

## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

September 28, 2020

The Pittsburg State University Faculty Senate met at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, September 28, 2020, with Cole Shewmake, President, presiding.

### Past Minutes

Minutes from the May 11, 2020 meeting were approved.

### Announcements

#### *Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs – Dr. Howard Smith*

Dr. Smith started by thanking everyone for their efforts in adjusting course delivery and getting the semester started. He also shared that there are discussions on the moving spring break for the spring semester to the beginning or end of the semester. More information will be released soon. In addition, he noted that current interest items at KBOR include: 1) the development of a common general education package and 2) increasing the number of community college hours that can be applied towards a degree. Dr. Smith concluded with announcing that enrollment is down for the fall, but better than expected considering the current environment. Undergraduate numbers are slightly down and graduate numbers are slightly up.

#### *PSU/KNEA –Khamis Siam, President*

Dr. Siam reported that negotiations for the KNEA contract have been finalized. There will be no increases this year. Dr. Siam encouraged faculty to continue to share leave.

#### *Student Senate – Bella L'Heureux, Representative*

Ms. L'Heureux thanked everyone for their efforts this semester. She also noted that SGA allocation forms for organizations are currently available on Gorilla Engage.

#### *Unclassified Professional Senate – Jason Kegler, President*

No report.

#### *University Support Staff – Terri Blessent, President*

Ms. Blessent reported that the group just started meeting and they are looking forward to the upcoming year.

#### *Faculty Senate President – Cole Shewmake, President*

Dr. Shewmake expressed congratulations to the new Faculty Senate Executive members. He also reported recent news from the KBOR Faculty Senate Presidents' meeting. News includes: 1) exploring a common general education package for transfer, 2) alignment of spring break across the state and 3) the creation of a statement of values on free expression (see attached). Dr. Shewmake also asked for those interested in serving as the Faculty Senate representative for the upcoming University Strategic Planning Council to contact him. It would be a 3-year term. It was noted that Faculty Senate is only a 2-year term so adjustments may need to be made once the member is no longer on Faculty Senate.

### Committee Reports

#### *Academic Affairs – Steve Cox, Chair*

No report.

#### *Undergraduate Curriculum – Mary Jo Goedeke, Chair*

Dr. Hendershot reported that the committee approved and recommends all curriculum items on the agenda.

All curriculum items recommended by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee were approved.

#### *Library Services/Learning Resources – Stella Hasting, Chair*

Dr. Shewmake shared that the committee met on September 10th. The meeting notes can be found on the agenda.

*Online and Distance Learning – Krissy Lewis, Chair*  
No report.

*Academic Honors – John Daley, Chair*

Dr. Daley announced that the committee received 52 applications, but only 19 were approved. The others were sent back for revisions. The committee discussed the need to revise the forms to make them more understandable.

*Honors College – Michael Davidsson, Chair*

Dr. Carlson reported that the committee is discussing the current application process and application criteria. There have been some questions raised regarding the amount of scholarship money allocated to the Honors College and the benefits of the program. For now, the application process will remain as is. Discussions will continue.

*Writing Across the Curriculum – Laura Covert-Miller, Chair*  
No report.

*Diversity and Multicultural Affairs – Jessica Jorgenson-Borchert, Chair*  
No report.

*Student-Faculty – Gail Yarick, Chair*

Ms. Yarick reported that the committee will meet on Friday to discuss the next steps for the proposed Dead Week policy.

*All University Committee – Tatiana Goris, Chair*  
No report.

*Faculty Affairs – Trina Larery, Chair*

Dr. Shewmake noted that there are limited PD funds available this year. Conference registrations and webinars can still be funded. The college deans are now the point of contact for these funds.

*Constitution Committee – James Whitney, Chair*  
No report.

*Pitt State Pathway Committee – Michelle Hudiburg, Chair*

Mr. Kehle reported that Dr. Smith attended their first meeting. They discussed the new KBOR initiatives including a general education transfer package and the number of hours towards a degree from a community college moving from 60 to 75. This year the committee will also look at the learning outcomes for the Gorilla Gateway, specifically Digital Literacy.

*Budget Committee – Tatiana Goris, Chair*  
No report.

*Academic Honesty – Shawnee Hendershot, Chair*  
No report.

### **Unfinished Business**

The Dead Week proposal was sent back to the Student-Faculty committee at the May meeting. The committee will be meeting on Friday to resume discussion.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Open Forum**

There was a question if Zoom will be an option for future meetings. Since there were only two requests for Zoom for the September meeting, Faculty Senate will continue to meet in person. Representative can always send a replacement if they are not available to attend. Mr. Kehle noted that virtual concerts are being held at the Bicknell Center. The next concert will be Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

**Meeting Adjourned** Meeting adjourned Monday, September 28, 2020 at 3:40 p.m.



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Melinda Roelfs, Recording Secretary

## **Draft**

The historical purpose of universities is to engage students and the greater community to empower them to confront, challenge, evaluate, and think critically about new ideas. Mere exposure to ideas does not serve the mission of institutions of higher learning. Universities' mission can only be served when institutions support and encourage full and open discourse and the robust, respectful exchange of ideas and perspectives on our respective campuses. Engaging with competing perspectives is essential for questioning our assumptions, testing our beliefs and refining our knowledge.

The Council of Faculty Senate Presidents reaffirms its commitment to the first amendment and the rights of faculty, staff, and students to express their diverse and often conflictual viewpoints. Our commitment to freedom of expression is paired with our obligation to uphold and protect the dignity of all members of our university communities in our classrooms and in our communal spaces.

A commitment to freedom of expression is not incompatible with a commitment to diversity and to nurturing a positive and collaborative environment where everyone can thrive. On the contrary, the ability to express and debate our divergent beliefs and ideas is fundamental to the personal learning and growth needed for society to progress as a whole.

Members of the university community should be encouraged to bring voices of all kinds onto campus to engage in rigorous debate in a variety of arenas. We are responsible, as educators, to provide an environment where civil discourse can take place, to protect human dignity, and to promote the core values and purpose of a university.