

## **Minutes from the March 14, 2022 Meeting of the Faculty Senate**

The regular Faculty Senate meeting was held on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 3:30 PM. The meeting was conducted both in-person in JUB 100C and via Zoom for those who preferred to attend remotely.

### **Attendance**

Present: Jeremy Aber, Anne Anderson, Sanjay Asthana, Sal Barbosa, Vishwas Bedekar, Larry Burriss, Lando Carter, Todd O'Neill, Claire Cook, Rick Cottle, Douglas Dabbs, Elizabeth Dalton, Andrea Dawson, Laura Dubek, Rudy Dunlap, Michelle Finch, Robert Gordon, Michael Hein, Renee Jones, Kyle Kennedy, Rebecca King, Rachel Kirk, Francis Koti, Lei Miao, Dan Morrell, Kari Neely, David Nelson, Martha Norkunas, John Ouellette, Sharon Parente, Alicia Pence, Ariana Postlethwait, Patrick Richey, Dianna Rust, Scott Seipel, Daniel Smith, Nat Smith, Raj Srivastava, Ben Stickle, Suzanne Sutherland, Zhen Wang, Andrew Wyatt

Excused: Lisa Green, Stephen Salter, Zhen Wang

Absent (unexcused): Song Cui, Christina Hiers, Seth Jones

Guests: Susan Myers-Shirk, Katie Brackett, Amy Aldridge-Sanford, Anjali Sarvaria

Faculty Senate President Bob Gordon called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

### **Greetings**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Anne Anderson moved to accept the Faculty Senate February Meeting Minutes as written. Kari Neely seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Neely moved to accept the Faculty Senate February Bylaws Revision Vote Minutes as written. Anderson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

#### **President Updates**

##### Executive Aide

Anjali Sarvaria has been hired as Executive Aide and will join the Senate March 28, 2022. Sarvaria introduced herself to the Senate. She has already started the process of filling Senate standing committees.

##### Faculty Direct Input on Chairs' Searches

Gordon reported that this issue will be discussed with Provost Byrnes at the next Academic Affairs Liaison Meeting. Pat Richey explained that up to four departments in the College of Liberal Arts have reported dissatisfaction with chair search procedures, especially with regard to transparency and faculty input. Other senators responded that the problem is broader than Liberal Arts.

### ITD and JUB A/V Updates

Gordon will request to purchase from ITD an iPad with an application that will control the camera, audio levels, etc. in the Faculty Senate room. Adding microphones to every table is prohibitively expensive with an estimated cost of \$60,000.

### **Senate Officer Nomination Committee**

#### President Elect

Kari Neely nominated herself.

Anderson nominated Andrew Wyatt for Faculty Senate President-Elect. Wyatt accepted the nomination.

#### Recording Secretary

Todd O'Neill nominated himself for Recording Secretary.

### **BOT Presentation Updates**

#### Finance, Anne Anderson

Gordon and Anderson will present on salaries at the Board of Trustees on Tuesday March 15, at 1 PM.

#### Academic Affairs, Lando Carter

Gordon and Carter will present on Academic Freedom on Tuesday March 15, at 9 AM.

### **By Laws Discussion and Vote**

Anderson introduced proposed revisions to the bylaws. She reminded senators that a copy of the proposed bylaws revisions had been circulated in advance of the meeting. She also provided the language of the proposed revisions in a PowerPoint presentation.

Regarding the Steering/Liaison Committee, Anderson proposed the following revisions:

#### Article VII, Section 9

**Current:** In the event a member of the Steering Committee and Liaison Committee is unable to complete his or her term of duty, the Steering Committee shall elect a replacement as soon as possible. The election shall be conducted in accordance with these Bylaws.

**Proposed:** In the event a member of the Steering Committee is unable to complete his or her term of duty, the Steering Committee shall elect a replacement as soon as possible. The election shall be conducted in accordance with these Bylaws.

#### Article VIII, Section 1 and 2:

##### **Current:**

**Section 1.** The members of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee shall also serve as members of the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee. Members of the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee shall hold office for one year and no member of the Senate shall serve as a member of the Liaison Committee for more than two consecutive years (except in the case of elected officers of the Faculty Senate).

**Section 2.** The duties of the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee shall be to accept and bring before the Administration all business suggested by the Senate membership, Steering Committee, or faculty of the University and to report the results of such consultation back to the Faculty Senate membership in the form of written or verbal comments at each regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting.

**Proposed:**

**Section 1.** The members of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee shall also serve as members of the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee.

**Section 2.** The duties of the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee shall be to accept and bring before the Administration all business suggested by the Senate membership or faculty of the University and to report the results of such consultation back to the Faculty Senate membership in the form of written or verbal comments at each regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting. The Liaison Committee meets monthly with the Provost (Academic) and President.

Daniel Smith moved to approve the proposed revisions to Article VII, Section 9 and Article VIII, Sections 1 and 2. Kari Neely seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Regarding the Faculty Trustee, Anderson proposed the following revisions:

Article XII, Section 2

**Proposed (see italicized addition):** Eligibility: To be eligible to serve as the Faculty Trustee on the local board of trustees, the faculty member must be a tenured, full-time faculty member who has worked at least 7 consecutive years at MTSU, has performed less than 50% of their work in the area of administration during these 7 years as determined by their workload, *and has served at least one year on the Faculty Senate.* Faculty members who perform 50% or greater of their work in the area of administration, including members of the Chairs Council, shall not be eligible to serve as Faculty Trustee on the local board. If eligibility of a person to be nominated is questioned, the Faculty Senate shall be the judge of the qualifications of that person. The decision of the Faculty Senate can be appealed in writing to the Faculty Senate President within two weeks of notice of ineligibility. In the case of an appeal, the Faculty Senate will appoint a committee with one representative per college, including University College and Walker Library to review the decision.

Article XII, Section 3

**Proposed (see italicized additions):** Selection Process: In an academic year in which a new board member is to be selected, *during the Fall semester* the Faculty Senate President will request from all university tenure and tenure-track faculty the faculty nominations of faculty members to be considered for election to the local board. *All nominations must be received no later than the scheduled December Graduation Ceremony. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will review nominations for eligibility and present a ballot to the Faculty Senate for a vote at the beginning of the Spring semester. After reviewing nominations to ensure all nominees satisfy qualifications, if there are not at least 2 viable nominees than the Faculty Senate may add a nomination to the ballot. In this case, the assent of the additional nominee must be obtained by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee before presenting the ballot to the Faculty Senate. The local board Faculty Trustee will be elected at the first Faculty Senate meeting of the Spring*

*semester by a majority vote of the Faculty Senate. A majority of the total Faculty Senate membership shall constitute a quorum for voting. The election must occur at the first Spring meeting to ensure the elected faculty member can participate in the training and assumption of duties at the same time as other new Board members for that year.*

Smith moved to approve the proposed revisions to Article XII, Sections 2 and 3 as written. Richey seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Regarding Senate Committees, Anderson proposed the following revisions:

#### Article XIII

##### **Proposed :**

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate shall have 3 standing committees – Board of Trustees committee, Finance committee, and Committee on Committees. Members of each Faculty Senate Committee shall hold office for one year; up to three consecutive terms shall be allowed for an individual member. Committee members may be chosen from either current senators or from faculty who have served on the Senate in the past. Whenever possible, no more than half of the membership shall rotate off the committee in a given year.

**Section 2.** Each Faculty Senate committee shall be composed of a maximum of five members, with no majority coming from a single department or college. Committee membership shall be maintained from the first fall senate meeting in a given year until the first fall meeting in the subsequent year.

#### Article XIII

##### **Proposed :**

**Section 3.** The duties of each Faculty Senate committee shall be to 1) keep the Faculty Senate informed of major policy issues and discussions within the board committee to which it corresponds; and 2) make suggestions to the Faculty Senate for motions and initiatives which it feels best supports the faculty well-being and the institutional well-being for the committee area it is supporting. In addition to these general charges the committees will have specific areas of responsibility as outlined in section 4.

**Section 4.** The specific responsibilities of each of the standing committee shall be as follows:

- Board of Trustees Committee: Attend/view the Board of Trustees committee and quarterly meetings and will report back to the Faculty Senate on key issues discussed.
- Finance Committee: Review the budgets and reports of the University that detail the financial conditions and plans of the University. Provide information that allows the Faculty Senate to determine if the University is managing its affairs in such a way as to maximize its available resources. Provide faculty of likely impact on faculty salary and benefits of decisions taken or about to be taken by the University and its designated staff in the finance area.
- Committee on Committees: Work with the Senate President and executive aide to ensure that faculty are represented adequately on University committees. Prepare an annual report of suggested changes to the University committee structure.

**Section 5.** In no way shall the provisions of this article impact or change the membership of the Steering Committee, the Election Committee, or the Faculty Senate Liaison Committee.

Senators asked for two minor amendments to the proposed revisions to Article XIII: In section 5, remove “Liaison”; In section 2 add “standing”. Smith moved to accept the proposed revisions. Neely seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote. Anderson reported that she would fix the two sections as requested and provide the bylaws revisions to Gordon to send out to all faculty.

The bylaws revisions go into effect after approval by the whole faculty.

### **Gen Ed Redesign Update – Susan Myers-Shirk**

Susan Myers-Shirk provided a PowerPoint presentation of two new models for General Education Redesign approved for public comment by the General Education Committee. She promised that these models would become available after the Faculty Senate meeting. The two models are divided into three sections each: Foundations (basic, foundational skills); Disciplinary Knowledge (discipline driven); Explorations (outcomes driven). The difference between the two models is that Model 1 features “pathways” while Model 2 features “integrative seminars.” Myers-Shirk reported that she would disseminate three videos containing an overview and details of the models, as well as PDF presentations and a Guide to Student Learning Outcomes. Myers-Shirk asked for questions.

Q: Are you presenting any comparisons to what we currently do?

A: No, but we welcome comments. We have also developed a survey that permits discussion of the current model.

Q: Some features present in previous iterations have been dropped from the current models. How would I know what has changed?

A: Although we had a near unanimous vote to send out the models for comments, that does not mean we are ready to vote to adopt. Some on the committee want to return to the current curriculum with new SLOs. The reason the committee decided to send out these models is that they want to know what the campus community thinks. The Committee will respond to comments and revise. Myers-Shirk clarified that the campus comment period starts today and runs through April 14. Public forums begin March 21.

Q: At the end of the last General Education Committee meeting, we agreed to add some language that it is possible to add integrative seminars and pathways on top of the existing General Education structure. Where is that language included?

A: In the survey

Q: What do you need from Faculty Senate?

A: We need you to personally review the materials and encourage members of your department to do so as well. We need full participation in the process. Complete the survey and attend the forums. Help us with guiding a robust and civil conversation that leads toward broad agreement about values/identity. We do not want a significant portion of our university alienated.

Q: In a video you talk about maintaining the current General Education program—is that a real option? If so, why don’t you add the existing model as a choice?

A: The Committee decided against that because they felt that gathering this information in the public comment period did not close that off. There is no requirement that the Committee approve one of these two models.

Q: How do the proposed models relate to the General Education cores of Belmont and UTK?

A: Belmont and UTK have a much more open General Education program. These models ally more with our LGI and community college partners because of transfer issues. They don't discourage transfer.

Q: Could you clarify the process from this point forward?

A: The Committee will make a decision 30 days from now after four weeks of discussion. They may agree with certain changes and send out another model for an additional comment period.

Q: If one of these models is approved, will there be a massive creation of new courses that have to be approved? What is the first year of implementation?

A: We assume we will need a full year next year to develop courses. It is important to make a decision this year because 1/3 of the General Education Committee members roll off every year.

Q: Could you ask permission that no one roll off next year? You don't have enough time.

A: The General Education Committee is a Faculty Senate committee so this could be a discussion for Faculty Senate. That said, Policy 32 still stipulates the time period.

Q: Could you be transparent about whether any department will be more impacted than others when it comes to cutting required courses?

A: In the current models, the History Department will be more impacted than any other department. In previous models, we had cut the Literature requirement. A recent revision in early February resulted in adding the Literature requirement back in and cutting the History hours in half. History has been a six-hour requirement because of a statutory requirement. Students must have this requirement in history to graduate from LGIs. Whoever is responsible for a student graduating without this requirement can lose their job and be prevented from working at a university. All of our LGI partners and community college partners do require six hours of History as part of their General Education. This is an issue.

Q: When the General Education Committee decided to cut History credits, was there any discussion with members of the History Department about what that meant and did you discuss the impact on university resources?

A: I am from the History Department and the CLA representative is from the History department...

Q: But did those members represent the views of the History Department in this discussion?

A: No, they did not.

Q: How will the shifts in credit requirements impact university resources?

A: There is a section in one of the videos about resources. We would like to hire an Assessment Coordinator and provide stipends for faculty who redesign their courses. We hope to receive funds to maintain additional Faculty Learning Communities. We envision microgrants, course

releases, and reduced course caps for General Education classes. General Education courses should be taught by fulltime faculty, tenure-track faculty would be ideal. We haven't come to conclusions about the budget. I don't go forward without the resources. It has to be supported.

Amy Aldridge-Sanford, representing the Office of the Provost, affirmed support for General Education Redesign.

**New Business**

There was no new business.

Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, Larry Burriss seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Documents provided at the meeting:

Draft Faculty Senate February Meeting Minutes

Draft Faculty Senate Bylaws Revision Vote Meeting Minutes

*Respectfully submitted by Suzanne Sutherland, Recording Secretary. Approved by the Faculty Senate on April 11, 2022.*