

## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

October 26, 2020

The Pittsburg State University Faculty Senate met at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2020, with Cole Shewmake, President, presiding.

### Past Minutes

Minutes from the September 28, 2020 meeting were approved with amendments.

### Announcements

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

Dr. Smith started by thanking everyone for their efforts in getting us through 10 weeks of on-campus operations. Reports will be available soon from the Digital Measures and Student Technology working groups. Dr. Smith discussed the Strategic Planning Council and that Casey Hermansson will serve as the Faculty Senate representative. Discussion has been that there will likely need to be a transition period from the current strategic plan to a new strategic plan. Dr. Smith provided an overview of commencement exercises planned for November. Students will walk across the stage, have their names read and receive their diplomas. Friends and family are limited to four per graduate. A mitigation plan was submitted and approved by the Crawford County Health Officials. Lastly, Dr. Smith shared that the fall budget is unpredictable at the moment. Factors such as the state budget, enrollment/tuition revenue and employee benefit costs will all play a role. We could be looking at a deficit of 5-9 million. Typically, Academic Affairs takes the lion's share of the cuts.

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

Dr. Siam reported that news from the most recent Town Hall indicated that we are in good shape financially for the 20-21 academic year. There are some concerns when considering the 21-22 academic year. Dr. Siam noted that pay cuts are always last resort when finances become stressed.

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

Dr. Smith noted that Ms. L'Heureux had met with him to propose mental health days for the spring 2021 semester. The proposal included one mental health day a month and not on the same day of the week. No specific dates were recommended in the proposal. If approved, dates would be campus-wide, not by individual instructor. Dr. Smith encouraged faculty to share this with units for feedback.

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

Dr. Kegler shared that the committee is meeting virtually and has been working on their website. Anyone is welcome to join the meetings. To piggyback on Dr. Smith's remarks regarding SGA, Dr. Kegler noted that SGA is committed to helping make a difference for students. They've talked a lot about mental health awareness and the need to expand resources to students, including increasing the availability of the counseling center and the addition of group therapy options. He encourages faculty to consider the mental health day proposal. Dr. Kegler also reminded faculty to complete the Campus Climate Survey that closes on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

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

No report.

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

Dr. Shewmake shared that the free expression statement is still being reviewed by Faculty Senate Presidents across the system. He has received a few comments and encourages faculty to reach out to him with questions. In addition, Dr. Shewmake indicated that faculty must opt in to receive the out of state travel funds as part of the KNEA contract. If they do not opt in, the funds will go directly to their department. Funds must be used by June 30, 2021. Other announcements included that Casey Hermansson is the Faculty Senate representative on the Strategic Planning Council, Spring Break was moved to the end of the semester and the Campus Climate survey closes November 6<sup>th</sup>.

## 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 with two minor amendments: 1) the AAS degree proposed does not affect Pitt State Pathways and 2) FCS 340 was corrected to FCS 406 in the HHPR emphasis revision.

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

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

No report.

### *Online and Distance Learning – Krissy Lewis, Chair*

Dr. Shewmake reported that the committee met on October 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss online learning experiences. Heather Eckstein provided her perspective based on what she hears from students. The committee plans to look at DFW rates prior to COVID in order to identify patterns that may exist. The committee also discussed following up on the online landing page and offering support for the next strategic plan.

### *Academic Honors – John Daley, Chair*

No report.

### *Honors College – Michael Davidsson, Chair*

No report.

### *Writing Across the Curriculum – Laura Covert-Miller, Chair*

Dr. Binder reported that the committee received 41 applications for WL best practices and are in the process of reviewing. The committee is also discussing course substitutions and waivers in light of the 120 rule and for transfer students. If you have any thoughts on this, please share with Dr. Binder.

### *Diversity and Multicultural Affairs – Jessica Jorgenson-Borchert, Chair*

Dr. Jorgenson Borchert reported that the committee met on October 12<sup>th</sup> and spoke to Deatrea Rose, newly appointed Assistant Vice President for Student Life – Senior Diversity Officer. They discussed the Campus Climate survey and past surveys that had been done by the committee. The results from the Campus Climate survey are expected just prior to break or in early 2021. The committee also discussed the need to build a list of courses that have diversity requirements. It was suggested that this be done with the help of the Tilford Group. For additional details, see the committee report in the agenda.

### *Student-Faculty – Gail Yarick, Chair*

Dr. Shewmake reported that the committee met on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss next steps for the proposed Dead Week Policy. It was decided to send the policy along with the Faculty Senate discussion notes from spring 2020 back to SGA for revisions for resubmittal. See agenda for additional details.

### *All University Committee – Tatiana Goris, Chair*

No report.

### *Faculty Affairs – Trina Larery, Chair*

Dr. Shewmake noted that there is currently \$15,000 available for Virtual Innovative and Academic Professional Development training for faculty. This provides clarification from what was reported at the last meeting. In addition, Kathleen Flannery will continue to monitor the current situation and reevaluate funding when appropriate. The budget line that she has created is not going away.

### *Constitution Committee – James Whitney, Chair*

Dr. Whitney reported that the committee met to discuss amendments to the Bylaws. There were questions raised regarding the structure of some committees, whether they are committees or subcommittees. There are numerous committees in the bylaws that should be referred to as subcommittees. This was the first reading. The second reading will take place at the November meeting. For proposed changes to the Bylaws, see the committee's report in the agenda.

*Pitt State Pathway Committee – Michelle Hudiburg, Chair*

No report.

*Budget Committee – Tatiana Goris, Chair*

Dr. Goris reported that the committee met with Doug Ball and he plans to share some information with the committee around the end of November.

*Academic Honesty – Shawnee Hendershot, Chair*

No report.

#### **Unfinished Business**

None.

#### **New Business**

There was a need expressed to clarify the current nomination process. The election process is laid out in the constitution, but there is no formal nominations process outlined. In the past, nominations were taken from the floor, but that is no longer taking place. Dr. Shewmake will work with the Constitution committee to help provide clarification and determine if additional action is needed.

There was also a question regarding a repository of committee documents. Currently only Faculty Senate minutes are centrally archived. Dr. Shewmake encouraged faculty to share any thoughts they had on how we could efficiently store documents so that they would be available to incoming committee membership each year. CANVAS and Sharepoint were mentioned as platforms that may work for this purpose. (Sharepoint has a searchable option.)

#### **Open Forum**

None.

#### **Meeting Adjourned**

Meeting adjourned Monday, October 26, 2020 at 4:02 p.m.



Melinda Roelfs, Recording Secretary