (infrastructure: heating and cooling), academic space, and student life
 - Packing is back around Robinson Tower. Will be phased in. Some need to be refurbished. Some non-academic offices in Cashion or Hankamer could move to Robinson.
- e. Elections (Senator Malavanti)
- Elections in A&S, Hankamer, Robbins, Libraries, Education, Engineering & Computer Science. Uncontested seats in Music and in Law. Election will run the week before spring break.
- f. Bylaws Committee (Senator Long)
- Committee includes Erica Ancira, Kayla Collins, Jeremy Counsellor, Adrienne Duvall. Committee is finalizing edits for attendance requirements and sending substitutes. This will be a new article in by-laws, will be integration of remote senators, also responds to questions about elections about fulfilling vacated terms, or when not enough nominees in a unit that needs a Senator, added language to permit remote meetings. This will fit current needs and practices. Hopes to have complete report at next Senate meeting.
- VI. Unfinished Business: 4:35 p.m.
- a. Questions from last time: EC will ask about student insurance.
 - b. Senator McGlashan reviewed retiree information on Baylor website: Looking much better, all in one place. Some items are missing: Faculty members may need help with moving office to residence. Zoom (unlimited) question: is there a time limit? Free access but can't host a meeting longer than 45 min.
 - c. Suggestion from Senator: Department or Unit to add on name tags in the future
 - d. Senator: Concerns about changes to Chair evaluation; lack of ability to make confidential comments.
- VII. New Business: 4:45 p.m.
- a. Senate Chair Chevis was asked to seek Clarification of "primetime" for class scheduling
 - Registrar' office stated: 65% max of classes scheduled in prime time.
 1. Any class that starts before 9 or at 3:30 or later is outside of prime-time.
 2. Starting to enforce but not strictly enforced.
 3. Concerns have been raised about disproportionate impact on lecturers or those with childcare needs.
 4. Will invite Wes Null and someone from Registrar Office.

- Question: Are synchronous OL counted as primetime?
 - Question: Could VPFA be looped in?
 1. Senator Chevis: Registrar and Provost newsletter said Facilities management, not provost-level decision.
 - Senator Comment: “It appears this was decided by someone and then presented to a small level of Staff, and then told broadly units like Registrar. Would like for answers on this.”
 1. Comment: This was told to Academic Operations. Associate Deans attend. Appears to be guidance from higher-level that current facilities were being used at full extent in order to justify new buildings.
 - Senator comment: This also affect co-curricular events in the evenings; can’t teach 8 am and evening classes if those events are in the evenings.
 - Comment: Could affect struggling programs
 - Comment: Tidwell was originally planned to not need classrooms.
 - Comment: Safety/security issues for evening classrooms. Not just to parking lot. Could also be in buildings.
 - Comment: staff not available to help us outside 8-5
 - Comment: Cleaning staff coming after hours
- b. Nominating Committee for 2024-2025 Senate Officers
- Send Senate Chair recommendations or self-nominations. Please also be thinking of next year’s officers and Policy committee members to send to this committee once formed. Nominations from the floor are also available.
- c. Items from the floor
- Changes in annual evaluation were discussed over the last year. Provost office has said SETs should not be sole indicator of effectiveness. Are there weights related to SETs, Peer observations?
 1. No one could answer.
 - Procurement during grant-writing process? Issue coming from Business Officer. Vendors are supposedly supposed to be approved before grant if submitted. This seems incorrect, but it was confirmed by someone above the Business Officer.
 - We appreciate efforts by Provost for mid-career faculty. What about those who are in Associate (tenured) level and trying to get to full? In the Sciences, some associate professors are having research space taken and reallocated to new hires. Seems to be done outside the department and without involving the faculty member that is affected. Additionally, being “punished” with more teaching assignments which are less ideal in that department.

- Bachelor's of Philosophy in Honors College was sent to University Curriculum committee. The BPhil degree has REL classes, but REL dept was not consulted. However, A&S classes contribute 50% core, and 90% electives in this degree. Discussions are happening among Chairs, but they wanted Senate to be aware. This degree may duplicate and even compete with current programs. There is talk about bringing in Endowed Chairs for this program. However, departments are doing this work and the Endowed chairs could be in existing departments.
 1. Senator: This was the only thing discussed at last A&S Chairs meeting. Multiple Chairs had multiple questions and departments were caught off guard. Could Senate address this?
 2. Senator: Agreed that this was accurately described. One proposal for BPhil showed in CIM. There are rumors of a plan is to create 5-6 more. This is a great concern.

VIII. Announcements: 5:03 p.m.

- a. Laura Johnson, Title IX coordinator coming next time

IX. Adjourn: 5:03 p.m.