

## **Faculty Senate Meeting with the President**

September 9, 2024 @3:35PM

via TEAMS

### **Members Present**

Michael Allen, Teddy Burch, Scott Christen, Melissa Comer, Kris Craven, Mark Creter, Mary Lou Fornehed, Jerry Gannod, Melissa Geist, Ka Grimes, Syed Hasan, Colin Hill, Amy Hill, Alfred Kalyanapu, Krystal Kennedy, Christy Killman, Matthew Langford, Jeannette Luna, Jennifer Mabry, Twanelle Majors, Ann Manginelli, David Mann, Michael Nattrass, Linda Null, Brian O'Connor, Hyewon Park, Yi Peng, Mustafa Rajabali, Lee Ann Shipley, Sandi Smith-Andrews, Amber Spears, Leslie Suters, Dennis Tennant, Thomas Timmerman, Kristen Trent, Kyle Turner, Hannah Upole, Lenly Weathers, Brenda Wilson, Kexin Xu

### **Members Absent**

Megan Atkinson, Wei Tsun Chang, Yun Ding, Andrew Donadio, Dennis Fennewald, Josh Field, Richard LeBorne, Holly Mills, Joseph Ojo, Steven Seiler,

### **Guests Present:**

Lee Wray

Senate President Rajabali called the meeting to order and provided an update about Teams invites for meetings this semester. Teams invites will be resent by Senate Secretary Manginelli in the next few days. Additionally, access to the Faculty Senate website will not be available to Senator Manginelli until after website training happens on September 19.

### **Remarks by President Oldham**

Thank you to everyone for the great start to the semester. A high level of enthusiasm and energy was noted. Most of campus has reopened for use, and we are looking forward to getting other projects finalized. Enrollment for the year is positive, with 10,551 students – a 4.3% increase over last year. There was a small increase in graduate students, 2006 new first-time freshmen, and number of transfers were relatively flat. New freshmen had an average 3.7 GPA and 24.1 ACT. Additionally, our retention numbers are up to 78.2%, with a 4-year graduation rate at an all-time high of 41%.

The following questions/concerns were submitted by the Faculty Senate for the President to address:

- 1) Who will replace Deanna Metts as the person who manages fraud, waste, and abuse complaints on campus? Deanna was respected and trusted in this position.

### **President Oldham:**

A search was completed, and 4 candidates were interviewed. Amy Willigas was hired for the position. She is currently the director of internal audit for UT (system?). Amy brings

with her a lot of valuable experience.

- 2) This question is about Eagle Engage: As a faculty member who regularly discusses events around campus with both other faculty and students, we want to understand why Student Organizations have to re-register when they are already registered. This takes up valuable time from both faculty and students.

**President Oldham:**

I will defer to Student Affairs, as this is the office that deals with this. Dr. Polk-Johnson or someone on her staff should be able to answer this.

- 3) Why are faculty and staff now responsible for entering curriculum revisions into Coursedog? Could we investigate appointing a person from the registrar's office to enter information from attached documents into the Coursedog system?

**President Oldham:**

Defer to provost office.

- 4) Parking on campus has been an issue when school is in session. With the increase in cost and the parking issues, what measures are being taken to address parking enforcement?

**President Oldham:**

Dr. Stinson worked last year with SGA on potential options for parking going forward and having a parking garage on campus. However, the student referendum failed around a parking garage. If we keep the system as it is, stricter parking enforcement will have to increase. Communication will happen beforehand, to minimize surprises.

Several discussion points on the parking issue:

- The SGA referendum was very specific. Students would be charged whether they used it or not, and many students pay rent to live close by so they don't have to purchase parking. (**President:** The referendum was student-led. A parking garage must be self-financed. Other campuses do this through a mandatory student fee. We will keep working on it. Ultimately it will have to happen.)
- Students would pay a fee and have to buy a tag as well? (**President:** A hang tag would have to be purchased. Revenues would build and maintain the structure.)
- Would this provide ample parking for everyone? (**President:** Would be like what we have now. Everyone would have access, but it would still be first-come first-serve. Currently only about half of the students pay for a tag. A number of students park without a tag, and that creates the enforcement issue. The issue is not that we don't have enough parking, but they don't want where we have it – lot across Willow is generally available.)
- Is the increase in enforcement issue being discussed? (**President:** It is in the works.)

- 5) What are your thoughts on the university adding a "professor of practice" role as well as a tenurable teaching professor track (teaching assistant professor, teaching associate professor, etc.)?

President Oldham responded to the question, as well as engaged in a lot of back-and-forth discussion.

- Having these roles would give flexibility, increased competitiveness, align us with aspirational peers. (**President:** We have some of this with clinical professor and research roles. Would leverage opportunities. Would need to have clear structure and titles.)
  - In the broader world, titles are viewed differently. (**President:** Alignment of titles/expectations is important to avoid mixed messages and tensions. We can continue these discussions in our departments, with academic affairs, etc.)
  - How this might work would vary based on departments, roles, responsibilities, etc. (**President:** every department would have to look at it through their individual lens. Must be consensus between departments, provost, administration – with everybody on board and moving in the same direction.)
  - Clarity of guidelines is important, so that those things are honored as they move up the chain.
  - Variabilities in roles as well as levels of required teaching/research/service. (**President:** There is a lot of variability. Discretion is at the department and college level to interpret and personalize, but it cannot be done in a vacuum. Communication is key. On larger campuses there is a wider variety of faculty appointments.)
  - We will continue this discussion in the future. This would increase the competitiveness of the institution.
- 6) The issue of summer school pay via proration based on course enrollment, as well as the lack of timely communication and transparency with regard to summer school pay. Faculty are not always able to make informed decisions about summer teaching because of this. Students may be affected by the availability (or lack of) summer classes.

#### **President Oldham**

This is really a provost question. Provost Bruce has had a great amount of discussion on this topic.

#### Other Such Matters/Questions

- Trash and recycling pickup on campus: recycling containers broken open and overflowing on the pickle ball court (**President:** will make sure appropriate people are notified.)
- New student club picked up 100 pounds of trash around the track behind Foundation Hall. Roteract group also does that twice a year.

- Benches by pickle ball court (**President:** Requested to look at benches and fencing around the courts.)
- Water feature at the new engineering building? (**President:** Hiring a company that helps clean up and balance the water. A fountain will be added in the near future.)

**Approved:** 10/21/2024