

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE

The University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus)

Regular session – April 8, 2024 – 3:30 p.m.

Thurman J White Forum Building – Conference Room B

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Email: FacSen@ou.edu | Website <https://www.ou.edu/facultysenate>*Note: The remarks of the Senators and others are summarized and not verbatim*

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 pm by Chair Heyck. Senators were asked to read the [Land Acknowledgement](#) on the screen.

PRESENT: Abramson (1), Beaulieu (1), Bolino (0), Burns (0), Busselle (2), Cavazos (3), Cuccia (0), Demir (0), Fithian (0), Gibson (1), Hill (0), Hougen (0), Jones (1), Kang (1), Kibbey (0), Kraus Steffensen (1), Lamothe, M. (0), Lamothe, S. (0), Larson (1), Leseney (1), Lifset (0), Livingood (0), Litov, (0) Lu (0), McLeod (0), Muraleetharan (0), Neeson (0), , Patten (0), Rai (1), Saho (3), Scrivener (0), Sharma (0), Silva (0), Weaver (0), Zumpe (0)
 FS Chair: Hunter Heyck
 FS Chair-elect: Lori Jervis
 FS Secretary: Sarah Robbins
 FS Executive Committee Members (Non-senators): Darren Purcell
 FS Administrative Manager: Ann Seely
 FS Student Worker:

Guests: Sarah Ellis, Liz Karr, Kathy Agnew, Sean Burrage, Hollye Hunt

ABSENT: Benjamin (2), Cytacki (1), Davis (1), Deacon (2), Fuenzalida (3), Furtado (3), Grigo (1), Lungmus (1), Malestein (1), Nicholson (3), Nollert (2), Pepper (3), Tracy (1), Warnken (1), Young (1)

Note: During the period from June 2023 to May 2024, the Senate holds eight regular sessions. The figures in parentheses above indicate the number of absences.

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APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular meeting of March 11, 2024 was approved without revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Committee on Committees' Nominations for end-of-the-year vacancies on University and Campus Councils/Committees/Board and Faculty Senate Standing Committees was distributed with the meeting materials and will be voted on at the May Faculty Senate meeting.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, by Chair Heyck

The report was distributed via email. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. There were none. Chair Heyck told about a meeting with Provost Wright on Friday, April 5th, where they discussed the possibility of a policy for major reorganizations that was analogous to the program discontinuance policy.

ELECTION: OFFICERS FOR AY 2024-25

Candidate bios were distributed via email. Chair Heyck asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. Ballots were disseminated. Sarah Robbins was elected chair-elect; Stephanie Burge was elected secretary for Academic Year 2024-25.

BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

The revised policy was distributed via email. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. There were none. The senators voted on the policy; the policy was approved.

POST-TENURE REVIEW POLICY

A formatted and slightly revised policy was distributed via email. Vice Provost Sarah Ellis indicated that this change makes it align with other procedures; it allows the faculty member to make the request rather than Committee A. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. Sen. Muraleetharan indicated the exact wording was not in the memo and asked for clarification. VP Ellis indicated that they want the process for an extension to originate with the faculty member and then be submitted to the Dean. Chair Heyck read the revised language to the senate and displayed it on the screen. Sen. Muraleetharan asked that language be added to indicate that Committee A is to be informed. Sen. Bolino indicated that Committee A would have to be notified for the approval of the extension regardless. A discussion ensued. A friendly amendment to add "and Committee A must be notified of the request" to the new language. The senators voted on the policy; the policy was approved.

ENDOWED CHAIRS AND PROFESSORSHIPS POLICY REVIEW

The policy was distributed via email. VP Ellis indicated this was another policy that came out of the President's Advisory Committee. We are lacking in policy and procedures related to endowed chairs. The committee proposes that faculty receive a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to accompany their endowed chair. There is also a stipulation that endowed chairs be reviewed every 5 years; some colleges already do this but others do not. Each college may determine their own review process. The floor was opened to questions. Sen. Jones asked if this applied to existing chair designations or only new endowed chairs. VP Ellis indicated this was a legal question and cannot be answered across the board. Sen. Bolino indicated that some of the policy wording is confusing as to why the provost is initiating a review rather than the college. Chair Heyck asked senators to email specific comments to the Faculty Senate within the next two weeks and those will be shared with VP Ellis.

POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING POLICY

The policy was distributed via email. The Graduate College Associate Dean Liz Karr discussed the need to develop a postdoctoral training program to help mentor postdocs to the next step in their career development. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. Sen. Muraleetharan questioned who was involved in writing the policy and asked if it would be better to write these in the colleges with guidance from the provost's office. AD Karr indicated it was developed in conjunction with an advisory group from across the university. The graduate college has moved forward from their working with the deans and the National Postdoctoral Association. AD Karr has presented it to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and other stakeholder groups. Centralization of this task in the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs helps the office know who the postdocs are and that we are following applicable laws, etc. We currently have 127 postdocs on campus and there are less than 10 turning over during any given month. They are able to manage the

workload and have a quick turnaround. Chair Heyck asked the senators to talk to the faculty constituents and send any feedback to the Faculty Senate.

REMARKS BY KATHY AGNEW, DEPUTY CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Kathy Agnew provided information to Gallup for the engagement survey that has been disseminated; this makes it anonymous to OU. The data will be presented in the aggregate and provide numbers by type of respondent and college. There is a login page to ensure that people only participate once and that they are affiliated with OU. The floor was opened to questions. So far we have about a 30% participation rate across campus, but faculty are not participating at the same rate as staff. Faculty are encouraged to participate in the survey.

REMARKS BY SEAN BURRAGE, VICE PRESIDENT FOR EXECUTIVE AFFAIRS AND CHIEF OF STAFF AND HOLLYE HUNT VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Vice President Burrage and Vice President Holley Hunt joined the senate by Zoom to provide a legislative update. VP Hunt indicated there have been some wins this legislative session for some of the more contentious issues; there will be no additional DEI legislation this year. There is no additional abortion legislation. There is discussion about additional funds for higher education and for deferred maintenance for higher education, state parks, and state agencies. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. Chair Heyck asked if the appropriations bill would impact the merit raise program this year; VP Burrage indicated there were multiple factors that impact the raise program including at least a flat appropriation, the tuition program, student enrollment, etc. There was a question about deferred maintenance and if there would be work to make buildings ADA compliant; there is no specific designation to bring buildings into compliance.

Sen. Heyck asked senators to email their questions related to compliance with the executive order related to DEI to the Faculty Senate so that we can discuss them with VP Burrage and the General Counsel Paliotta. VP Burrage indicated he appreciated this approach and would provide answers. Sen. Zumpe asked how the Faculty Senate has handled issues like this in the past; the College of Education is asking if the Faculty Senate will be putting anything out about this order and compliance. How will this impact scholarship and teaching? Chair Heyck indicated that our approach this year has generally been to gather concerns and take them to the administration as serious areas of concern rather than making statements. Sen. Zumpe indicated that it might be helpful to let the faculty know the philosophy so they do not feel we are apathetic on the issue.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Heyck opened the floor for new business. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm. The final regularly scheduled Faculty Senate Meeting of this academic year will be held on May 13, 2024 at 3:30 pm.



Sarah Robbins, Faculty Senate Secretary, 2023-24