

Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda

December 8, 2023

1:30-3:00pm (UC 251)

Senators: Dr. Vikram Bhadauria, Dr. Brian Billings, Dr. Jaime Cantrell, Dr. Joy Cooper (Secretary/Parliamentarian) (absent), Dr. LuzMary Rincon, Dr. Sara Lawrence, Dr. Brian Matthews, Dr. Sheila Moore, Dr. Craig M Nakashian (President), Dr. James Nguyen, Dr. Godpower Okereke, Dr. Sebastian Schmidl, Dr. Kevin Williams (Vice-President), Dr. Faycal Znidi (absent)

- I. Call to Order.....Dr. Craig M Nakashian
 - a. The meeting was called to order by Senate President, Dr. Nakashian, at 1:33 p.m.

- II. President’s Report.....Dr. Ross Alexander
 - a. Dr. Alexander provided an update regarding the faculty that fell below established CUPA thresholds. Corrections to faculty salaries have been addressed and equity adjustments will begin in Spring 2024. This resulted in a recurring \$1.5 million University commitment. Dr. Alexander emphasized the need for growth and retention to support salary increases.
 - b. Enrollment in the Spring 2024 is appearing to be robust and promising.
 - c. Faculty are encouraged to work with the University regarding enrollment in two ways.
 - i. Play a direct role in student recruitment.
 - ii. Continue to work on innovative new programs.
 - d. Dr. Alexander provided a reminder of commencement on December 16th.

- III. Provost and VPAA’s Report.....Dr. Melinda Arnold
 - a. Dr. Arnold discussed recruitment and enrollment staffing that is currently underway.
 - b. The Provost discussed the search for the Director of Enrollment that is underway with hopes to have someone in place in February.
 - c. Department Chairs may be contacted to assist with graduate student registration.
 - d. Academic Affairs budgets are underway with hopes of completing them soon.
 - e. CBET Dean search is underway, and the plan is to bring candidates onto campus early in the Spring semester.

- IV. Approval of Minutes from 11/10/2023.....Dr. Craig M Nakashian
 - a. Minutes from the previous faculty senate meeting held on 11/10/2023, were reviewed. Dr. Lawrence motioned to approve the minutes, and Dr. Billings seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- V. President of Faculty Senate Report.....Dr. Craig M Nakashian
 - a. Representative on the Academic Affairs Council
 - i. Dr. Arnold released an announcement about reestablishing an Academic Affairs Council, previously called Provost’s Council. The Senate has historically had the President of Senate serve to represent Senate.

Discussion ensued regarding Senate representation and the conclusion was made that the Faculty Senate President would represent the Faculty Senate on the Academic Affairs Council.

- b. Dr. Nakashian announced as of yet, no updates on SB 17 or 18 (Tenure Bill and DEI Bill)
- c. Dr. Nakashian presented the ideas begin discussed with Dr. Alexander about additional salary incentives for faculty (tenure and non-tenure) and considering possibilities regarding additional incentives for faculty beyond tenure and lecturer. The conclusion was made to have the Rules and Procedure committee consider looking at potential incentives and ideas in the Spring.
- d. Dr. Nakashian is discussing with the Provost the idea of considering a Fall break. Discussions regarding Fall break are still ongoing.

VI. Committee Reports & Business Items

- a. Curriculum Committee..... Dr. Godpower Okereke
 - i. ACME Changes
 - 1. No discussion ensued regarding the forms and changes that had been distributed to Senate and faculty.
 - a. Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.
 - ii. Curriculum Committee bylaws
 - 1. No updates to report on the Curriculum Committee Bylaws
- b. Core Curriculum Assessment.....Dr. Faycal Znidi
 - i. The Core Curriculum Chair was absent, and there was no report provided.
- c. Educational Technology.....Dr. Kevin Williams
 - i. Nothing to report
- d. Academic Rules & Procedures.....Dr. Craig M Nakashian
 - i. Changes to FS constitution- eligibility of chairs, non-tenure-track faculty, role of vice-president of senate, and codification of quorum requirements
 - 1. Dr. Nakashian discussed the current eligibility of Faculty Senate. Discussion ensued and the motion was made and approved that all full-time faculty (tenure and non-tenure), with the exception of Deans and Department Chairs, are eligible to serve on Senate.
 - 2. The transition will take place in the February 2024 Senate meeting.
 - 3. Constitution section 5.2, regarding Faculty Senate Vice President was discussed. Currently the Senate Vice President automatically transitions into the Faculty Senate President role. A motion was made to amend the constitution to reflect the Senate VP would not automatically become a two-year commitment. All were in favor of the amendment.
 - 4. Dr. Nakashian discussed section 7.3 regarding a quorum. The language regarding a quorum consisting of one half of voting members plus one shall be required to adopt a motion was approved.

- 5. Proposed changes to Article I, Section 2, of the Committee bylaws were discussed and suggested changes that were presented to Senate were approved.
- 6. Another minor Constitution revision was approved to replace the word “sub-committee” with “committee” throughout the bylaws.
- ii. Minor revisions to the Tenure and Promotion document to incorporate changes due to the state law
 - 1. Dr. Nakashian addressed how the state law resulted in revisions to TAMUT T&P policies to parallel the adjustments to the state law.

- e. Academic Standards.....Dr. Sheila Moore
 - i. Nothing to report
- f. Faculty Welfare.....Dr. Joy Cooper
 - i. Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) is currently reviewing the Faculty Morale Survey and proposed bylaws.
- g. FRED.....Dr. Jaime Cantrell
 - i. Approval of request from Dr. Marvel
 - ii. Approval of request from Dr. Jiao
 - iii. Approval of request from Dr. Cantrell
 - 1. No discussion ensued and the approvals will move forward.
- h. Budget Committee.....Dr. James Nguyen
 - i. Bylaws for the committee are being reviewed and discussed.

VII. Old Business

- a. Faculty Handbook.....Dr. Sara Lawrence
 - i. Dr. Lawrence announced a draft of faculty handbook coming in January.
- b. QEP.....Dr. Daniel Mintun
 - i. Dr. Mintun announced digital literacy and writing skills are topics for QEP consideration. More information regarding QEP updates will be provided in January.
- c. Preservation of committee agendas/minutes

VIII. Senate Concerns

- a. A concern was brought forth to Senate regarding the need to clarify the CUPA salary data and how this data is relevant to respective departments and individuals.
- b. A concern regarding clarifying and simplifying travel requests was discussed and brought to the Senate. The process of addressing this will be reviewed by the Senate President and if needed presented to the appropriate Senate committee.
- c. A concern was made regarding the lack of student support for student athletes and the impact to students and faculty.
- d. A concern regarding the time frame of student evaluations and notifying faculty when students evaluations will occur was presented and discussed.
- e. Parking issues were presented to Senate President.

IX. New Business

- a. Dr. Cooper expressed gratitude to Dr. Nakashian regarding his Senate service.
- X. Next regular meeting of Faculty Senate scheduled for February 9th.
- XI.
- XII. Meeting was adjourned by Dr. Nakashian at 2:55 p.m.