

Faculty Senate Meeting
September 2, 2020, 3:15p.m., via Zoom
Minutes

Senators Present: Carolyn Jester, David Warren, Lacy Wolfe, Dever Norman, MaryJane Dunn, Talisha Givan, Richard Miller, Brett Servis, John Long, Darrel Farmer, Michael Loos, Jessica Allen, Holly Cothren, Patti Poblete, Cheryl Massey, Bryon Martin, Lisa Massey, Trae Warner, David Sesser, Catherine Leach, Lim Angela Tchoi, Judy Carlyle, Zahria Zamanipour, Megan Hickerson, Judy Harrison, Shannon Wittig, Ajay Aggarwai, Ivan Birch, and Tommy Copeland.

Guest: Dr. Borsig

Numerous Zoom Observers

- I. President Farmer called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.
- II. The April and May minutes were approved.
- III. President's Report: President Farmer turned the meeting over to Chancellor Borsig.
 - a. Chancellor Borsig's address to the Faculty Senate focused on four areas:
interim/acting provost, academic program review, enrollment, and fiscal issues.

Interim/Acting Provost: The university sent out a RFP out to select a firm to conduct the interim provost search. Out of three proposals, the selection team chose The Registry. Thanks to Tim Jones, the deadline of September 1 set by the Arkansas Legislative Council was met. Approval is expected on September 18. An external, virtual search for an interim provost will begin immediately and a decision will be made quickly. The Interview Panel includes the three academic deans, three members of the Executive Council, Dr. Farmer, and Dr. Givan. The plan is for the interim provost to begin October 1. Until the interim provost begins, Dr. Ken Taylor will serve as acting provost. In order to avoid conflict of interest, Dr. Celya Taylor, Dean of Teachers College, will report directly to Dr. Borsig until the interim provost begins. Dr. Ken Taylor will not make any decisions involving Teachers College.

Academic Program Review: The deadline for completion of the academic program review was not met. Dr. Maralyn Sommer is completing Phase 4. She is currently working with the academic deans and the wrap-up is expected in early October. A program review should occur annually, not only during a financial crisis and a pandemic. Faculty lines cannot stay where enrollments used to be. Enrollment trends are led by the economy. Outcomes from program review will not be the only actions. The program review should provide good information about what programs should do during the near term after it is completed.

Enrollment: The State of Arkansas is ahead of tax collection projections, and Arkansas' economy is strong which bodes well about any reductions that could occur. HSU had budgeted for a 5 percent reduction in enrollment, but

enrollment reduction is going to exceed that percentage. Student Semester Credit Hours (SSCH) means more than headcount. In order to balance the 2020 budget, HSU had to furlough 155 employees. Enrollment is down and will have a financial impact that is being calculated. With over 45% of students enrolled in online courses or of course sections being online, fees that usually go to debt reduction will not be collected. HSU has to get to a good net tuition number for the fall; then make a judgment to forecast for spring and summer I. Rita Fleming is finishing calculating the net tuition number. Institutions dealing with Covid are dipping into financial reserves, but HSU has no financial reserves. The budget cannot be balanced until it is clear what the federal government is going to do and if there is going to be another stimulus package. Federal assistance will likely be wrapped up in one bill, a continuing resolution, to fund government through December 31. Sustainability is balancing fiscal 2021 while looking forward. HSU must find a path to financial sustainability from an expense and revenue standpoint. The university does not have cash flow in the summer. An adopted balanced budget is meaningless until there is cash on hand. The challenge of financial sustainability involves revenue, expenses, and cash flow.

The task in front of the University involves three buckets: 1) financial sustainability, 2) finding efficiencies, and 3) growth. The most obvious efficiency will be the transition from POISE to Banner, expected to be complete by July 1, 2021. In order to grow, HSU must identify areas where students are shifting and put resources into those programs. HSU must diversify tuition income which means diversifying students. Although HSU will always recruit first-time entering students, the high school graduation rate in Arkansas is flat., and all states will be aggressively recruiting those students. HSU must be indispensable to the area that it serves and deploy multiple opportunities for students whether they are place bound, older, or nonresidential. These opportunities include 2 + 2 programs and graduate opportunities. In order to become indispensable, the university must look at the students it teaches; this is an ongoing process.

Head count this year will look different and will be lower.. Head Count is not correlated with students paying tuition. Except for Arkadelphia, HSU will not have concurrent enrollment. Current enrollment does not add to revenue. It does not calculate with tuition income. Faculty need to ensure who is in class and purge "no shows" so that those students do not get billed and referred to a collection agency.

The primary challenge is how to balance the budget in the fiscal year and to fit operations within available revenue. What the federal government may do is not a solution to problems. Any assistance from the federal government will lengthen the planning horizon and might provide an opportunity to invest in programs.

Dr. Borsig's Pledge: He will be forthcoming with information when he is sure that he has good information. He will be cautious. He will wait until he is certain. He believes it is important to resolve issues rapidly within the current fiscal year. It is time to get past waiting for the other shoe to drop. There are opportunities that are good for the university. He cannot promise that there will not be an across-the-board pay cut, but it is not the only answer and is not a good solution. Answers depend on revenue, the government, and how these pieces fit together. He believes that everyone should get organized, share information, go to work, find solutions, bring recommendations, make hard decisions, and move on with the confidence that the hard decisions are behind us. Sustainability, efficiency, and growth may be the three task forces to be launched immediately. A quick timeline (by the end of semester or the first of next semester) is necessary to address the urgency of the situation.

Questions from faculty:

Q: We need clarity on the program review. What kind of matrix do we have to accomplish that?

A: We have no scenario until we know what revenue exists. Program review is more of a road map than anything else.

Q: Across-the-board cuts are unfair because we have inequities in salaries across campus. ~~Will future cuts be across the board?~~ **If there are future pay cuts, will they be across the board?**

A: Points well made. Faculty will be full partners in conversation.

Q: When will staff have their contracts?

A: I did not know, but I will ask. Do not underestimate the impact of 10 days of furlough on what gets done. Progress has been made on hiring a director of Human Resources. Lack of haste is due to having a budget, but no money.

Q: Concerning the payroll tax cut, SS withholding be stopped until the end of the year? Employees may not know that the tax savings will have to be paid back at the beginning of 2021. What is HSU going to do with the payroll tax cut?

A: The ASU System is not going to implement the payroll tax cut.

President Farmer reported that people have been asked to serve on the committee for the permanent search for the president. People have been asked to serve on the search for the Human Resources Director and they are supposed to meet this week. The search for the Executive Director of the Foundation is on deck.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Executive: The committee met and made the agenda for today's meeting.

- b. Academic: The committee will meet next week. Faculty evaluation will be on the agenda.
 - c. Buildings and Grounds: No report.
 - d. Finance: Emails sent. Input sought.
 - e. Operations and Handbook: No report.
 - f. Procedures:
 - Ballots were submitted to Wrenette Tedder for the Faculty Excellence Awards Committee elections. The committees will select the recipients of the 2020-2021 Faculty Excellence Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity in the spring. The elections are scheduled to run through September 25.
 - g. Shared Governance Review:
 - Two proposals were made: 1) Regulations for Title IX changed. HSU adopted ASU regulations and policies for compliance. 2) The Committee on Committees is reviewing committee assignments. Anyone who cannot serve on a committee should make Ms. Kneebone aware.
 - h. Board of Trustees Representative: The representative had trouble finding a meeting. It appears the Board isn't doing a lot. A point of concern was brought up concerning the retracting of Dr. Akoto's sabbatical leave approval. His sabbatical was the only one approved by the Board of Trustees because he had a Fulbright fellowship. The Board has not met since the approval. What is the policy? How could the approval be retracted? President Farmer will check with Flora Weeks.
 - i. Graduate Council Representative: The Council reviewed the conditional admittance of students to the Graduate School. Students were notified by email. The Council will meet the second Tuesday of each month.
- V. Unfinished Business:
A Constitutional Amendment was approved in December, but has not yet been placed in the Handbook.
- VI. New Business
- a. A motion was made and passed to write a resolution thanking Elaine Kneebone for her service. Megan Hickerson will write the resolution.
 - b. Covid Grading Contingency Plans were discussed, and senators were asked to get feedback from their constituents.
 - c. A senator stated that the Faculty Senate should acknowledge that faculty were not hurt by furloughs, but staff have suffered. We should formally acknowledge the sacrifice of the staff. Faculty should be encouraged to contribute to the Staff Emergency fund in the Foundation and find out how to get the funds into the hands of the staff. The Senate was asked to recommend a salary threshold that future cuts would not go below. Senators should take the recommendation to their constituents.
- VII. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

