

## Clayton State University Faculty Senate

6 February 2023

### **ATTENDEES**

Senate members: Shakil Akhtar, Augustine Ayuk, Eric Bridges (Chair), Kate Cotter-Reilly, Deborah Gritzmacher, Anthony Hannah, Adam Kubik, Samuel Maddox, Larry Menter, Dennis Miller, Rebecca Morgan, Erin Nagel, Ken Nguyen, David Plaxco, Stacey Reynolds, Ann Showalter, Kendolyn Smith, Sharon White

Guests: Arianne Adams, Latonia Alexander, Dennis Attick, Shuju Bai, Dmitriy Beznosko, Stephen Burnett, Christie Burton, Matthew Carter, Jacob Chacko, Hae Ryong Chung, Shannon Cochran, Elicia Collins, Dwayne Daniels, Deborah Deckner-Davis, Everod Davis, Romesa Davis, Kitty Deering, Kevin Demmitt, Erica Dotson, Aubrey Dyer, Clint Edmunds, Billy Evans, Donielle Fagan, Antoinette France-Harris, Michelle Furlong, Sonya Gaither, Nichelle Gause, Brian Goldman, Pinar Gurkas, Linda Hain, Nayab Hakim, Alexander Hall, Feechi Hall, Sara Harwood, Asia Hauter, Iryna Hayduk, Craig Hill, Angela Hollis, Dwayne Hooks, Jeff Jacobs, Joe Johnson, Kimberly Johnson, Chizara Jones, Ebrahim Khosravi, Sanjay Lal, Mary Lamb, Carin Lightner-Laws, Catherine Matos, Thomas McIlwain, Paul Melvin, Antoinette Miller, Keith Miller, Jada Mitchell, Nasser Momayezi, Michelle Nelson, Eugene Ngezem, Mario Norman, Melanie Poudevigne, Leon PrietoMichael Sitvarin, Patricia Smith, Sheryne Southard, Meri Stegall, Scott Stegall, Ceimone Strickland, Terri Summers, Naquilla Thomas, Vinod Vincent, Celeste Walley-Jean, Mark Watson, Carol White, David Williams

### **ORDER**

The Senate chair, Dr. Eric Bridges, called the meeting to order at 11:01am.

### **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

President Georj Lewis provided a brief introduction to himself before listing announcements from the leadership team related to capital improvement plans and Information Technology reorganization and new procurement rules.

President Lewis described significant concerns voiced by leadership of the Student Government Association (SGA), Faculty Senate, and Staff Council related to transparency and shared governance at the university. He acknowledged the difficult decisions with budget and staffing the university is facing, and he stated that he will always consider feedback from the campus when having to make those decisions. He described having a transparent philosophy of communication, when decisions do not require confidentiality.

President Lewis describes his plans to improve transparency and communication on campus. He will work with the Chief Budget Officer and the leadership team to make budget meetings

more open to campus, collaborate with SGA on a series of feedback sessions with students, schedule open office hours to meet with students, visit departmental meetings (he asks departments to invite him to their meeting), and meet regularly with Staff Council and Faculty Senate leadership.

Finally, President Lewis identified several priorities for moving forward: enrollment and student success, financial stability and growth, SACSCOC accreditation reaffirmation in 2024, strategic planning, filling critical vacancies on campus, and improving campus morale and culture.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

1. University Curriculum Committee. Chair Dr. Dmitriy Beznosko described the charge of the committee and mentioned the new system for making curriculum changes that replaces the old Banner Action Form system. Next meetings: Fri, Feb 10 @12pm and Fri, Mar 17 @ 12pm.
2. Faculty Affairs Committee. Chair Dr. Michael Sitvarin described the main focus of the committee to redo the outdated SEI. The committee has worked with IT to create a more secure and flexible system, and is working on revising questions to make them more valuable as feedback. The plan is to do a trial run during summer courses, with the goal of the new SEI being fully implemented in fall 2023. The FAC has also been looking into a faculty pay equity study, but haven't been able to get much information from HR. In response to questions, Provost Lane thought it had been over 5 years since the last salary study. Next meeting: Mon, Feb 13 @ 10am.
3. Academic Policy Committee. Chair Dr. Antoinette France-Harris summarized the committee's previous work examining the student complaint procedure. The committee has been reviewing standards for online courses to better support student engagement and success. The APC has asked for feedback from Senators and will be responding to suggestions for creating an assessment tool to help students understand the expectations and requirements of online courses. The APC is now looking into process of administering that assessment tool to students. Next meeting: Wed, Feb 15 @ 2pm.
4. Student Affairs Committee. Co-chair Dr. Deborah Deckner-Davis described the committee's work on developing student handbook policy on children in the classroom, and developing strategies for faculty to ensure students are not penalized for their parenting status. Additionally, the committee has been developing disruptive online behavior policy in the student handbook that specifically addresses issues that can arise in online courses.

Co-chair Dr. Sam Maddox described the committee's focus group efforts to understand student concerns about enrollment and barriers to success. The committee plans to

administer its student survey to a selected representative sample with the goal of providing recommendations to university administrators in March. Tentative results of focus groups identified the following areas of concern and suggestions: limited access to information and communication, creation of a student advisory board, not feeling supported by faculty/staff, and convenience as the main reason to come to CSU. President Lewis mentioned possible funding from the state legislature to help support some of the issues mentioned.

5. Committee for Advancing Retention in Education. Co-chair Dean Celeste Walley-Jean described the goals of committee as identifying strategies and activities to help with retention. The committee has shared its recommendations on its Faculty Senate Teams channel. After surveying students who registered for spring classes after the fee payment deadline, the committee identified financial challenges as the main barrier for students; oftentimes this included not understanding the financial aid system. Someone in the student success office is planning a communication campaign about how to register for classes to help fill some of the gaps.

The committee discussed developing a student advocacy team (like a help desk) to help students navigate policies and procedures at the university. Next meeting: Wed, Mar 1 @11am in UC-260.

## **CLAYTON STATE AAUP CHAPTER UPDATE**

Dr. Carol White described being approached by a faculty member regarding the non-renewal of his contract and concerns about the lack of transparency in that decision. The AAUP chapter appealed to Faculty Senate to investigate that procedure. Additionally, the Georgia Conference of the AAUP has been working with the USG office to get off of the AAUP censure list. Dr. White described that there was some optimism that there may be positive changes coming.

## **PROVOST'S REPORT**

Interim Provost Dr. Jill Lane provided an update on enrollment (total head count = 5,328, 6% under budgeted goal of 5,650) and the searches for the two assistant vice president positions. Offers have been made to the finalists for both positions. Finally, Dr. Lane clarified that as soon as Faculty Senate votes on the Faculty Handbook revisions proposed by the SAFE Committee, she will initiate electronic voting by the entire faculty on the changes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Plans for reviewing and approving Faculty Handbook changes proposed by the SAFE Committee. SAFE Committee co-chair Dr. Ann Showalter stated that the Senate would discuss one the three sections of the Handbook changes in each of the next three

Senate meetings. The first section to be discussed will be the section on Annual Evaluations. SAFE Committee co-chair Dr. Mark Watson added that many of the details of the policies changes are set by the academic units, and he encouraged academic units to make sure they had clear guidelines on their policies. This last point was further emphasized by Interim Provost Lane, who also encouraged academic units to begin the process of revising their policies to align with those proposed by the SAFE Committee.

Senator Dr. Sam Maddox voiced a concern about streamlining the annual evaluation portfolio when a faculty member also has to do a post-tenure review portfolio. The current Handbook policies already allow for a “slim” portfolio that does not require the extensive evidence that was already documented in previous annual evaluations.

2. Update on non-tenure renewal case. Senate Chair Dr. Eric Bridges said that only one faculty provided feedback on the charge to the non-tenure review ad-hoc committee, and he planned to send out the updated charge and goal of the ad-hoc committee. Dr. Bridges stated that the Senate would hold an electronic vote in the next few weeks without the participation of Senator Dr. Ann Showalter.
3. Update on Academic Affairs’ ad-hoc committee on evaluations of administrative faculty. Dr. Ann Showalter provided an update on her survey of faculty preferences regarding the frequency of evaluations of administrative faculty and her meeting with the ad-hoc committee developing these policies. The vast majority of non-administrative faculty preferred annual evaluations of administrative faculty. Respondents’ justifications for their preferences included supporting excellence at the university, equity, accountability, and being able to provide feedback without risk of retaliation. The majority of administrative faculty preferred evaluations by faculty every two years and mentioned concerns about needing multiple years to implement ongoing projects and produce results.

Dr. Showalter reported that the ad-hoc committee is going to review their policies to make it more explicit that evaluations by faculty of faculty administrators will be conducted every-other year. The goal is to have these revised policies drafted by the end of spring break. Ad-hoc committee chair Dr. Michelle Furlong acknowledged that the phrasing of the wording could have been clearer and explained many of the factors that committee considered in developing their policy language. She mentioned the short time-frame to develop the policies and wanted to emphasize that it was not the committee’s intent to leave out faculty input on the process.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:12pm.

Minutes recorded by Ann Showalter, Secretary of the Faculty Senate.