

Faculty Senate Meeting with President Oldham

Topics for October 20, 2025

Termination of French & German Concentrations in Foreign Languages

I would like President Oldham to address these eliminations as it could set a negative precedent for the closure of concentrations dictated by upper administration. Why didn't these eliminations follow university policy? They affected the university-wide curriculum because there are 11 degree programs with foreign language requirements. Thus, shouldn't those eliminations have been approved by the University Curriculum Committee and Academic Council? Instead, they were presented in an "emergency" meeting of the faculty senate during which no minutes were allowed to be taken. Senators were then asked to respond to a Qualtrics survey with a Likert scale to indicate the extent to which they supported the elimination of the 2 programs. Individual results of each survey were sent to then-provost Lori Bruce directly, instead of in aggregate, thus stripping the survey of anonymity. To my knowledge, when the results were compiled all abstentions and all "neutral" votes were counted as a vote to "eliminate" French and German, making it seem like the faculty senate approved the eliminations when the actual votes produced by a truly anonymous survey may have presented a different picture.

Additionally, the degree program in Foreign Languages as a whole was not even on THEC's low-producing programs list. Yes, the Spanish concentration has the majority of majors, but many other majors on campus have similar differences among their concentrations. There are also other concentrations across campus that have similarly "low" numbers of majors. Why didn't they get eliminated along with German and French, if "low enrollment" was the true reason for the eliminations?

Compensation

With a number of chairpersons on the Senate, we are aware that there still exist both salary inversions and also salary compression in many departments across campus. Recognizing that salary inversion should have the highest priority, a consensus on a solution in principle to the inversion problem could then lead to a similar solution for the compression problem. In our last discussion on shared governance, you reminded us "The more you talk, the better the communication is and the more likely everyone is satisfied with the outcomes." In the spirit of that, how can the Faculty Senate assist in finding a path to repairing these issues related to faculty compensation. Our hope is to have a better understanding of the challenges in correcting this issue and a clear consistent path to corrections that can be shared with the faculty.