

Meeting: Faculty Senate  
 Date: May 5, 2020  
 Time: 2:01 p.m.  
 Location: Video Conference via Zoom  
 Adjournment: 3:23 p.m.

# Minutes

Members present: Hongmei Jia, Bob Williams, Annette Taggart, Stephen Starnes, Omar Elariss, Lavelle Hendricks, Laura Isbell, Julia Ballenger, Vipa Bernhardt, John Smith, Jason Davis, Sandy Hayes, Yasmin Atinc, Brandon Randolph-Seng, Thomas Boucher, Brock Johnson, Debra Mahoney, Matt Wood, Robert Rodriguez, Benton Pierce, Gracie Brownell, Vivian Dorsett, Andrea Williams

Members absent: Gerard Huber, Johanna Delgado-Acevedo, Dimitra Smith, Kathryn Jacobs

Issue/Topic	Summary of Discussion	Decision/Action
<p><b>Invited Speaker:</b>             Cece Gassner Vice President of Research and Economic Development</p>	<p>The April minutes approved with no revisions</p> <p>VP Gassner came to speak about the 18 month comprehensive review of community engagement and the 5 and 10 year plans to increase community engagement. They are currently looking for representatives to serve on the committee to guide those efforts. They are looking to see how their office can support faculty research. They are also talking about how to slowly reopen. There will be memos from the chancellor, they are meant to be guidelines. There are a lot of unknowns so they are meeting constantly. Senator Bernhardt asked if there was a plan for grad students needing lab time. She said they had reached out to IRB and PIs about researcher needs and then sent out emails to relevant parties and only one came back with a student who still needed to collect data. This student was granted selected exceptions to allow them on campus to do their work. Senator Bernhardt expressed concern about one of the students they knew would need it in the fall and VP Gassner said they will contact them about that. She expressed that there was concern about a 2<sup>nd</sup> wave to the pandemic and how we will deal with that.</p> <p>Senator Starnes asked about any examples of economic engagement. Gassner said they were working with Commerce ISD and getting Paris Regional Medical Center and the Health and Engineering Tech Alliance to provide Paris Medical with 3-d printed face shields, and working to get rural communities medical equipment that they often don't have and hope to provide.</p>	<p>Motion to approve by Senator Ballenger, Seconded by Senator Davis</p>

<b>Communications</b>	Nothing to report outside of the e-mails that have been sent	
<b>Committee Reports</b>	<p><b>Academic Life:</b> Senator Hendricks spoke of the importance of the Chuck Arize Junior Faculty Award. Last year they recognized 10 junior faculty members and were already at 18 nominations for this year’s award. The award ceremony is planned for October 6<sup>th</sup> 2020. Senator Hendricks also spoke of the importance of recognizing years of service on Faculty Senate in some way.</p> <p><b>Academic Practice:</b> Plan to work with Academic Life on member awards and recognition. At his point we stopped to recognize Senator Annette Taggart who is retiring and has been on the senate since 2014 and has been maintaining the senate website for the last few years. Senator Taggart thanked them for the kind words and said that if time allows she is willing to help whoever takes over the website.</p> <p><b>Admission and Retention of Students:</b> Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Budget:</b> Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Curriculum:</b> Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Faculty Awards:</b> Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Organization of the Senate:</b> Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Scheduling and Facilities:</b> Nothing report.</p>	
<b>Unfinished Business</b>	<p>There was a proposal sent out from the subcommittee about for a new Department Head policy that would allow for a vote to elect department heads which would provide greater faculty governance. Senator Atinc stated that she was pleasantly surprised that Dr. Humphreys asked about shred governance and giving the departments a say. The Dean shouldn’t be the only say in this matter. Senator Starnes said that there are consistent complaints about the effects a poor department head has on the department. Senator Randolph-Seng stated the importance of faculty having a say. Senator Bob Williams pointed out the Ag College is different as there are no department heads so how does this apply there. Senator Atinc said the current policy is about Department Heads and Faculty Coordinators and the current proposal adds to that language.</p> <p>Senator Rodriguez asked if there was any thought to when this might be implemented. Senator Hendricks said if the policy is approved it then goes to policy and procedures and they would put an “effective of” date on it. Senator Dorsett shared that her department head had stated that the Deans will still just appoint who they want. Senator Hendricks stated that the faculty can always do a vote of no confidence of a Department Head. Senator Rodrigues asked that if this wasn’t binding what is the next step, does this make it a recommendation that the Deans take or not. Senator Atinc said they didn’t want to make it binding as there is already concern it might not pass. Senator Ballenger stated that we</p>	

	<p>need to move on it as the faculty need a say, and what the Deans do with it will be telling. Senator Bob Williams said this should be presented as a policy change and not a recommendation, as in his experience it's always been top heavy and autocratic but this would be a step in the right direction. Senator Hendricks reminded of a time when the threat of a no-confidence vote got someone removed. He also pointed out that there should be a Faculty Senate representative at the Dean's council when this is presented. There was further discussion about the title of Department Head vs. Chair and whether or not to revise the proposed draft document to reflect that and some of the other things being discussed. It was moved that we keep the draft document as written in order to keep the ball moving forward, motion passed unanimously. There was then some discussion of the difference between a policy and a procedure change. It was decided it looks better as a proposed procedure change. It was then moved to send the draft as a procedural change to Dr. Humphreys</p>	<p>Motion to keep as written by Senator B. Williams, seconded by Senator Atinc.</p> <p>Motion to send proposed change to Dr. Humphreys by Senator B. Williams, seconded by Senator J. Smith</p>
<p><b>New Business</b></p>	<p>The Spring and Summer graduates were approved.</p> <p>The bursar's office asked the senate to comment on student regalia; no one on the senate expressed any concerns or problems with it. Senator Taggart said that maybe we should look at how faculty wear their regalia. Senator A. Williams offered to hold a workshop.</p> <p>There was then discussion about concerns with re-opening the university. The cross contamination concerns, disciplines that don't work with social distancing, etc. There was debate about moving classes to larger classrooms, but the problem is there are only so many classrooms and some classes are too full. Concern was raised that academic integrity has been compromised by being fully online. It was pointed out that everyone's situation is different so it will be hard to have a one-size fits all policy. Senator Starnes said the current idea was to give faculty the choice for their own classes. Senator Pierce said he'd heard mention of people retiring early and asked about that. Senator Starnes said it was being recommended as something to offer to faculty.</p> <p>As the meeting was wrapping up Senator Hendricks took a moment to thank Senator Starnes for his tenure as President, and Senator Atinc volunteered to be the new Secretary of the senate. Meeting adjourned at 3:23 pm.</p>	<p>Moved to approve by Senator Starnes, seconded by Senator Davis</p>