

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

Senators present: Darrel Farmer, Talisha Givan, Judy Harrison, Catherine Leach, Lacy Wolfe, Shannon Wittig, Trae Warner, Dever Norman, Ajay Aggarwal, Thomas Copeland, John Long, Zahra Zamanipour, Michael Loos, Ivan Birch, David Sesser, Jessica Allen, Carolyn Jester, Byron Martin, Holly Cothren, Cheryl Massey, Patti Poblete, Richard Miller, Brett Serviss, Maryjane Dunn, Megan Hickerson, Lim Angela Tchoi, David Warren

Guest: Dr. Jim Borsig

- I. Call to Order: President Farmer called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.
- II. Approval of November Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve the November Faculty Senate minutes. The minutes were approved.
- III. President Farmer invited Interim Chancellor Dr. Jim Borsig to address the Faculty Senate. After thanking the faculty for all their work done on behalf of the students, Dr. Borsig addressed the following items:
 - a. The Higher Learning Commission approved the merger of Henderson State University into Arkansas State University System on November 3; legislation has been drafted and is expected to be enacted by the General Assembly in January.
 - b. The announcement of a voluntary early retirement proposal for Board of Trustees approval at the December 10 meeting; the window for consideration begins the day after the BoT meeting and lasts until the last working day of February. An outline of the proposal will be sent to faculty and staff on Friday or Monday.
 - c. He is looking forward to receiving the recommendations from Drs. Hunt and Patterson and the Strategic Enrollment Committee on their work built around the Arkansas Performance Funding Model and the Best Practices in Student Retention and Completion. The focus of the work is aligning resources with efforts to improve retention and graduation rates. HSU's student retention rate is about 10 points below the national average. It is important that faculty understand the funding formula.
 - d. The final meeting of the Henderson State University Board of Trustees will be on December 10; Dr. Borsig anticipates a seamless transition into the ASU Board of Trustees schedule.
 - e. Dr. Borsig expects a second federal stimulus package soon; pandemic aid is dependent upon Congress passing the budget. He does not yet know the impact of student debt on registration for the spring semester. The current budget will be finalized once the university knows the net tuition revenue from spring and the amount of the stimulus package. Then work on budget planning for 2021-2022 can begin.

- f. Dr. Borsig responded to questions about the makeup of the ASU Board of Trustees and the HSU Board of Visitors. It will take legislative action to dissolve current HSU Board of Trustees and expand the ASU Board of Trustees from five members to seven, with two members representing HSU. Then a HSU Board of Visitors will be created. He is unsure of the number of members on the Board of Visitors or how they will be selected. It is possible that members of both boards will be appointed by the Governor.
- g. One senator asked about a rumor that over 1000 students had not been able to register for spring because of student debt. Dr. Borsig said that he did not believe the number was still that high and that some of those were students enrolled prior to this semester. The university has chosen a third party contractor to monitor and manage payment plans which will reduce some of the work load in the Business Office. Students will pay a nominal fee, so there will be no cost to the university.

IV. President's Report:

President Farmer gave updates on the following items:

- a. Current work on the budget is primarily dealing with nonacademic restructuring/
- b. Dr. Welch verified that Rita Fleming did not take a pay cut according to the terms agreed upon in her contract.
- c. Faculty emeritus status for Drs. David Thomson and John Hardee will be approved by the Board of Trustees in December meeting
- d. In response to a question concerning Board of Trustee approval for establishment of new rank for librarians, President Farmer stated that Dr. Hunt has not yet reviewed the changes to the Faculty Handbook, so they will not be on the BoT agenda.

V. Committees' Reports

a. Executive:

Provided an agenda

b. Academic:

Maryjane Dunn stated that a recap of what the committee had done concerning student evaluation of instruction had been sent the secretary to add to the minutes. Discussion about the differences in evaluation of online and face-to-face instruction continued. During a meeting with Jennifer Holbrook and George Finkle, they expressed concern from the Nursing Faculty who have done additional training and are qualified for online instruction. Senator Dunn suggested that the Academic Committee increase the number of members to allow a subcommittee to work on evaluation of online instruction. A contact from ASU stated that student evaluations of instruction vary by departments/disciplines. A copy of the policy from the ASU Handbook will be included in the minutes. (See Appendix A)

- c. Buildings and Grounds:
The committee did not meet, but the chair visited with SSC. Faculty should report issues to key people, but should not report directly to SSC. A member of Shared Governance said that there will be a University Building and Grounds Committee.
- d. Finance:
No report
- e. Operations and Handbook:
Nothing new to report
- f. Procedures:
The election of at-large positions on the Faculty Senate has been finalized and the website will be updated soon. (See Appendix B.)
- g. Shared Governance:
No report
- h. Representative to the Board of Trustees
The final HSU Board of Trustees meeting will be December 10.
- i. Representative to the Graduate Council
The Council met by email. Several students expressed interest in Teachers College and the School of Business during the Graduate Fair.

VI. Unfinished Business
None

VII. New Business
A motion was made and seconded to confirm Kristy McDaniel as a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The motion passed.

The following resolution was passed by the Faculty Senate:

“The Faculty Senate hereby recognizes, commends, and sincerely thanks Dr. Darrell Farmer for his outstanding leadership as President of the 2020 Faculty Senate.”

President Farmer summarized the Senate’s year as having survived three administrations, going from a pay increase to a pay decrease, and adjusting to teaching in a Covid pandemic. In spite of these challenges, the faculty kept doing its job. Students kept making kind comments about faculty. He reminded senators that we are the helpers, the ports in the storm, and the stewards of the community. He is a convert to the Reddie Spirit.

VIII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Harrison

Appendices

- A. Academic Affairs Subcommittee Report
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_6DYOpJd5FpDmrAve2cdIM4m2SaRDN6g/view?usp=sharing

- B. Procedures Committee At-Large Election Report
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p7evQQoeiT7ImMlBs9tKNrNvqURrITTa/view?usp=sharing>