

Faculty Senate
11/14/2022

The MTSU Faculty Senate met in regular session, Monday, Nov. 14, 2022, at 3:30 p.m., Senate President Stephen Salter presiding.

Members present: Rafet Al-Tobasei, Vaughn Barry, Vishwas Bedekar, Larry Burriss, Lando Carter (via Zoom), Leigh Anne Clark, Michelle Conceison, Claire Cook (via Zoom), Douglas Dabbs, Elizabeth Dalton, Andrea Dawson, Carmelita Dotson (via Zoom), Laura Dubek, Tricia Farwell (via Zoom), Michael Federici, Andrea Georgiou, Robert Gordon, Lisa Green, Jeannie Harrington, Amy Harris (via Zoom), Samantha Johnson, Renee Jones (via Zoom), Kyle Kennedy, Rachel Kirk, Francis Koti, Preston MacDougall, Joan McRea, Kay Murphree, Kari Neely, David Nelson, Suman Neupane, Keely O'Brien, Todd O'Neill, John Ouellette, Sharon Parente (via Zoom), Alicia Pence (via Zoom), Michael Principe, Patrick Richey, Jim Rost, Dianna Rust (via Zoom), Stephen Salter, Saleh Sbenaty, Philip Seagraves, Xiaowei Shi, Raj Srivastava, Andrew Wyatt (via Zoom)

Members Absent: Anne Anderson, Jacob Avila, Patrick McCarthy,

Members Excused: Jeremy Aber, Suzanne Sutherland (via Zoom),

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the October Faculty Senate meeting. Approved.

Committee and liaison reports:

John Ouellette – Academic Affairs Committee. The committee has received good information from Becky Cole regarding workload calculations. The committee will meet again to more closely examine the workload data and will soon meet with chairs about workloads.

Rachel Kirk – Athletics Committee. There will be a faculty/staff appreciation night at a February basketball game.

The committee met with the athletic department to discuss plans for further activities to increase faculty/staff athletic engagement.

Kari Neely – Committee on Committees. University Policy 32 allows for substantial input from the Faculty Senate regarding composition of University committees, the required five-year committee review and the requirement for annual committee reports.

10 committees are up for review this year

Senator Neely reported there are numerous ad hoc committees, but little guidance as to their formation and membership. The committee on committees will continue to look at these concerns.

It is important in regards to shared governance that the Faculty Senate in particular, and the faculty in general, understand what the numerous and varied University committees are doing and the outcomes of their work.

Finance Committee – A copy of the committee report is attached.

Jeannie Harrington reported Associate Provost Becky Cole is providing information relative to questions from the committee, particularly regarding pay equity relative to gender. The committee will compile this information for presentation at a future Senate meeting.

Sustainability Committee – Elizabeth Dalton reported the committee has met twice to discuss scope of the committee's work. There needs to be a permanent University-level sustainability committee for more effective functioning. The committee is looking at what other campuses are doing about sustainability, and is seeking suggestions for campus-wide sustainability events.

President Salter meets with University Provost Mark Byrnes monthly, who confirmed that in the future the selection of committee members will be done with the advice and consent of the Faculty Senate.

Provost Byrnes and President McPhee have met to discuss various proposals for "pay on promotion."

Provost Byrnes has been meeting with various University constituencies regarding the University mission statement. He said the current statement does not highlight the numerous MTSU strengths.

The University will begin SACS review in two years, and we may be asked to redefine our mission. An immediate question that needs to be dealt with is, should the statement be general or specific?

He will meet soon to seek input from department representatives regarding the mission statement.

President Salter met with MTSU President McPhee who noted admissions staff members are working as best they can, but there is still a need to improve our acceptance rates and enrollments.

Students who are accepted by the University do not necessarily continue on to enrollment.

President McPhee feels we need to do more personalized interaction by the faculty in regards to student contacts.

The College of Basic and Applied Sciences has a good post card program, and Aerospace has hired an outreach coordinator.

President Salter would like faculty to become more involved in Preview Day activities.

Senator Ben Stickler asked if the administration can provide a list of “best practices” regarding marketing, applications, admissions and enrollments. Do we know what works and how do we know?

Motion from Senator Stickler: The Faculty Senate requests the MTSU Administration provide documents with proven best practices for faculty to reach applicants that extends beyond current practices.

Discussion of motion.

Senator Jim Rost: Do we know what marketing is doing?

Senator Jeannie Harrington: What does the administration want us to do?

Senator Dianne Rust: Is there any coordination between University divisions?

What are the results? Contacts from current students seems to work best, There are currently three “touches” to prospects. What exactly will the faculty be expected to do? At this point there are no requirements for a fourth “touch” by faculty or writing cards to prospects.

College of Basic and Applied Science is mailing postcards to prospects and applicants, but is there any data on the results?

Are deans and chairs interested in “playing the game”?

Yield (enrollments as a function of applications) is looking better than last year.

Vice Provost for Academic Programs Amy Aldridge Sanford is asking, but not mandating, that faculty attend preview days and True Blue tours with a smile. We always have a smile.

Several Senators commented that e-mails and text message are not effective. Some Senators noted that peer contacts by current MTSU students were effective in convincing applicants to attend MTSU

Motion made to table motion asking for report from administration. Passed.

Vice President for Business and Finance Alan Thomas addressed the Senate, with particular emphasis on questions submitted by Senator Michelle Concesion

Everything at the University touches finance.

President McPhee submitted next year’s budget to the Board of Trustees in October, with approval at the November Board meeting.

THEC is asking for \$150-million extra from state for next year, of which about \$12-million would come to MTSU.

Governor's budget released late January/early February, and the state legislature acts around April/May
Once the money gets to THEC then the "formula" kicks in.

The University needs \$60-million for a new engineering technology building, but received only \$40-million from the state, leaving approximately \$20-million for the University to fund.
Some other capital projects could come in under budget.

The CARES Act has been extended to June 30, 2023.
The University has held back some CARES money to offset potential funding losses due to lower student enrollments.

There are currently no plans for budget cuts, but the University is developing contingency plans for various funding and enrollment numbers.

The budget is balanced through June 2023

There has been no discussion of fee increases, although we may need to increase fees in auxiliary areas, which cannot be funded out of the University general funds. SGA has been involved in discussions of auxiliary fee increases.

Enrollment does not have the impact it did years ago due to changes in the mythical and mystical funding formula. "Impact/progression" funding now counts for more. Enrollment is still a factor, but at smaller increments.

Advising, tutoring, etc. eventually factor in because they impact retention/graduation

Increased fees for on-line courses (\$30/credit hour) are still suspended, and there are currently no plans to bring them back.
The General Assembly wants to know why on-line costs more. Technology for on-line costs more than on-grounds courses.

Out of State / International fees are worth \$20-million per year. Scaling these fees back would negatively impact general funding.
We are in the middle compared to other schools.

The University can charge 30-40% "overhead" to grant funding, which counts as revenue. Part of the funding goes back to Sponsored Programs in order to generate more grants, and part goes to departments.

Increased scholarships do lead to higher enrollment.

There has been a 14-15% increase in new freshmen.

“Come for free” is a marketing tool, since this program kicks in only for the “last dollar” after all other scholarships, Pell grants, lottery money, etc. have been applied.

External grants to students counts as revenue.

Senator Kari Neely asked who are the 118 faculty members still below CUPA market?

Becky Cole has the information.

Last year all State agencies received a market increase. Higher education, however, is not a “state agency” for market increases

Senator Ben Stickle: We need a Faculty Senate member for the Grants and Sponsored Projects committee. Senator David Nelson volunteered Vice Provost for Academic Programs Amy Aldridge Sanford will head a committee to look at one-day-a-week programs aimed specifically at commuters
There may be some money to market this program.

The deadline for nominees for faculty member on the Board of Trustees is approaching. Requirements were distributed last week, and there needs to be at least two nominees, or else the Faculty Senate Steering Committee will appoint the board member.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Larry L. Burriss, Recording Secretary