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Dalton State Faculty Senate: Minutes of October 8, 2020, Meeting

Members Present:

Christian Griggs (Senate President), Karren Bennett, Samantha Blair, Alicia Briganti, Amy Burger, Omin Chandler, Cindy Davis, Cecile de Rocher, Carl Gabrini, Nick Gewecke, Tom Gonzalez, John Gulledge, Mike Hilgemann, Mike Joseph, Clint Kinkead, Victor Marshall, Nancy Mason, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, Travis McKie-Voerste, Jennifer Parker, Jennifer Randall, Tammy Rice, Pat Ryle, Kristen Weiss Sanders, Lorena Sins, Sharlonne Smith, Jeff Stanley, Megan Vallowe, Kevin Yan, Margaret Venable (*ex officio*), Bruno Hicks (*ex officio*), Jodi Johnson (guest), Katrina Autry (guest), Mary Nielsen (guest), Lori McCarty (guest), Marilyn Helms (guest), Tammy Byron (guest), Stacie Kilgore (guest), Jenny Crisp (guest), Mike D'itri (guest), Jenny Guy (guest), Vallarie Pratt (guest), Melissa Whitesell (guest), Gina Kertulis-Tartar (guest), James Wright (guest), Marina Smitherman (guest), Shanon Windom (guest), Haley Gomez (guest), Meagan Standridge (guest)

I. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

The meeting of the Senate was convened remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Senate President Christian Griggs called the meeting to order at 3:15pm and established that a quorum was present. He asked for approval of the minutes of the September 10, 2020 meeting. Jeff Stanley made a motion to approve the minutes, and Nancy Mason seconded the motion; it was passed by electronic poll.

II. Reports from Officers

- a. General information and updates. Christian Griggs, Faculty Senate President, welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded us of the online meeting protocols. He encouraged everyone to get involved in the process and prompted anyone who did not have access to the chat to use the hand-raise feature when wanting to speak. Christian then reviewed each of Dr. Hicks's responses to the motions passed in the September meeting. Finally, he mentioned that he reached out to HR about salary increases related to the Carl Vinson study, and he was told that Dalton State is still committed to moving individuals to the appropriate salary range upon promotion.

III: Reports from Committees

- a. Academic Conduct. No report for this meeting.
- b. Assessment Committee. Megan Vallowe reported that the committee met on October 8 and the committee elected Megan to serve as chair. They set goals for the year and discussed SACS accreditation coming up in two years. DSC already started working on drafting some reports, and this committee will start working with Henry Codjoe and Jenny Crisp on those reports as related to assessment. Another goal is to make sure that individual schools are aware of the new assessment manual that was passed at the end of last year and what steps each school started to take to implement the manual. They will meet again next month.
- c. Faculty Development Committee. No report for this meeting.
- d. Faculty Evaluation Committee. No report for this meeting. Christian mentioned that Sarah Mergel was elected chair and that he will be in touch with her to discuss goals.
- e. Faculty Resource Committee. This committee met two weeks ago and Jennifer Randall was elected chair. Jennifer reported that Melissa Whitesell briefed the members on past work the committee has done. They are working on a survey assessing library resources and will be meeting again to discuss changes to the survey before sending it out.
- f. Faculty Welfare Committee. This committee met on October 5 and elected Amy Burger as chair. The committee is prioritizing making changes to the Faculty Handbook and

reconciling its content with the Policies and Procedures Handbook. The next meeting is planned for October 23.

- g. Strategic Planning Monitoring Committee. This committee met on September 29 and elected Victor Marshall as chair and Samantha Blair as secretary. Vic reported that the members discussed current and future plans of the committee. Henry Codjoe completed a draft of the Strategic Plan progress report this summer, and it is currently under review by the committee.
- h. Student Success Committee. This committee's first meeting was on October 1, and Carl Gabrini was elected chair. Members discussed the charge of the committee, concluding that their role is to provide advice and counsel to each area of student success and to keep lines of communication open. They also discussed ways in which they could provide access to information, such as digitizing information and putting it online for easy access.
- i. Tenure and Promotion Committee. John Gulledge reported that the committee communicated via email and a few members were selected to complete a Status Check on the contents of the ePortfolios submitted for tenure and promotion this year. The committee will meet via Teams in early November to discuss the upcoming review process.

IV. New Business

a. Class size policy. Christian opened up discussion by stating that a concern was raised regarding not having a class size policy limiting the number of students who can be enrolled in a class. He would like the Senate to explore what such a policy would look like. There was a concern as the fall semester started that some class sizes were being expanded without faculty input. In addition, this raises concerns about equity (e.g., some classes are already capped at 20-something students because they are composition classes, but other classes with a heavy writing component, but not officially classified as writing-intensive, typically have 40 students).

Travis made a motion to create an ad hoc committee to create a policy regarding the maximum number of students in classes; Jeff Stanley seconded the motion. John Gulledge

asked whether we were talking about face-to-face classes, online classes, or all classes?

Christian suggested making the policy as broad as possible. The motion was approved via online poll. Christian then asked for volunteers to serve on the ad hoc committee, and the following senators volunteered: Nancy Mason, Karren Bennett, Carl Gabrini, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, and Jeff Stanley.

b. Academic Policy Manual Updates. One of the Momentum tasks this year set by the USG is for colleges to review their policies and procedures to identify ones that may pose as a barrier to students achieving their degrees. Committees were formed with the intention of completing these reviews by the end of the fall semester. Along those same lines, Dr. Nielsen and Dr. Hicks began to review the Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures Manual to see whether they reflected the current policies and procedures of the USG, as well as looked at links to make sure they are still active. Periodically after reviewing individual policies, Dr. Nielsen will send them to Dr. Hicks, and Dr. Hicks will send the policies, a few at a time, to the Senate for review and further suggestions. Once approved, they will then upload the updated policies to the manual's online repository on the college website. They are also working with the Faculty Welfare committee on any policies that overlap with the Faculty Handbook to maintain consistency. John Gullledge made a motion to approve the first set of policy updates, and it was seconded by Mike Joseph. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved via online poll. Christian would like to vote on these updates via email in the future because there will be several. John Gullledge made this motion, Megan Vallowe seconded it, and it was approved via online poll.

c. Calendar for Spring 2021. Jodi Johnson reviewed proposed changes to the Spring 2021 calendar. These changes included having the same start date of Wednesday, January 6 and continuing to observe the Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday on Monday, January 18. In lieu of spring break, faculty would take Tuesday, March 9, and Wednesday, April 7, as holidays. The thought process was that this would allow for some relief in the spring semester, but the breaks would be short enough to discourage travel. Finally, the semester would end two days early on Tuesday, May 4.

Mike Joseph expressed concern with having days off in the middle of the week, especially for classes that must be split for social distancing. This would create problems for those class schedules because it introduces inconsistencies.

Jeff Stanley brought up the fact that the original idea behind eliminating spring break was to achieve compression of the semester, and this schedule does not achieve this. In addition, starting on January 6 is within two weeks of Christmas and New Year's, putting the semester at risk with an early start date right after holidays. He shared Georgia Gwinnett's calendar which has a start date of 1/19 and an end date around the same time as the proposed end date (5/3); this counter schedule would achieve the goal of a 15-week semester while starting two weeks later than the proposed schedule.

Jodi mentioned that they discussed starting after the MLK holiday, but a couple of issues were raised: (1) students would have already been out of class since Thanksgiving so that is an incredibly long break possibly affecting retention, and (2) it would still be within flu and cold season no matter when we start in January, so she doesn't think starting later would eliminate the possibility of the spread of illness due to the holiday break.

Cindy Davis stated that she doesn't think random days off will be beneficial and Tammy Byron raised the concern that if students have a random Tuesday off, she doesn't see them coming on that Monday, and if they have a random Wednesday off, she doesn't see them coming on that Thursday, so students may travel anyway.

Mike Joseph agreed that random days aren't going to help; he suggested maybe starting the week before MLK rather than the first week in January.

Jeff makes a motion to counter-propose a compressed schedule starting 1/19 and ending 5/3 instead of the proposed schedule; this motion was seconded by Patrick Ryle and passed via online poll.

d. Additional assignments for senators.

- i. Faculty Member on the Staff Council. Christian reminded senators of the purpose of this position and requested volunteers to serve. No one volunteered so Christian may look to full faculty for someone to serve.

ii. Senate Representative on the Committee on Committees (two-year term).
Christian reminded senators of the purpose of this position and requested volunteers to serve. Nancy Mason volunteered unopposed.

V. Announcements

- a. Next Faculty Senate meeting on Thursday, November 12 at 3:15pm via Teams
- b. Other announcements. There were no other announcements.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Briganti, Senate Secretary