

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE

The University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus)

Regular session – May 13, 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 3:31 pm by Chair Heyck. Senators were asked to read the [Land Acknowledgement](#) on the screen.

PRESENT: Abramson (1), Bolino (0), Burns (0), Busselle (2), Cavazos (3), Cuccia (0), Cytacki (1), Deacon (2), Demir (0), Fithian (0), Gibson (1), Grigo (1), Hill (0), Hougen (0), Jones (1), Kang (1), Kibbey (0), Kraus Steffensen (1), Lamothe, M. (0), Lamothe, S. (0), Leseney (1), Lifset (0), Litov, (0) Lu (0), Lungmus (1), McLeod (0), Muraleetharan (0), Neeson (0), Nicholson (3), Nollert (2), Patten (0), Pepper (3), Saho (3), Scrivener (0), Sharma (0), Silva (0), Tracy (1), Warnken (1), Weaver (0), Young (1)

FS Chair: Hunter Heyck
 FS Chair-elect: Lori Jervis
 FS Secretary: Sarah Robbins
 FS Executive Committee Members (Non-senators):
 FS Administrative Manager: Ann Seely
 FS Student Worker: Taylor Fleming

Guests: Lee Camargo-Quinn, Liz Karr

ABSENT: Beaulieu (2), Benjamin (3), Davis (2), Fuenzalida (4), Larson (2), Livingood (1), Malestein (2), Rai (2), Zumpe (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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Announcements.....	2
Senate Chairs Report.....	2
Remarks by Lee Camargo-Quinn, Director Human Resources - Benefits.....	2
Election: Faculty Senate Executive Committee At-Large Members	2
Election: Slate of Committee Nominees for 2024-2025	2
Vote: Endowed Chairs & Professorships Policy.....	2
Vote: Postdoctoral Training Policy.....	3
Vote: Revisions to Faculty Senate Charter.....	3
Recognition of Outgoing Senators.....	3
Assumption of Office by 2024-2025 Senate Chair Lori Jervis.....	3

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular meeting of April 8, 2024 was approved without revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Faculty Senate is sad to report the death of Bob Swisher from the School of Library & Information Studies who passed away on March 30, 2024, and the death of Beverly Alspaugh Joyce from University Libraries on April 29, 2024.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, by Chair Heyck

The report was distributed via email. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions. On behalf of the Honors College faculty, Sen. Tracy thanked the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for their advocacy related to changes in the Honors College.

REMARKS BY LEE CAMARGO-QUINN, DIRECTOR HUMAN RESOURCES - BENEFITS

Director Camargo-Quinn discussed the dependent audit; they are using Unify HR to host the audit. Those who have not yet verified dependents will get further communication via physical mail and email. These are due May 31st. They are working with people who are overseas. International documents are accepted and do not need to be translated.

There will be changes to our benefits for calendar year 2024 and for calendar year 2025. The HR Benefits office regularly tracks the university's expenditures on health insurance claims. Effective July 1, our plan will no longer cover GLP-1 drugs (Wegovy, Saxenda, and Zepbound); those using those medications have been notified and provided other medication options to address weight loss. The costs are prohibitive and continuing to cover these medications on our OU plan would require an across the board increase to our insurance premiums, in addition to what was already planned. Sen. Busselle mentioned that the U.S. Senate is investigating the cost of these drugs; if the drug costs reduce, we would reconsider offering coverage of the pills. Sen. Burns indicated that cost is a consideration but the entire discussion should not be framed in that manner. Sen. Litov asked if it would be removed from the OUHSC plan; Director Camargo-Quinn indicated it would be off all of OU plans. Sen. Bolino encouraged the university to look for ways to continue to cover these medications because weight can cause other medical complications.

For 2025, we are looking at different plan design options as another way to help to control costs. There might be tiered networks. Tier 1: Custom Network includes Norman Regional and OU Health - this would have lower copays. Tier 2: Similar network to what we have with Cigna - higher copays, hope to add a steerage mechanism that could provide a list of doctors with the best outcomes/ratings and the copay would then be reimbursed. Tier 3: Out of network - you will pay more to see healthcare providers that are not in the network. Sen. Busselle clarified that patient privacy is still a factor in these decisions; it is. Another senator asked about a percentage increase to a provider that is out of network; it is unknown at this time. There was a question about setting tiers and the controversy around a tiered structure.

ELECTION: FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Candidate bios were distributed via email. Chair Heyck asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. Ballots were disseminated. For the STEM At-Large: Chris Weaver, for the Professional At-Large: Ana Bolino.

ELECTION: SLATE OF COMMITTEE NOMINEES FOR 2024-2025

The slate of committee nominees was distributed via email. Chair Heyck conducted a vote. The slate was unanimously approved. Sen. Bolino mentioned that she had the honor to serve on the Academic Programs Council; Mark Morvant mentioned that he might bring an idea to the Faculty Senate to have college representation.

VOTE: ENDOWED CHAIRS AND PROFESSORSHIPS POLICY REVIEW

The policy was distributed via email. Chair Heyck mentioned that edits were made to address concerns raised via email. Chair Heyck opened the floor to discussion. 34 voted in favor; 2 abstained, no voted against. The policy was approved.

VOTE: POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING POLICY

The policy was distributed via email. Chair Heyck indicated that we have received no comments about the policy. Chair Heyck opened the floor to questions; there were none. 35 voted in favor, no one voted against, 1 abstained. The policy was approved.

VOTE: REVISIONS TO FACULTY SENATE CHARTER

Proposed revisions were distributed via email. Chair Heyck indicated that there has been a lot of discussion about the proposed revisions. The Faculty Senate is not legally required to change the name of our DEI committee since it works broadly to advance faculty issues; it is up to us if we want to change the name but it could draw unwanted attention to the senate. The issues addressed by the committee have always been related to recruitment, advancement, and retention, so that is the name being proposed.

Chair Heyck opened the floor for discussion. Sen. Busselle indicated that it is difficult to recruit a diverse pool of applicants and questioned if we need to make such a change if no one is asking us to change it. Sen. Muraleetharan inquired about how members of the current DEI Committee felt about the change; they have been inactive and did not share opinions though they were asked. Some individuals would like the faculty senate to push back on the executive order but were unsure how to do that effectively. Others express that the name of the committee does not matter; it is the work itself that matters. Chair-elect Jervis indicated that we have not got anyone to commit to being chair of DEI once the current chair went on sabbatical. Change to the name may make members feel safer serving. Sen. Cytacki asked if the vote did not pass, what would happen; the language in the handbook would remain the same. Sen Warnken indicated that our land acknowledgement recognizes us as diverse and inclusive. Sen. Hougen indicated that this is a difficult situation and the guiding light should be about who the most vulnerable people are and how they would be impacted by what we do; this is a matter of the least worst option. Another senator indicated that the proposed name does not reflect the work to be done by the committee. Several senators expressed disappointment in the institution as a whole that we are not putting up a fight to this order; there has not been serious faculty resistance to the issue. Sen. Abramson asked why we were no longer using the parallel language used by the university - Access & Opportunity; Chair Heyck indicated that language was more student-focused and did not match the work of the faculty senate committee. Sen. Kibbey expressed that if we do not change it and it attracts attention, it could be hard to change it to this later. Sen. Busselle asked if faculty could be released from their service if they were still uncomfortable doing this work.

Chair-elect Jervis indicated we are also voting on the ability to vote electronically during meetings.

The vote related to changes to the DEI Committee: 14 voted in favor, 16 voted against, 7 abstained.

The vote to allow electronic voting in meetings: approved unanimously.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING SENATORS

Chair Heyck introduced and thanked the outgoing senators for their contributions. They will receive certificates of appreciation for their service. The following outgoing senators were recognized for completing full three-year terms (2021-24): Scott Lamothe, Rebecca Larson, Patrick Livingood, Bala Soho, Thomas Neeson, Andrew Cuccia, Tohren Kibbey, Kun Lu, Jason Cytacki, Leslie Kraus Steffenson, Amy Pepper, Jacqueline Lungmus, Paul Young, Elizabeth Zumpe,. Certificates will also be sent to the outgoing members of the Senate Executive Committee.

Chair Heyck thanked everyone in the Senate for their hard work this year. He passed the gavel congratulating incoming Chair Lori Jervis on her transition to Chair of the Faculty Senate for 2024-25.

ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE BY 2024-2025 SENATE CHAIR LORI JERVIS

Chair Jervis introduced a resolution of appreciation for outgoing Senate Chair Hunter Heyck.

WHEREAS Professor Hunter Heyck, like Chairs before him, has worked tirelessly and effectively to ensure that the fundamental principles and ideals of shared governance were upheld;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck worked behind the scenes with staff, administration, faculty, and Faculty Senate on numerous issues including (but not limited to) improving communications and scheduling related to building construction and remodeling work; changes to course scheduling; the Gateway to Belonging courses; compliance with state dictates on diversity, equity, and inclusion; the campus biweekly pay transition; exit interviews; the Task Force assessing the Honors College; and the restructuring of humanities programs;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck skillfully and patiently worked with staff, administration, faculty, and Faculty Senate to craft, refine, and usher to approval numerous policies including (but not limited to) Title IX and Institutional Equity; Background Checks; Provost's Minimum GA stipend; participation of non-regular faculty in shared governance; Post Tenure Review, Postdoctoral Training; Endowed Chairs and Professorships; Faculty Appeals Board; and Abrogation of Tenure, Termination of Employment, and Severe Sanctions;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck initiated and facilitated two successful town halls, one on changes to federal student aid policy that potentially impacts departmental minors and certificate programs and the other on IT;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck took decisive action to ensure that proper procedures were followed with regard to program discontinuance of Landscape Architecture;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck participated in several deans searches;

WHEREAS Professor Heyck never hesitated to share his insightful opinions with his fellow officers, the FS executive committee, senators, administrators, and basically anyone else who would listen,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate expresses its deepest appreciation to Professor Hunter Heyck for his exemplary service, leadership, and commitment for the academic year 2023-24.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Heyck opened the floor for new business. Sen. McLeod indicated that Social Work asked that the senate talk about how faculty have been required to participate in the staff evaluation system. Faculty were required to observe the performance of the staff that report to them and then report something different on official paperwork. The staff evaluation process differs from the faculty evaluation process - only 10% can be exceptional, only 25% can be highly effective; some supervisors were required to change scores of their staff despite performance. Sen. Jones indicated there is a simple solution - make it like that faculty system. Sen. Muraleetharan indicated the changes to the evaluation system have been very top down. Chair Heyck indicated that FSEC had many discussions with the Provost about the plan. A couple of senators questioned the process for how we implement changes and asked for more time to discuss and asked for more information and discussions about the exact evaluation procedures. Sen. Demir discussed issues with OU IT policies with new computers; you must give them access to all of your files and permission to delete without notification.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm. The final regularly scheduled Faculty Senate Meeting of this academic year will be held on September 16, 2024 at 3:30 pm.



Sarah Robbins, Faculty Senate Secretary, 2023-24

