

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting
May 1, 2024 –3:00 - 4:00 p.m.
MCOB Rm 101
MINUTES

Attending: Bret Webb (presiding), Vicki Tate, Donna Streeter, Seema Singh, David Turnipseed, Clay Davidson, Andrei Pavelescu, Marie Migaud, Laura Vrana, Sean Walker, Sinéad Ní Chadhain, and Yvette Getch

Excused: Christina Wassenaar

OLD BUSINESS

- **Vice President for Research & Economic Development**
The search committee has interviewed all finalists (around 9 candidates), and the next step is to decide who (and how many) will be invited to campus. Many of the candidates have backgrounds on the medical/clinical side of academics. Some of the candidates have backgrounds in R1 institutions, while others are from R2 universities, and even a few that have experience transiting from R2 to R1.
- **Mike Chambers new role**
At this point there is nothing specific determined on what the position responsibilities will be and who will report to whom.
- **Feasibility Study for Fundraising Campaign**
No update to report. The university is setting a major capital fundraising campaign for around \$500 million for buildings, research, programs, etc.
- **AAUP – exploration of local chapter**
Not sure of the status of the local chapter since nothing is given on the national's web site about which universities have local chapters. David Turnipseed said he is the VP for the local chapter and Elizabeth Vanderwaa is the president. AAUP has dues (around \$200), but the local chapter (currently at around 9 people) does not charge dues. Also, Auburn U has a local chapter, but UA does not. First, we need to decide what we, here at USA, want to see from AAUP before we try to do a membership drive. Bret made the suggestion that we have a couple of local members be guests at the August plenary session.
- **Changes in the charges for Senate standing committees**

All ExComm members should review the proposed suggestions for changes in the charges of the standing committees. The current bylaws (2023) need some corrections in text, while the changes in charges should be voted on in the August plenary session.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Proposed focus on faculty salary – what does this mean in reality**

This is an ongoing issue for faculty members. Some progress has been made but request for definite considerations from university administration received the response of “No”.

Sinéad suggested that we should support that Instructor-level appointments receive some attention for consideration of salary alignment since they were left out of the general discussion for raises and equity.

- **Workload study**

There is no universal rule for workload assignment that would work for the entire university, but it should be done at the college level since the colleges are so different.

- **In-person requirement for Senate Plenary meeting**

Vicki requested that the plenary meetings should be required in-person attendance and that the Zoom option should only be given to those who would be away from the university during those meeting times. Also, when doing a zoom attendance, the person should be visual rather than attending as a blackout. Consensus of the group was in support of these requirements.

- **Seema Singh resignation – replacement plan**

Seema and her husband have both accepted employment at the Mississippi Medical Center, so her position as Chair of Academic Development and Mentoring will need to be filled. An email prior to the May plenary session requesting nominations will be send out to membership, will election to be done at the May meeting.

- **Agenda and plan for May 8 PC meeting**

The issues to be brought to the President’s Council meeting next week will be:

- Update on the search for VP for Research & Economic Development; what are the planned changes in the responsibilities of the position for the new hire; and where would that person be in the chain of command, with respect to the new position of Chief Economic Development Officer (Mike Chambers)

- Where is the university in looking at the salaries for instructor-level faculty since they were left out of previous surveys on salary raises [inversion, compression, and equity].
- Update on the tentative enrollment for this fall semester

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Awards**

Chang Humanitarian Award: Sylvia Diaz

Research Partner Award: Breast Cancer Research Foundation

Education Community Partner Award: Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment

Outstanding Teaching Partner Award: Franklin Primary Health Center

- **Request to move Plenary Session from MCOB 265 back to the Faculty Center**

The reason the meeting was originally moved from the Faculty Center was because the university started charging a service fee (due to COVID) to meet at the facility. If Faculty Center is not a possibility, is there another possibility where the acoustics and layout would be better suited for our meetings than MCOB 265.

- **External Fellowships being denied**

There is an issue in A&S where faculty have applied for external fellowship, have gone through the whole process and received the award, but “Academic Affairs” has denied the request for leave. Sinéad was interested in finding if other colleges have also had this problem or is it unique to A&S.

Minutes compiled by Vicki Tate, Faculty Senate Secretary