

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
FRIDAY MAY 1, 2020, 3: 00 PM
ZOOM

Present: Cory Coehoorn, Doug Bible, Tom Dubose, Zolt Lenvarszky, Aadel Darrat, Harvey Rubin, Helen Wise, Brian Salvatore, Allen Garcie, Laura McLemore, Matyas Buzgo, Yong Dai

Called to order: 3:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: There being no corrections, the minutes of the April 9, 2020, meeting were approved.

President's report: Doug Bible commended faculty, administration, and staff for their work in transitioning to at-home operation. He reported that in the past month, he attended the university planning council meeting, which approved the Faculty Senate plan regarding changes to the Youree Drive entrance to the campus. He has also been attending COVID-19 task force meetings. He reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee met on Monday. Items to be discussed are the University Hearing Panel and officer elections. He did not get all committee assignments updated, but asserted that he and Russ Perry will work on it

Administrator Reports:

a. Chancellor: Dr. Clark asked for questions about the Town Hall meeting. Yong Dai asked if a schedule of zoom meetings could be sent out in an email. Chancellor Clark said he is trying to get that together. He reported that we are still working on LSU Covid-19 plan Phase 1. He has submitted our plan to LSU but has not heard back. He has a meeting with Interim President Gallagin this afternoon.

b. Provost: Helen Taylor thanked the faculty for everything that has gone so well in the past 6 to 8 weeks. Compared to what she has heard from some other schools, LSUS has done a great job. She reported that students seem to be adapting well. The semester is finishing smoothly. She said town halls will continue by popular request, possibly in a different format. She wants to continue to help faculty with teaching online because so many are new to it. Administrators are asking deans to set up schedules for people who need access to their offices. Doug Bible noted that pass/no credit does not require faculty to do anything differently than they usually do in recording grades. Yong Dai asked about students who request and incomplete. Dr. Taylor stated that incompletes were be handled the same as usual. She noted that the due date for grades is May 12 as usual.

c. Vice-Chancellor for Business Affairs: Barbie Cannon reported that LSUS is under a spending freeze until June 30. She expressed appreciation for the cooperation of faculty in completing appropriate forms. She said she did not know what the legislature is going to do about next year's budget. They will set a budget by July 1, which might help us plan but she thinks it might change in August. LSUS is in a good financial position. Our reliance on the state is much less than it has been in the past. She is optimistic for the next fiscal year. We'll be ending this year strong and budgeting for next year over the next two months.

Yong Dai asked about reimbursements for conferences already attended. Dr. Clark answered that those could go forward. Barbie said she will carry over the spring grants so they can be utilized in the fall. Dr. Clark isn't sure about fall enrollment. He said we don't know about face-to-face enrollment. We might pick up students who will not go back to distant schools in the fall. Cory asked if there would be face-to-face classes in the fall, or if we started online, would it be possible to transition to face-to-face. Dr. Clark answered that there's always a possibility we would have to go online in the fall or convert from face-to-face to online after the semester starts if conditions change. Helen Taylor said faculty should think about both kinds of course delivery. There was a question about fees and summer enrollment. Dr. Clark said they intend to be more lenient with faculty over course enrollment in the summer to give faculty income during the summer. A question arose as to whether BPCC was planning to be online in the fall. Dr. Clark said he knew BPCC had talked about possibly being online in the fall, but he did not know what they had decided. He said we are not just about to announce that fall will be on line. He will prepare for the possibilities but will let the Faculty Senate know if they decide that.

d. Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and Purchasing: Bill Wolfe had no updates to report. We are on track but will be flexible.

Committee Reports:

Doug Bible said he received a detailed report from Curriculum and Standards and will share it in the next week. He got good reports from Faculty Research and Development.

Old business:

a. Status change for Student Conduct Committee. Changes in the University Hearing Panel were distributed to faculty and we got feedback. The Policy & Personnel Committee have a new proposal that changes the member selection process and appeals process. Gary Joiner explained the changes were to insure that faculty have a strong voice in who will be on the University Hearing Panel. The Academic deans will rotate as appellate judge on the panel but cannot hear appeals from their own college. Doug Bible asked for a motion to approve the changes. Harvey Rubin so moved and Helen Wise seconded. The motions was approved with one opposed. Matyas Buzgo commented that there is a strong loss of power even in the current wording. His observation has been that faculty tend toward greater academic rigor and administration tends to greater leniency, which could weaken faculty influence in the classroom. This was a clarification not further discussion of the motion. Doug Bible pointed out that the Faculty Senate had oversight of the list of faculty submitted to administrators.

New business:

a. Doug Bible announced that Binshan Lin and Katherine Wickstrom will continue on the Faculty Research & Development Committee and asked for a motion to extend their appointments to that committee? Matyas Buzgo so moved and Harvey Rubin seconded. The appointment was approved.

b. Brian Salvatore expressed a concern that may need to be referred to the Policy and Personnel Committee with regard to adjunct faculty in Chemistry & Physics. Brian is concerned about one full-time faculty representing two concentrations of 120 hours each in Physics and an over reliance on adjunct faculty. He has always championed an increase in adjunct faculty compensation. He noted that there has been no consultation with department chairs about policy regarding compensation for adjunct faculty. However, he received a memo from Human Resources, copying the Chancellor and Provost, accusing him of disregarding university policy by promising raises to his adjuncts and alluding to him as “ignorant”. He asserted that he has never promised adjunct faculty anything. He feels that he was unjustly treated, and he lacks confidence in administrators involved in this. He is also concerned about some of the renovations in the science building, specifically asbestos abatement. He was contacted by a member of the faculty in his department who was worried about it. He conveyed these concerns to the Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs because it was his duty as department chair. He feels that some of the disciplinary measures might be retaliatory. He said an adjunct faculty in his department was told that Dr. Siska was dismissed because he was going to cause us to lose our accreditation. He said that is not true, and he doesn’t believe faculty has always been told the truth with regard to various things particularly dismissals of the former Provost and Dean. He maintained that he was told the adjunct salary was going to go up and it hasn’t. He emphasized that what he believes is important is faculty, students, and programs. He is concerned that his adjuncts in Chemistry and Physics are planning to go elsewhere. Doug Bible agreed that adjunct salaries probably need to go up and acknowledged that some of the issues Brian brought up probably need to be referred to the Policy and Personnel Committee.

Bill Wolfe gave background on this issue. He explained that recommendations on adjunct compensation were made to Dr. Vassar, which he approved. A committee revisited that. He said they drafted a policy that would raise adjunct pay but it has never been approved or implemented.

Brian said it says in the statement that it is the responsibility of the Dean to justify exceptional compensation. When he saw the Dean’s signature on it, he assumed the Dean had done the justification. When Brian was asked to do it, he did it. It looked like the justification from last year. He asked that the threatening memo not be put in his file, and he asked for an apology for the email calling him ignorant.

Helen Wise asked Brian to draft something to Doug Bible with specific requests along with the solutions he feels are appropriate. The Faculty Senate can then direct them to the proper departments.

b. Faculty Senate Executive Committee Elections. Doug Bible asked for nominations one position at a time. He asked for nominations for President noting that he was willing to serve. Harvey Rubin nominated Doug Bible, and Tom Dubose seconded. Doug was then elected by acclamation. Doug noted that Russ Perry is eligible for another term as Vice President. Helen Wise nominated Russ and Cory Coehoorn seconded. Russ Perry was elected by

acclamation. Tom Dubose nominated Laura McLemore for another term as Secretary; Yong Dai seconded. Laura was elected by acclamation. Doug Bible asked Allen Garcie to stand for election as Parliamentarian and Allen agreed to be nominated. Aadel Darrat seconded. Allen was elected by acclamation. Kevin Jones is eligible to continue in the at-large seat; Zsolt Lenvarszky cannot. Doug Bible nominated Cory Coehoorn for one at-large position. Tom Dubose seconded the nomination. Yong Dai nominated Kevin Jones for the other at-large position, and Harvey Rubin seconded the nomination. Cory and Kevin were then elected by acclamation.

Observations and concerns: Doug Bible expressed appreciation for everyone's support. Mary Lois White asked about the Freshman Seminar. Doug said it wasn't really on the agenda for this meeting. Mary Lois said maybe the Gen Ed committee should be the committee Dr. Hart works with because of overlapping goals. Doug said he would look into that.

Adjourned 4:03 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. McLemore, Secretary