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Dalton State Faculty Senate: Minutes of January 16, 2020, Meeting

Members Present:

Matt Hipps (Senate President), Karen Bennett, Samantha Blair, Donna Blesdoe, Alicia Briganti, Amy Burger, Susan Burran, Cindy Davis, Cecile DeRocher, Nick Gewecke, Tom Gonzalez, Cheryl Grayson, Christian Griggs, John Gulledge, Bob Haverland, Mike Hilgemann, Cathy Hunsicker, Jean Johnson, Victor Marshall, Travis McKie-Voerste, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, Amy Mendes, Hussein Mohamed, Lydia Postell, Tammy Rice, Deb Richardson, Sharlone, Smith, Jeff Stanley, Tami Tomasello, Megan Vallowe, Kevin Yan, Margaret Venable (*ex officio*), Adrian Epps (*ex officio*), Jon Jaudon (guest), William Mast (guest), Logan Huggins (guest), Brooklyn Herrera (guest), Katrina Autry (guest), Elizabeth Hutchins (guest), Andrea Roberson (guest), Tammy Byron (guest), Lee Ann Williams (guest)

I. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

The meeting of the Senate was moved to Goodroe Auditorium due to a classroom conflict. Senate president Matt Hipps called the meeting to order at 3:25 pm and established that a quorum was present. He asked for approval of the minutes of the November 14, 2019 meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded. The motion to approved the minutes was passed by voice vote.

II. Committee Reports

a. Academic Conduct. Travis McKie-Voerste reported that the committee has adopted new language for the Academic Conduct process that is currently undergoing evaluation by the VPAA office. A draft of the new language was submitted to the Senate. Discussion and approval will be later in the semester. At that time, the committee will ask for feedback. The committee feels that faculty are underreporting incidents that occur in their classrooms. The committee wishes for faculty to make greater use of the reporting process. It is not intended to limit the instructors' options for handling any violations in their classes, but without a report, it is impossible to know if students have multiple violations.

b. Advising, Academic Excellence, International Education, and Student Transitions. No report for this meeting.

c. Assessment. The committee is working on a manual for assessment so that assessment is consistent across campus. Also, there needs to be more consistency in action plans. The committee is getting feedback from the deans and hopes to present their plans to the Senate by the end of the semester.

d. Faculty Development. The committee reminded everyone that the date for the Bold Talks conference is Friday, March 20, 2020. They are inviting proposals for the conference.

e. Faculty Resource. Amy Burger reported that the committee is working on the Instructional Technology certificate once again. They are also considering the results of two surveys sent out last semester.

f. Faculty Welfare. No report for this meeting.

g. Tenure and Promotion. This committee met on Jan 16, 2020 to consider the complete portfolios they received. Their recommendations will be sent to the VPAA.

h. Committee on Committees. No report for this meeting.

i. Faculty Evaluation. Matt Hipps reported on the feedback the committee has received regarding the evaluation process. One of the most serious complaints has to do with the difficulty faculty experience in getting excellent (a 4) for evaluation. There are many ways to do excellent level work that do not fit into the current evaluation structure. The committee believes that the evaluation process should be weighted toward teaching, but teaching is a

difficult thing to assess. Faculty goals are not necessarily related directly to teaching. The committee has to answer the difficult question of what effective teaching looks like, as it is different for every instructor.

There are also questions about the process. The length of narratives varies considerably. Dr. Epps has suggested a page limit on narratives to streamline the process. Also, there is the question of establishing multi-year goals. Some projects do not fit into a one-year plan.

Ultimately, coming up with an equitable system that makes everyone feel satisfied is hard! Many people are frustrated by the current system. The committee wants to strike the right balance between subjective and objective systems. Also, the need for consistency across campus continues to be a priority.

Susan Burran asked about whether the committee has looked at evaluation systems at other campuses. Matt Hipps replied they had. Across the USG system, evaluation methods are widely variable, going from extremely subjective to strictly quantified. Matt reported that there is also the possibility of training chairs to help establish more consistency of evaluation on campus.

III. Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Matt Hipps invited Dr. Susan Burran to speak about the new DSC strategic plan. Dr. Burran explained that the USG has completed its new strategic plan and Dalton State has followed with a new plan as well. She presented the draft versions of the new mission, vision, and value statements. All the Dalton State statements are modeled after the USG statements. The Dalton State goals are also reflective of the USG goals. However, the committee is asking for feedback on the statements, especially in terms of how we can accomplish these goals and if anything is missing from them. A survey is going to be emailed to everyone so that they can give input. The committee will be presenting these statements and goals to the Staff Council and SGA at separate meetings. An open forum for Dalton community members and any others who want to contribute ideas on the strategic plan will be held on Jan 28 at 5:30 pm. The survey closes on February 7, 2020. The committee will then incorporate the suggestions they receive.

Discussion followed as to whether there was a need for a separate meeting for the full faculty to contribute their ideas. Most Senators agreed that the open forum meeting is sufficient opportunity for faculty to voice their concerns.

IV: Old Business

At the November 14, 2019 meeting of the Senate, faculty raised questions about disability accommodations. A motion was carried to invite Andrea Roberson from Student Support Services to address the Senate and answer questions. Matt Hipps invited Andrea to this meeting. Faculty asked Andrea about when during the semester a student may request accommodations. Andrea replied that a student can request accommodations at any time in the semester. A student must go through a set procedure to gain accommodations. They have the right to use any or all of the accommodations they have been certified to receive. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with their instructors about what accommodations the student plans to use. They can opt to not use an accommodation at the beginning of the semester and then decide they will use it later in the semester. Andrea stresses to students that they need to be proactive with their instructors and inform them in a timely manner. Accommodations do not have to be retroactive.

V. New Business

a. Potential Proclamations. Matt Hipps suggested that when a VPAA/Provost is leaving, it is appropriate to thank them for their service. He would like to draft a proclamation thanking Dr. Chute and Dr. Epps for their work at Dalton State. The issue was tabled for the present.

b. President Annual Evaluation. Matt Hipps asked for up to 12 volunteers to meet with the Chancellor during the campus visit for Dr. Venable's annual evaluation. The meeting will occur on February 18, 2020. Matt asked that there be at least one representative from each school. Interested individuals can contact Matt.

c. Parking. Matt Hipps asked that everyone who is habitually having trouble finding a parking place to contact him. He will collect complaints and direct them to the appropriate people.

d. Matt Hipps made a short statement about his term as president. He admitted that he is a confrontational person and because of this, he may have been seen as aggressive or dismissive of other people's opinions. He apologized for any misunderstandings or any times when he has not listened with impartiality. His goal has always been to protect the faculty and acknowledges that he has not always done this in a suitable way. He promised to be more open to others' opinions and recommendations.

VI. Adjournment

The next Senate meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2020. The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M Johnson, Senate Secretary