**Faculty Senate Minutes**

**Wednesday, October 13, 2021**

**4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, Zoom**

**Attending Senators:** Taylor Acee, Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Stacey Bender, Peter Dedek, Rachel Davenport, Danette Myers, Lynn Ledbetter, Ben Martin, Stan McClellan, Roque Mendez, Andrew Ojede, Michael Supancic, Nicole Wesley

**Guests:** Timia Cobb (University Star), Aimee Rountree, Judy Oskam, Karen Sigler, Amy Benton, Sarah Angulo (Senate Fellow), Dwonna Naomi Goldstone, Joaquin Palacios, Jesse Backstrom, Ewelina McBroom

Senator Ledbetter called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm

**Council of Chairs Report**

Senator Ledbetter provided an update about the Personnel Committee (PC) Guidelines approved by the Faculty Senate on July 23, 2021 and presented to the Council of Chairs on October 7, 2021. In general, chairs liked the idea that the document is simply guidelines but were not in favor of implementing them as policy and Dr. Thorne explained that there are currently eight policies that mention PC. Some chairs pushed back against the guidelines by claiming that these appeared to be designed to address problems in certain departments, and it would be better to address these problems individually. Representatives from the governance committee responded that the guidelines are designed to promote transparency. Senator Wesley described reactions as open and receptive to NLF being participants on the PC, but that much of the discussion from the chairs was focused on their disagreement that PCs should have a chair that is separate from the department chair. Senator Ledbetter explained that some of the disagreement with the guidelines stemmed from the diverse work different committees do across departments/programs and that the council suggested the senate conduct a survey of department PCs to collect data the senate could use to draft revised guidelines.

A senator asked if any of the chairs spoke in favor of having separate PC and department chairs since their department operates in that manner and it has worked well. Senator Ledbetter responded that no chairs spoke up in favor of that guideline. Another senator pointed out that the guidelines are helpful for departments to know there are options to address inequities.

The council also discussed the application to become a Phi Beta Kappa chapter and how having a chapter at Texas State would help enable the push to become an R1 institution.

**Mandatory COVID vaccinations**

The senate discussed the university policy regarding mandatory meningitis vaccination, which requires all students under the age of 22 to provide proof of immunization for bacterial meningitis at least ten days before the start of classes. Since the FDA has now fully approved Pfizer vaccinations for COVID, senators discussed the possibility of issuing a statement for requiring COVID-19 vaccines.

A senator pointed out that meningitis is a one-time vaccination while a COVID-19 vaccine would be a recurring treatment (e.g., boosters). It was also noted that the meningitis vaccination is required by law. A senator requested asking PAAG at the next meeting whether the university would pursue mandatory vaccinations and another senator pointed out that the senate already knows what PAAG will say in response. A senator suggested asking PAAG if the university will follow the federal executive order that requires all employers with more than 100 employees to require vaccination or regular testing, or the executive order issued by Governor Abbott, which bans requiring employees receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Faculty Senate with Liaisons Meeting Agenda**

Senators discussed the format for the upcoming full senate meeting. Senators agreed the meeting with liaisons will last from 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm with a 15 minute debrief after the combined meeting. The meeting will be an open discussion to listen to concerns brought forth by senate liaisons.

**Miscellaneous**

Senators discussed returning to in-person meetings while providing an online participation option for guests. Senators were asked to consider returning to in-person meetings in the future.

Senator Supancic read an email from Dr. Scott Bowman that thanked and congratulated the Faculty Senate for their advocacy and hard work to have the university require faculty search committee members complete diversity and inclusion training.

**Approval** **of Minutes**

Senators approved the minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting.

**Executive Session**

Senators voted to suspend the rules vote on two items:

1. Christa Oliver (Department of Theater and Dance) to serve on the Presidential Work Life Advisory Council.
2. Senators also voted to approve the recommendations from the Piper Committee.

Senator Ledbetter reminded everyone that the FDL applications need to be reviewed by November 10, 2021.

Senator Supancic provided a brief report that the Commencement Team offered recommendations, but they have not been approved by the Cabinet yet. Additionally, because of the platform party being interrupted during their exit from the arena during a summer commencement, additional arena staff will be present at future commencements.

A senator inquired about why salary information is not available through public access in the library. A senator clarified that faculty salary data is available on the Faculty Senate website.

Senators voiced concerns about the increasing number of administrative positions on campus.

The senate received a concern about a recent change in the law about constitutional carry and how that may affect campus carry. Senator Ledbetter forwarded the concern to Dr. Thorne who recommended that the senate contact Dr. Lisa Lloyd about how the university is going to address any necessary changes. The senate will consider inviting Dr. Lloyd to a future meeting.

**Policy Review**

UPPS 04.05.11 Confined Space Entry (Senator Jensen)

Meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm

Minutes submitted by Jennifer Jensen with supplemental notes from Ben Martin