

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
May 6, 2020 via Zoom

Members present: Ajay Aggarwal, Brett Serviss, Bryan Martin, Carolyn Jester, Catherine Leach, Cheryl Massey, Constanze Weise, David Sesser, David Warren, Dever Norman, Holly Cothren, Ivan Birch, Darrel Farmer, John Long, Judy Carlyle, Judy Harrison, Lacy Wolfe, Lim Angela Tchoi, Lisa Massey, Maryjane Dunn, Megan Hickerson, Michael Loos, Patti Poblete, Richard Miller, Shannon Wittig, TaLisha Givan, Andrew Burt, Zahara Zamanipour

Guests: Dr. Chuck Welch, ASU System President; Elaine Kneebone, HSU Acting President; Ms. Rita Fleming, HSU Vice-President of Finance and Administration; Dr. Maralyn Sommer, HSU Interim Provost

Numerous other faculty and staff

- I. Called to Order by President Farmer at 3:17 p.m.
- II. Approval of April Minutes (Minutes not distributed prior to meeting and mistakenly approved. Minutes have since been distributed and will be brought forth at next meeting.)
- III. President Farmer opened the meeting by welcoming the guests and asking Dr. Welch to respond to questions from faculty.

**Question: Is program review going on, who is conducting it, and is it only academic program review?**

Before responding to the question, Dr. Welch gave an overview of the events leading to the current financial status of HSU. The following is a paraphrase of Dr. Welch's (Ms. Kneebone's, Ms. Fleming's, Dr. Sommer's) comments:

The existing budget was challenging, but because of budget cuts and the approval of an interest-free state revenue stabilization loan of \$6,000,000.00 to be paid back long term, the university was going to finish the fiscal year with slight budget surplus. Then Covid 19 hit, causing the state to cut \$871,994.00 from HSU's 2020 budget. Because HSU had no reserves, the university could not finish the fiscal year on June 30, 2020, without personnel reduction, probably through furlough. In order to avoid furloughing employees, HSU representatives worked extensively with state and federal officials to find other solutions. These budget cuts will remain in place in Fiscal Year 2021. Based on revised revenue forecasts, universities can expect to receive 85% of Category A funding and most of Category B. Although some universities are not including Category B funds budgets in 2021 budgets, ASU will budget Category B. No ASU campuses are planning to budget Category C funds. Even if Category C funds were released, they would not be released until the last minute. The state added Category D for the first time in the 2021 budget, but no one expects Category D to flow. Without Categories C and D, HSU will be short almost

\$2,000,000. HSU expects to receive \$3,767,931.00 in federal funding from the CARES Act, but half of that will go directly to aiding students. About \$1,800,000 will go for institutional use. Federal funds cannot be used for state cuts and can only be used for expenses directly related to Covid. At this point, the guidelines on how those funds may be used are unclear. Even if the university could use federal funds for revenue replacement, they still would not cover lost funding; consequently, contingency plans are being made. Considering furloughs and program viability must be part of contingency planning. Dr. Eric Atchison, ASU Vice-President for Institutional Research, and Dr. Sommer are running HSU's numbers (FTEs and SSCH) through an academic cost accounting program. There will be a complete analysis of all areas of campus to see what can be reduced, reformed, or eliminated. The university also has high fixed costs and debt load. No final decisions have been made and the budget has not been finalized. The budget might not be ready for the May Board of Trustees meeting and might have to be reviewed during the June meeting. On a positive note, the Educational Trust Fund might get a 2% increase.

**Question: To what extent does the university have to show federal money being spent is directly related to the pandemic?**

Cares Act dollars were announced with little guidance from the United States Department of Education. Fiscal agents had to sign that the funds would be spent legally. Everyone is scared to spend the money because the guidelines for institutional use are not clear. Two sets of Frequently Asked Questions were recently released. In some ways, the FAQ's helped; in other ways, they further muddied the water. Student money is prohibited from going to DACA students, international students, and students who weren't Title IV eligible. Because online offerings are not impacted by Covid, then funds cannot go to students taking online courses. That raised the question that some students were not enrolled in fully online programs, but might have been taking an online course this semester. As the guidelines are written, those students do not qualify. The Big 6 (AASC, AACCC, ACE, APLGU, etc.) worked on and a list of questions about what colleges and universities need. No questions have been answered yet. As the guidelines are written, the colleges and universities hesitate to use the funds because of fear of misuse. States still don't have clear guidelines about how to spend money. Congress wants to know if funds are being used as intended.

**Question: Has any consideration been given to low enrollment, but much needed, programs?**

Data are only one piece of the picture. We have to consider regional needs. Savings are not meant to be current year, but long term. There are unique circumstances for some programs. The plan has different phases. Questions will be asked. Why are numbers like this? What is the program's potential to grow? How can the program be strengthened?

**Question: Are we moving from POISE to Banner? How much will it cost?**

ASU campuses will move to Banner. Banner is more economical as a consortium. The long term cost of Banner will be less than Poise. Year 1, Year 2, implementation costs are prohibitive. However, there might be some federal money for that. We might be able to use CARES Act money for that. Other federal funds for technology may be available.

**Question: Have tenure applications been sent to the president's desk. Will they be ready for the Board of Trustees meeting in May.**

Dr. Sommer is working with Dr. Adkison and those recommendations will be sent to Ms. Kneebone. They will be sent to the Board for the May meeting.

**Question: Will HSU staff members still have to appear before JPR?**

Yes. Although there has been no conversation about it, when the Capitol reopens, the meetings will resume. The Joint Auditing Committee sent the report to the Joint Performance Committee. The Joint Auditing Committee has not yet signed off. Something has to happen.

**Question: Do we know where private money came for to send officials to China last year?**

The money had to come from the HSU Foundation.

**Question: Are people who have given money to the Foundation aware of how their donations are being spent? How did people get money to travel to China? Not knowing leads to questions of accountability.**

Some donors give unrestricted money. There is a management fee applied to endowment funds that can be spent for institutional use. Restricted funds cannot be spent for any other purpose. Many donations are designated for scholarships. Some funds are designated for the president's use. There are third party audits. HSU and ASU use Landmark. There is no conflict of interest. The administration will look into how foundation funds have been used.

**Question: What is a furlough?**

According to the Employment Security Division, a furlough can entail one or two days release from work each week. Loss of partial employment makes the employees eligible for unemployment, plus an additional \$600 a week until July 31. Furloughs for some employees were being considered for May and June. Hopefully,

the university will not have to go there. Furloughed employees still have benefits. Other types of furloughs are more like layoffs; people are let go indefinitely.

**Question: Would faculty be impacted?**

Faculty were not considered for furloughs, but considered for reduction in salary for the month of May. Unemployment would not pay for that. Looking at 40% reduction in administrative and classified staff for six months.

**Question: Currently there is a lawsuit referring to Drexel student asking for 40% refund of money. Could HSU figure out percentage of cost for instruction online and not online per student? Could the university use the money that way?**

The ASU general counsel is working with other Arkansas general counsels and national officials to address the current lawsuits and the anticipation of many more.

**What happens to a surplus if any in the Cares Act? Can HSU get a loan knowing money is there?**

Hopefully, the rules will relax someone. Multiple contingency plans concerning money are being considered.

**Question: Explain how the furlough will impact 12-month employees?**

The same way. We would close on Thursdays and Fridays. In addition to salary savings, there should be some utility savings.

**Question: Will HSU consider a four-day week?**

That is not something that we've really explored. Some colleges go to a four-day week during the summer, mostly two-year colleges. Everything will be looked at looking forward. Energy savings are built into debt for that. However, some offices have to work five-days a week.

**Question: Considering a second wave of the virus, would it be frowned upon to convert to online to protect vulnerable groups?**

ASU is asking about testing and contact tracing. It is understood that some employees or their families are autoimmune compromised. The system is sensitive to that. There is a meeting on Friday to talk about what the next semester will look like for K-12 and higher ed. Every campus will look different. Any concerns should be communicated with department chairs and deans. Like ADA issues, they must be worked through.

**Question: Can money be used for training faculty who are not prepared for teaching online?**

Based on current guidelines it is allowable.

**Question: Is it possible to set up grants for economically challenged students who cannot pay their debt to HSU?**

Students are already receiving help through the students' half of the CARES Act money. All eligible students will get money. Direct aid to students is on the list.

**Questions: Will the rank of librarian and handbook changes be on the May Board of Trustees meeting agenda?**

It is not known yet what will be on the agenda, but faculty will be informed.

**Question: Referencing Brett Powell's comments at the JPR meeting about scholarship money going mostly to merit rather than need, is HSU's method of awarding scholarships dysfunctional and unique? Do we need to reform?**

Most institutions award scholarships on merit. Many of the comments were misleading. HSU has the same student body it has had for many years, but the problem occurred only in the past few years. Scholarship criteria is part of an overall enrollment management plan. It is important that every dollar is spent well.

ASU's Vice President for Institutional Research is a national iPeds trainer and is well versed in data and analysis. A lot of decisions have been made anecdotally, but it is important to move toward data-driven decision making. Some scholarships should not be capped; maybe others should. Everything will be under review.

**Comment: Appreciation for communicating and listening to faculty concerns.**

Elaine and Rita have worked tirelessly. Revenues were inflated; expenditures were underreported. They've had to go line-by-line.

The ASU board is driven by three words: Strategic, Analytical, Accountable.

**Question: Will we still transition to ASU in January?**

That mainly involves eliminating the HSU Board of Trustees and adding two positions to the ASU Board. The two Board members will be appointed by the governor and do not have to be existing HSU Board members. Everything should be approved by January 15. HLC was supposed to visit, but they asked to have the June visit virtually. They will make a physical trip if necessary before November.

**Question: Will program reviews be done before June 30?**

Any decisions before June 30 will be small, not long term. Phase 1 is almost finished. Phase 2 will include faculty involvement and questions for departments being drafted.

IV. President's Report

President Welch covered most of the report. The faculty role in program review is being developed. Administrative bloat will be looked into. Presidential search has stalled.

The minutes were approved without being seen. The minutes will be shared and placed on the website. They will be brought forward again at the next meeting. A senator mentioned the need for faculty to get the latest information. Developing information should be put on a website. Q&A needs updating. The Faculty Senate should create our own information channel and be architects of our own information.

Another senator mentioned that such information should be properly vetted.

V. Reports from Committees:

a. Executive

Made an agenda.

b. Academic

The committee completed a rough draft of what is wanted to be included and not included in evaluations of instruction. It should be sent to your constituencies in the fall.

c. Buildings and Grounds

The chair met with two of five committee members and talked about building a website and what the future of the Building and Grounds Committee should be. Now that appropriate technology is available, it should be more than a reporting system. The committee should be more of an advocacy committee. There should be a website for reporting concerns to the Committee. Reports should not have to go through administrative assistants. The Committee should remain in the Faculty Senate who can advocate for the needs of students, as well. Serious issues like asbestos and flooding must be addressed. The Committee wants to meet with IT people.

d. Finance

No report.

e. Operations and Handbook

No report. Tenure applications are moving forward. Program review is moving forward according to procedures in the Faculty Handbook.

f. Procedures

No report.

g. Shared Governance

Although there was no formal report, a senator said that currently, there are three proposals for review being sent to faculty for feedback. The proposals are expected to go to the Board of Trustees for approval. One proposal is about students' need to appeal financial aid. There has been some conversation about contracting with an outside company to deal with financial aid appeals; however, there is no money for contracting. Dr. Patterson is looking at establishing a campus-wide building and grounds committee to address large-scale issues. Some senators expressed concern that no one knew to whom the proposals would be sent for review and that the proposals could be sent to the Board of Trustees in May without appropriate feedback. If the proposals are on the May Board of Trustees agenda, then the process as described on the website is not being followed and it is not shared governance. President Farmer and Dr. Givan will review the proposals, find out where they are in the process, make sure that the Senate has followed procedure, and visit with Dr. Worth. Another senator commented that the Shared Governance section of MyHenderson is difficult to understand and information is hard to locate. Standard headings by years and dates would make searches easier. There are no minutes from the planning and budget committee. It was suggested that minutes of all meetings where decisions are being made should be recorded.

h. Representative to Board of Trustees

No recent meeting.

i. Representative to Graduate Council:

The Graduate Council did not officially meet. Dr. Taylor requested the Graduate Council vote on the following: 1) A Business College course proposal at its second reading for a course called "MBA Boot Camp" and 2) The acceptance of 5 Graduate Faculty Applications. Votes on these matters were to be cast on May 5, 2020. Dr. Taylor will share the outcomes of the votes.

VI. Unfinished Business

None

VII. New Business

A senator mentioned the work done on the annual review will need to continue in the fall. Another senator mentioned the need for revisions and clarity in the Faculty

Handbook. President Farmer said that he would check for clarity on a salary reduction concern raised by a senator about 9-month faculty who choose to be paid over 12 months.

VIII. The meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

Recorded and submitted by Judy Harrison