

Meeting Minutes, Faculty Senate, full meeting, March 28, 2023

These minutes were reviewed and approved during the Faculty Senate meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 2023.

In attendance:

Geleana Alston, Tonya Amankwatia, Uchenna Anele (S) Niroj Aryal (S), Mohammad Azad (S), Bishnu Bastakoti (S), Jennifer Mendoza Beasley (A), Stephen Bollinger (S), Trevor Brothers, Kelvin Bryant (S), Kimberly Bunch-Crump (S), Kay Burks (A), Michael Cundall (A), Zachary Denton (S), Nicole Dobbins, Sherrie Drye (A), Marka Fleming (S), Yvonne R. Ford (S), Galen Foresman (S), Corey Graves (S), Kimberly Harper (S), Scott Harrison (S), Nina Ingram, AKM Kamrul Islam (S), Tom Jackson, Yahya Kamalipour (S), Cindi Khanlarian (S), Stephanie Kelly, Lyubov Kurkalova (S), Nicole McCoy, Kimberly McNeil (S), Ahmed Megri (S), Devang Mehta (S), Carmen Monico (S), Emmanuel Obeng-Gyasi (S), Venkatesh Pandey (A), David Rachlin (A), Ginger Redd, Kristen Rhinehardt (S), George S. Robinson, Jr., Jacqueline Roebuck Sakho (S), Checo Rorie, Dave Schall (S), Amy Schwartzott (S), Belinda Shipps (S), Chantel Simpson (S), Vijay Singh (S), Arwin Smallwood, Tonya Smith-Jackson, Davi Thornton (S), Jeff Wolfgang (S), Qing-An Zeng (S)

(S): Senator

(A): Alternate

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by the Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Scott Harrison. Roll call was taken by Dr. Harrison and Dr. Fuller.

Dr. Harrison welcomed everyone in the session and expressed thanks to the University Provost, Dr. Smith-Jackson, for her time and upcoming forum within the session. Dr. Harrison then made reference to a communication recently sent out to the Faculty Senate regarding initiatives from the UNC System including six recently established working groups surrounding faculty policies. Dr. Harrison expressed thanks to the university leadership, and Provost especially, for helping to promote representation from the university on these six working groups.

Provost Smith-Jackson commented on a salary data analysis project having been generally completed with respect to peer institutions and other institutions. A goal has been to pursue further steps. Some of this will depend on availability of state funds. Dr. Dobbins inquired if the results of the analysis could be made without too much delay to the faculty. Due to the intensive amount of data to review and report on, it currently appears that results will be disseminated later in the summer. Provost Smith-Jackson then made specific reference to the Pre-eminence 2030 Plan for the university. Regarding the objectives to be pursued, action plans were being developed across academic units to achieve the indicated metrics for these plans. The university continues to advocate for resources at the state and national level. Provost Smith-Jackson emphasized university goals for shared governance, interactions with faculty in support of action plans, and foundational considerations for student success including thorough and timely midterm and final grading evaluations.

The Provost routinely invited comment from the faculty community in attendance. Dr. Harrison made mention of how the Provost had suggested earlier in the academic year that there be a frequent, open and collaborative interaction with faculty, and expressed his thanks for the time and many efforts of the

Provost across the university. Regarding recent considerations surrounding the compelled speech policy, discussion during the forum with the Provost was as follows. The policy, as it is written, is challenging to interpret. At present, some of the intent for the policy appears to include how position descriptions and interviewing questions should not compel the addressal of specific topics such as diversity, equity, inclusivity, belonging (DEIB) or related matters such as critical race theory. It was mentioned by faculty that, at our university, there are considerations of standards for equitable evaluation with respect to accreditation for K-12 training programs and that some of the compelled speech policy seems to therefore introduce challenges with respect to that. Regarding the social sciences, social justice and critical race theory are the basis of real scholarship in this area and a core part of the discipline. When these areas substantially relate to what the social sciences profession is about as a scientific discipline, the compelled speech policy may ultimately interfere with goals for the teaching of this content. It was suggested that there be further discussion about this. Regarding the impact of this policy on the university's capability for advancing goals and strategic initiatives, it was suggested to review challenging concerns with university counsel.

Dr. Schwartzott inquired on the housing situation for students. The Provost indicated that new dormitory construction was being pursued, and that expectations were being clarified with students regarding guaranteed housing. Greater guidance is also being given on local housing options. One of the buildings on campus was mentioned as having substantial issues with leaking, and the Provost indicated that this would be looked into. Dr. Rhinehardt inquired on personnel for providing ongoing on-site support for research infrastructure for how quite a bit of infrastructure required ongoing support for resolving practical challenges and managing background situations. The Provost replied that this need was being recognized and that communications should be with chairs and deans who are assembling strategic budget requests with a goal to establish more of these permanent support positions. Dr. Amankwatia suggested that, for considerations and communications on university issues of support at the national level, whether more could be looked into with respect to the Honorable Bobby Scott's Jobs to Compete Act and its relationship to distance education and online collaborations.

The Provost thanked the Faculty Senate for its work in representing the university in the UNC System. Regarding the six working groups regarding faculty policies in the UNC System, the Provost indicated her involvement on the post-tenure review committee. This committee is focused on both incentivizing post-tenure review outcomes of exceeding expectations, and also addressing those who may need to be performing at a higher level. Some of this work would be to define issues with expectations and deficiencies to help clarify the decision-making of PTR committees. The forum with the Provost concluded with Dr. Harrison thanking Provost Smith-Jackson for her availability and engagement with respect to the forum.

The January and February 2023 minutes of Faculty Senate meetings were then reviewed and updated with minor corrections. Dr. Carmen Monico motioned to approve the January 2023 minutes and Stephen Bollinger seconded these minutes. The motion carried unanimously. Stephen Bollinger motioned to approve the February 2023 minutes and Dr. Niroj Aryal seconded these minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

There was then a forum with the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Services (ITS), Tom Jackson. This began with a series of updates from Vice Chancellor Jackson. They were completing their five year cycle of updating the information and media technology of classrooms. Laptops were becoming

the primary office computer and most faculty have received a new one installed as their primary office computer. The university was making progress on its security roadmap and response to a prior cybersecurity issue. Staffing issues remain substantial within Information Technology Services and there remain multiple vacant positions needing to be filled. Faculty inquired upon the availability of software, needing more availability of tools for working with PDF files as well as other software. Vice Chancellor Jackson indicated that there should be institutional licenses already for PDF-related software. Vice Chancellor Jackson also indicated that the requisition process involved review of the license agreement but that the procurement and purchasing process generally worked to address other needs. Tableau was mentioned as a modern analysis tool for which an institutional license would be very helpful and Vice Chancellor indicated that would be looked into. Dr. Rhinehardt inquired about the support and use of cloud-computing, which had been necessary in light of challenges with cyberinfrastructure restoration. Vice Chancellor Jackson responded that some additional policies are being looked into for cloud-computing. Other topics addressed were that ITS provisioning of computers generally relates to office and classroom needs and that students may be provided with access to the O365 environment to enable greater group-based sharing of content between faculty and students. Currently, the university only supports O365 for faculty. Dr. Harrison thanked Vice Chancellor Jackson for his time and engagement with faculty during the forum.

The meeting then moved to nomination and election of Faculty Senate Vice Chair and Faculty Senate Secretary positions, each being of a two-year term (Fall 2023-Spring 2025). Dr. Nicole McCoy was nominated by Dr. Harrison from the floor for the position of Faculty Senate Vice Chair and the nomination was seconded by Stephen Bollinger. Dr. McCoy accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations. A vote was conducted via online poll (anonymous) and the outcome of voting was unanimous in support of Dr. McCoy. Dr. Tiffany Fuller was then nominated by Dr. Dobbins for the position of Faculty Senate Secretary and the nomination was seconded by Dr. Rhinehardt. A vote was conducted via online poll (anonymous) and the outcome of voting was unanimous in support of Dr. Fuller.

Committee reports then ensued. Dr. McCoy mentioned that the university's ad hoc University Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee (UAPCC) was approving its final set of curriculum packets on the last Friday of April. Dr. Harrison remarked that the Constitution Committee may work to examine the UNC System Faculty Assembly by-laws, with there being some insightful approaches there. The calendar committee indicated they were having an upcoming meeting.

For new business, a question surrounding a summer salary cap was raised, as to whether that was a UNC system policy or a campus policy. On another topic, it was mentioned by Dr. Smallwood that final curriculum packets to be reviewed for academic year 2022-2023 needed to be submitted to the UAPCC by Friday, March 31.

Dr. Harrison then moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Khanlarian seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.