

Faculty Senate Meeting
October 7, 2020
3:15 p.m. via Zoom

Senators present: Darrel Farmer, Talisha Givan, Judy Harrison, Catherine Leach, Lacy Wolfe, Shannon Witteg, Dever Norman, Trae Warner, Megan Hickerson, Thomas Copeland, Lynne Dardenne, Zahra Zamanipour, Michael Loos, Ivan Birch, Ajay Aggarwal, David Sesser, Lim Angela Tchoi, Jessica Allen, Carolyn Jester, Byron Martin

Guest: Dr. Jim Borsig

- I. Call to Order: President Farmer called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.
- II. Approval of September Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve the September Faculty Senate minutes. The minutes were approved.
- III. President's Report: President Farmer asked Dr. Borsig to follow up on his September report to the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Borsig stated that the time has come to take a deep dive into the budget and begin planning for the next two to three fiscal years. The first step toward the fiscal year 2022 budget will begin with the Planning and Budgeting Committee. The Committee will meet biweekly and focus its work on understanding the decisions necessary to balance the fiscal year 2021 budget before considering the fiscal year 2022 budget.

Henderson's finances have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Enrollment is down and residence hall occupancy for fall 2020 is 63% compared to 78% a year ago. Because of the pandemic, a drop in residency was expected. The fiscal year 2022 budget will be determined on anticipated enrollment. Fall 2021 enrollment is anticipated to be what it is fall 2020. Nothing can be determined until net tuition revenue for spring is known. Typically spring enrollment is less than fall enrollment, but it is impossible to know until the count is in. Once the fiscal year 2022 budget is final, it will be presented to the ASU Board for approval. How federal stimulus money is used will be in consultation with the ASU system. Because Moody's Investors downgraded HSU's credit rating, the University is affected in opportunities to refinance debt and what investors look at considering the University from purchasing debt. It is essential that federal stimulus money be set aside for reserve. The University's current reserve has to ensure the University meets payroll. HSU currently has a \$3,000,000 line of credit in the bank that has not been touched. The current budget includes a little more than \$2,000,000 in CARES money which is intended to plug any shortage of revenue from the State of Arkansas. Because state tax collections are good at this point, it appears that categories A,B,C in the state budget will flow; it is uncertain if category D will flow. Categories C and D funds do not become available until the fourth quarter. The university will plan for the worst,

but hope for best. While the variables are not known, it is hard to work with the equation.

The university is on hard freeze in hiring. Only the president can approve exceptions. The university is about to launch a staff review that is expected to be completed before Thanksgiving. Some of the many position vacancies will be filled. A HR director is expected to be hired soon. After the implementation of the Banner system in 2021, the university will be in a better position to know which positions are needed.

There is a voluntary early retirement proposal being designed with ASU and is expected to be completed before Thanksgiving. Exactly how the plan will look cannot be determined until federal stimulus funds are known.

Drs. Hunt and Patterson are cochairing Covid Planning and will work on who should be included on the Academic Calendar Committee. They and the Committee will determine what the spring semester will look like. OBU is starting a week later and eliminating spring break. Other universities are starting later or shortening semesters.

Responding to a senator's question about worst case scenario for spring, Dr. Borsig said that there are too many unknowns. Although stimulus funding and net tuition income are unknown, Dr. Borsig said that he expected faculty employed this fall would be employed in the spring. When asked about the possibility of the HSU Foundation helping, Dr. Borsig stated that Henderson has a good and generous Foundation Board. Money flows from the Foundation to the University primarily through scholarships. The area is understaffed and staffing needs must be addressed. Friends of the University have raised a pool of money to build the capacity to raise money by focusing on helping students. Prospect research is being done now to determine where to ask for money without asking same people over and over. Once momentum builds, friends and alums will stand behind the University financially and emotionally. The Alumni Association is moving toward being better organized.

Dr. Borsig addressed other items. There was a letter to Dr. Welch about the audit. The letter was not a Henderson document. It is due diligence that the ASU Board required to be done before the merger occurs.

Glen Jones received payments in August and September. His contract ran from July to July. The final contract payment occurred in August because the July payment was not made. The September payment was for accumulated leave.

Dr. Borsig has not lost sight of the Diversity Committee. Invitations are being sent to those who are interested to be on a diversity planning committee.

There will be a Virtual Meet and Greet for Dr. Jim Hunt on October 15. He has had 20 years' experience as provost at two different institutions.

There is a state law that prohibits a deficit in E & G and Auxiliary funds. The virus caused most of those circumstances leading to a deficit and the federal stimulus will resolve most of those. Moody's investors were told of the University's three main priorities: 1) paying our long-term debt on time, 2) meeting our payroll, and 3) paying our vendors within 60 days of the invoice. All are directly related to the availability of cash. Dr. Borsig emphasized the importance of the work that Rita Fleming and ASU's Julie Bates have done in managing a cash flow crunch. Were it not for the pandemic, the University would be in good shape.

Dr. Borsig responded to other questions from senators:

Q: Will the budget and planning committee meetings be public?

A: I don't know. In my opinion they would be open. They will probably be virtual.

Q: Technology fees at HSU have always been about what they are now. Now that we are using more technology and have fewer students on campus, is it an option to increase fees?

A: Everything is on the table. My guess is that once we get the fiscal budget for 2022 adopted, we must look at tuition and fees. HSU scholarships almost half tuition which is unusual for a small public university. There is a scholarship battle between universities in Arkansas. It is a strategic conversation to have over time.

Q: What happened to last spring's sessions before the Joint Budget Committee?

A: I can't answer directly. The audits are still out there, but nothing revealed fraud. Some of the issues were because of a bad computer system and lack of training for employees. It is time for this one to wrap up.

Dr. Borsig expressed his appreciation for the conversations and what the Senate is doing. Moreover, he expressed gratitude for the stewardship and hard questions.

President Farmer reported that he had asked Dr. Borsig why Rita Fleming and others did not receive a pay cut. Dr. Borsig told him that he would seek out the answer and provide a follow up.

IV. Committees' Reports

a. Executive: The Executive Committee met via Zoom and made the agenda.

b. Academic:

Senator Allen reported that the committee was tasked with creating updated student evaluations. The committee met several times before the campus closed

in March, but finding a time to meet this fall has been difficult. Mary Jane provided a copy of combined notes to share during unfinished business. Any feedback should be given by the November meeting. The final work will be sent to Shared Governance by end of the semester. One department senator asked to add five questions to the instrument, but was told that questions could not be added. There was some concern that a few of the questions targeted online students, not students meeting face-to-face. Banner will possibly allow more options. There was mention of considering having evaluations for online courses separate from evaluations for courses that meet face-to-face. (See Appendix A: Draft of Student Evaluation of Faculty Instruction)

- c. Buildings and Grounds:
Nothing to report at this meeting.
- d. Finance
Nothing to report. Questions were answered by Dr. Borsig.
- e. Operations and Handbook
Senator Martin reported that the edited 2016 Faculty Handbook was available for the senators to review and that the committee welcomed comments and suggestions. (See Appendix B: Handbook and Operations Committee Documents.) Dr. Martin stated that there was one item that is an addendum that had not yet been approved by the Faculty Senate. A senator mentioned that a list of addendum items included in the November minutes had not yet gone to the Provost or the Board of Trustees for approval. Senators noted the urgency of getting all items for approval on the Board of Trustees agenda, so they must go to Interim Provost Hunt soon.
- f. Procedures:
Senator Wolfe reported that the Faculty Excellence Awards Committee election concluded and that the results will be attached to the October Faculty Senate minutes. The ballots for Faculty Senate Departmental Representatives were submitted to Wrenette. Those elections will be held during the month of October. (See Appendix C: Procedures Committee Documents)
- g. Shared Governance
Vice President Givan reported that the Committee on Committees had met to fill vacancies on University committees caused by faculty no longer with the university.
- h. Representative to the Board of Trustees
Senator Norman reported that Dr. Borsig had already shared everything related to faculty that occurred during the September Board of Trustees meeting. (See Appendix D: Notes on September Board of Trustees Meeting)

- i. Representative to the Graduate Council
Senator Warner reported that the Graduate Council met virtually to review proposals. Of particular interest were two new options proposed by the School of Business: Aviation Management and Engineering Management. The Council's next meeting will be October 13.

- v. Unfinished Business
 - a. Constitutional Amendment Correction
There was ongoing discourse about the clarity of criteria for the New Faculty Award. The Handbook and Operations Committee was charged with reconciling the wording concerning years of experience allowed to qualify for the award.

 - b. Resolution
President Farmer expressed appreciation from the Faculty Senate to Senator Hickerson for writing a resolution thanking Elaine Kneebone for her service as Acting President. Senator Hickerson read the Resolution aloud so that the recording could be sent to Ms. Kneebone. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the Resolution. (See Appendix E: Resolution Thanking Elaine Kneebone for Service as Acting President)

 - c. Covid Grading Contingency Plan
Senator Givan checked with representatives from other universities concerning their contingency plans on grading during the Covid pandemic. Last semester's grading contingency plans were implemented because students began the semester taking courses delivered through one modality, but many had to change modalities because of the pandemic. Students this semester began the semester knowing the modality, so grading will be done as usual. It was noted that some modalities changed as late as the end of August.

- vi. New Business
President Farmer led a discussion concerning awarding faculty emeritus status to Dr. John Hardee and Dr. David Thomson who retired during a transitional time at the University. Normally "emeritus" status would be awarded during the March or April meeting of the Board of Trustees, but the recommendation was not brought forward in a timely manner. The Senate concurred that both professors were deserving of the recognition and their status should be considered at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

A senator motioned that the approved September minutes be amended to change the wording of a question concerning the possibility of future pay cuts to "If there are future pay cuts, will they be across the board?" The motion to amend the minutes passed.

A senator expressed concern that not all programs on campus were marketed equally. For example, Virtual Reddie Day: Graduate School is coming up this month. Not all graduate programs are being featured, including HPE. One program in Teachers College was not included and that was marked as a deficiency by an accrediting agency, so programs need university support. Many presenters representing programs on Virtual Reddie Day had no participants. Marketing and Admissions and Recruitment could benefit from input by departments.

A senator asked what would happen to the salaries of faculty who are leaving the university. President Farmer agreed to ask Dr. Hunt or Dr. Borsig.

A senator noted that the OBU spring academic calendar will begin a week later than usual and will not include a spring break. No announcement has been made yet concerning HSU's spring academic calendar. One senator noted that faculty and students need a break.

- VII. Adjournment: With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Harrison

Appendices

A: Academic Committee Draft of Student Evaluation of Faculty:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ShiGEm9YjScRe7X8panDas4qe8iJ8LB_/view?usp=sharing

B: Operations and Handbook Committee Documents:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yXDO_qyL2R2_KaHydZpOw1-70zMqMWvc?usp=sharing

C: Procedures Committee Documents:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MIDeeMEJr_JXimrZRDhdmV4Xp0OFgo_8?usp=sharing

D. Notes from September Board of Trustees Meeting:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jV7MuJp-GemgvdFq7csgckruob9oxmCR/view?usp=sharing>

E. Resolution Thanking Elaine Kneebone for Service as Acting President:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EGaJ16uytSk5h7lkrBi7KCQAeLYIW1GS/view?usp=sharing>