

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes August 16, 2021

Call to Order: 3:02 pm

Acceptance of Agenda: Approved with amendment to accommodate President Cruz's schedule.

Acceptance of Minutes: Postponed to next meeting.

- **Those present:** Kate Ellis, Bruce Fox, Jessie K Finch, Karen Renner, Laurie Dickson, President José Luis Cruz Rivera, Provost Karen Pugliesi, Blue Brazelton, Marianne Nielsen, Chrissina Burke and Jaime Yazzie
- **Those also present (electronically):** Gioia Woods, Grace Okoli, Alexandra Carpino, Anika Olsen, Astrid Klocke, John Georgas, and Don Carter
- **Those absent:** Ed Smaglik, Alexandra Carpino, Pete Fulé, and Mohamed Mohamed

Faculty Senate President's Report—Kate Ellis

FS President reported on the progress of the President Steering committee and Academic subcommittee.

- FS President expects to have a clear definition of physical distancing and enforcement of CDC guidelines in classrooms. There are ongoing discussions about how to facilitate contact tracing. Possible for attendance-taking strategies that would help as would standardized seating.
- The draft of the Community of Care statement was read aloud. The statement encourages compassion for how we're going to treat each other and includes wearing mask.
- **Discussion:** *What are the various purposes of the statement--where will it be used?* It's important that we have consistent messaging and that we have the power/comfort to tell a student to put on a mask. *Communication is coming from the Provost office. First warning would be educational. Second step would be to notify the Dean of Students. There is some concern that there are efforts to motivate students to be activists on this issue.* A faculty member could ask student to leave, and that's where the political ramifications would arise since it goes against the governor's ruling. A formal NAU slide could be created and set as the default background on all of the classroom computers. *AFC wrote a letter to presidents of all of the universities thanking them for the move to wear masks and classes. Can we use SWALE to support the mask policy? The mask policy also ensures equity.* SWALE has been superseded by non-discrimination policy. But classroom disruption policy is still in place.
- FSEC statement of support was revised by the group. Final statement will be brought forward at next meeting.

NAU President's Report---President José Luis Cruz Rivera

President Cruz Rivera began by thanking the FSEC for the statement of support and updated the FSEC on the Town Hall.

- We have taken many efforts to make sure that our decisions are science-based. Our situation is current very fragile, both in terms of public health and the legal regulations that may come our way. Our focus is putting safety first and to create conditions that will allow teaching and learning to work well. All of the attention that we've been putting on Jacks are Back has not distracted us from making progress on other long-term issues. After the semester has started, we will turn to those other matters.

- **Questions:** *Will Jacks Are Back be updated to reflect the mask policy?* Yes, updates started and we're working on updating signage, etc. Details will show up on Friday and will be foreshadowed in the Town Hall. *How will we respond to CDC changes?* We would take the situation to the Public Health Advisory along with specific details about our community. *Status of vaccine mandates?* As things evolve, we will get the right people in the room, which will ideally include the other universities and larger community, and go from there. Please keep sharing information from your constituents. *Can faculty announce that they have been vaccinated?* Yes, and there are products like stickers, water bottles, etc.

NAU Provost's Report—Provost Pugliesi

Provost Stearns provided an update on COVID protocols, CDC guidelines, and availability of masks for students.

- An update on protocols will be coming out today. It will also clarify that we can consider offices learning spaces, and so we may require masks during office hours. The message will include a sign that can be posted outside offices and suggestions for how to deal with students who may oppose this policy. We will have a definitive answer about physical distancing in tomorrow's Town Hall.
- N95s and non-medical type mask will be made available --will be posted on the JacksareBack website. Students will get masks again and hand sanitizer.
- **Questions:** *Is there language that can be used to remind students that NAUFlex is only to be used for COVID purposes?* We want you to be flexible with students who are ill or in isolation, but you can enforce attendance policy otherwise. *Are you allowed to use NAU Flex concurrent with in-person class?* Our concern is that we are giving a problematic cue to our students if we are too flexible with students for non-medical reasons. Students whose academic success is at risk could be negatively impacted. If there is a formal accommodation, that might include NAUFlex. Faculty would be formally notified in that case. *Faculty are likely not aware that NAUFlex could be an accommodation for Disability Resources.* Accommodations are typically not mandates but agreements worked out with faculty and students.
- Academic Assembly model has been launched. Dean's Council met on August 4, and the first meeting of the Academic Collaborative is on Aug. 25. Agenda items include: workload policies, part-time compensation, TT faculty lines. The Academic Collaborative group will look at these issues. Likely, the next step will be to form a 45-day Task Force to generate recommendations or policies. Next Dean's Council will discuss NTT cluster of issues, including the Teaching Stream proposal, the chair tiering model, revisions to Faculty Hiring Policy and Protocols (Appendix C) especially in relation to Diversity Strategic Plan.
- I have informed the deans that when it's appropriate, NTT Faculty may have assigned scholarship in their SOEs as long as it doesn't compromise teaching needs.
- **Questions and Comments:** *We were told by past Provost that this was a COFS issue, so that might need to be noticed. Shared Governance agreement would be something to add.* We will be looking at many of the major documents that govern faculty and shared governance. That might be work that comes after the president has become more acquainted with our university. *We would like to put in a plug for a dedicated person to maintain the Policy Library. Efforts are underway on this. Shared governance document*

may need some updating and revising. The Academic Leadership Collaborative includes elected officers of FSEC. Several colleagues have wondered what we are going to do in regards to changing policies regarding Critical Race Theory.

Fall Enrollment—Anika Olsen

- Anika Olsen provided an update on a meeting with 70 Lumberjack students and an enrollment report.
- In light of the numbers, we are running out of traditional graduate students. Undergraduate students are increasing overall but down in a few areas.
- **Questions/Comments:** VA funds affecting military vets. Conversations are happening on around the decrease in traditional students. How can we change our portfolio to attract those students?

New Business and Adjourn

Moved to adjourn 4:59pm.