Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
October 9th, 2023

Please email corrections to Faculty.Senate@nau.edu.

1. **Call to order – Kate Ellis**
    Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis calls the meeting to order at 3:01pm.
    Those Attending: Kate Ellis, Karen Pugliesi, Roger Bounds, John Georgas, Sara Rinfret, Amy Rushall, Maribeth Watwood, Tarang Jain, Blue Brazelton, Blake Rayfield, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Gioia Woods, Pete Fule, Melissa Lawton, Jill Navran, Donna Simon, John Tingerthal, Diamond Bracey, KT Thompson, Laura Umphrey, Andrew Stevens

2. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis**
    The 10/9 Agenda is voted on and **approved.** The 9/11 Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting minutes are voted on and **approved.**

3. **Faculty Senate President's Report – Kate Ellis**
    Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.
    *   The Faculty Breakfast with the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) was a great success. There has been a great response from Faculty and the Board.
    *   The All-Faculty Meeting that focused on First-Year Momentum and Generative AI was a massive success.
    *   Regarding Generative AI, John Tingerthal, Amy Rushall, and Patricia Murphey have been focusing on creating professional development opportunities that focus on these unique needs.
    *   Chair of the AFC Penny Dolin mentioned that ASU has created a course for Faculty members that helps them understand and learn more about Generative AI. We will be seeing if there is any possibility for this to be shared with NAU and U of A faculty members.
    *   The Senate will need to field a committee to look at the Faculty Handbook. President Ellis suggests that this will be something that Michael Smith and the Council of Faculty Rights and Responsibilities will be taking on.
    *   There will also need to be a collaboration between the Council on Learning, Teaching Academy, and the President's Teaching Fellows, to look at creating a document that shares expectations on teaching expectations.
    *   The Leadership Summit Meeting occurred last Wednesday. Coming out of this meeting, we need to create a task force focused on looking to separate Faculty Development from service or teaching in SOE's.
    *   There is a momentum coming from the President's Office, which directly involves the provost Office and collaboration from the Faculty Senate.
    *   New Members of the FSEC introduce themselves to the provost.

4. **Provost's Office Report – Karen Pugliesi**
    Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- Provost Pugliesi mentions that today is Indigenous People's Day and that there will be events in the Native American Cultural Center.
- There is an importance of collaborations between the provost Office and the academic leaders across campus related to a variety of issues.
- This relates directly to the creation of a common set of teaching and instruction expectations that the provost has asked the Senate to support.
- Provost Pugliesi also suggests that the Senate helps participate in many different groups and projects around campus.
    - There will be a group focused on first-year learning and improving the First Year Learning Initiative.
    - There will be a group that will focus on the faculty-side of fostering a culture of student care.
    - There will be a group focused on getting Faculty Development into FAAR and SOE's so that faculty members are more encouraged to participate.
    - There will be a group looking into streamlining Annual Reviews for faculty to remove redundant letter writing.
    - A group focused on the faculty driven section of curriculum review.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods raises concern regarding the importance of writing letters and lifting their colleagues, so it may be difficult to change this culture.
- Provost Pugliesi responds to this concern by stating that they are very aware of the importance of these letters, and that there may be other ways that unit leaders can give recognition to the accomplishments of these faculty members.
- We will begin to look at Teaching Evaluations and how well they provide faculty with feedback that they can implement into their teaching practices.
- The provost office recently has been reviewing the business processes related to curriculum review.
- We have an opportunity to address the high expenses that student face when paying for textbooks and required course materials.
- In data collected by the provost office, students on average spend over $800 a year on textbooks and required class materials.
- Due to this high cost, the provost office has begun to look at ways to reduce this cost for students.
- Currently we are looking to implement a program titled "Equitable Access" that has been implemented in many other institutions around the nation.
- This program is used to establish agreements with bookstores and affiliates and allows the university to offer a flat rate for students to pay per semester for their required materials.
- This set price would be $250 a semester at NAU, and can be supported by financial aide.
- Students also have an option to opt out of this flat rate, so if their materials are below $250 in a semester, they won't have to participate in the program and pay the higher amount.
- Faculty choice of books would not be restricted in this program.

- This program would be a bridge between now and efforts to transition the university to become an entirely Open Educational Research Institution (OER). We will review the success of this program 3 years after it is implemented.
- Currently, there are no moves to implement this for Graduate students, it is only focused on undergraduate students.
- One concern about this program is that faculty members will have to submit their require materials and text in a reasonable time frame. This has previously been a struggle.
- We will have to develop systems to create reasonable reminders and warnings so that faculty members can submit these materials in a timely manner.
- The provost office will be looking for a Senate Endorsement of this program by the end of November.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood voices support for not putting this program into place for graduate students, as often graduate students have different financial aid and are looking to build their libraries of text.
- The provost office will continue to work with colleges on their program portfolio action plans.
- A search is underway for the Vice Provost for NAU Online.
- Deans will be taking a close look at curricular complexity. There will be training them in what to look for in their curriculum designs and they will work to improve and address these programs in their colleges.
- The School of Nursing will be moving forward with their request to become an independent college, and change their name to the College of Nursing.
- The College of Health and Human Services is also be finalizing a name change.

5. **Bylaws – Blue Brazelton**
   Faculty Senate Parliamentarian and Chair of the Bylaws Committee gives an update regarding changes to the Senate Bylaws.
   - We are close to finishing up the edits on the Bylaws. The FSEC will use this time to voice any concerns regarding these changes.
   - Currently, we are not obtaining any written reports from committees, would we like to change this? Faculty Senate Kate Ellis suggests that this would be extremely helpful in collecting information and recommends that one annual report would be useful.
   - Ex-Officio Gioia Woods also supports the creation of these reports, as we do not currently get much information regarding Senate-charged Committees. Formal records would help with the understanding of these committees and raise more discussion.
   - Dr. Brazelton mentions a suggested change to the apportionment of the Senate. Currently, there are no dedicated seats for Phoenix and Tucson. There is a dedicated seat for Yuma and Personalized Learning. Currently, we have many Online and Statewide Representatives, but we would like to ensure that this continues even if culture changes in the future. The change would require that we have a percentage of a college who are online/statewide, also get that percentage of online/statewide senate representatives.

- An example of this would be, if there are 10 senators from the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and 30% of the college is statewide/online then it would be required that 3 senators would be from that statewide/online population.
- The next discussion point is to create an online resource that can be used where all the resources from the Senate meetings are housed so that they are accessible to Senators. Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis agrees with the creation of this resource.
- President Ellis brings up the concerns regarding recording and distributing recordings as some meetings, especially FSEC, may discuss more private matters. For the Full Senate meetings, these are open, so that anyone who wants to join can participate.
- Currently, meetings are recorded by the Senate Admin only for Meeting Minutes. These recordings are not distributed to anyone.
- Finally, the last discussion point is whether we should take future agenda items from the floor at the end of every meeting. Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that we often do not have time for this, and that currently if anyone has a potential agenda item, they email Kate or the Faculty Senate email.
- President Ellis thanks the Bylaws Committee for their hard work on these changes.
- The future for these Bylaws changes is to bring it to the October Full Senate meeting, after it is discussed and changes are made, then we would look to vote on it in November at the next Full Senate meeting.
- A vote to bring these to the Full Senate is motioned, **the vote to bring these changes to the full Senate is approved.**

6. **Follow up on All-Faculty Meeting, Next Steps – John Tingerthal, Amy Rushall, John Georgas**
   Chair of the Council on Learning, Vice Provost John Georgas and Assistant Vice Provost Amy Rushall discuss the next steps that we should take following the discussion on Generative AI.
   - Don Carter will be reaching out to ASU regarding potentially getting access to the course on Generative AI.
   - John Georgas mentions the potential creation of a web page that would help share information to faculty regarding Generative AI uses, where/how to be cautious, and so on..
   - John Tingerthal suggests that faculty members are interested in Generative AI and these topics, but don't necessarily have the time to currently put a lot of effort into learning. Creating a group where faculty members can ask questions and get quick responses would be valuable for those who don't have time to attend an entire workshop.
   - Dr. Tingerthal suggests that faculty members want a baseline policy or statement, that doesn't have to be too much. Just recognizing and offering some guidance regarding these topics would be impactful.
   - There currently has not been much movement on Generative AI on the Academic Integrity front, as there is no way to really detect the use of these tools yet.
   - Chair of the Distance Education Council suggests the importance of policies that would be effective for all departments, as Personalized learning and online are impacted differently by Generative AI.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis discusses a message that she received from President Cruz Rivera regarding the supporting of a statement that was released by the United Nations Internet Governance. President Cruz Rivera asked that this statement be reviewed by the Faculty Senate, and that an endorsement of NAU being a signatory would be helpful.
- The FSEC supports President Cruz Rivera signing on to this statement regarding Generative AI.
- Chair of Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, suggests that NAU creates organizational goals regarding this topic, so that everyone is on the same page. He also suggests that there should be collaboration between the deans, so that they may all learn from each other and how each college utilizes and embraces Generative AI.

7. **Ombuds – Laura Umphrey & KT Thompson**

Laura Umphrey & KT Thompson introduce themselves as the new directors of the Ombuds Program.

- The Ombuds Program is put in place for Faculty Members, Staff and Graduate students to come and speak about difficulties that they are experiencing and to develop solutions for these problems.
- This Thursday is national Ombuds day so there will be advertisements for the Ombuds Office. This includes flyers and one on one meetings with departments and faculty members to share the resources that the Ombuds Office offers.
- Currently, the Ombuds Office follows the International Ombuds Code of Ethics.
- The Ombuds Office supports the facilitation of process in resolving issues.
- Some current trends of issues that have come up are mainly interpersonal, so conflicts between peers, and supervisor to employee conflicts.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood thanks KT and Laura for directing the Ombuds Program and aiding Graduate Students.
- Laura Umphrey & KT Thompson are also looking to reach out to previous NAU Ombuds and create a more comprehensive document that would help share the history of the Ombuds Program and how it has grown.
- They will also be looking to create a more efficient way to schedule and create appointments.

8. **GSG – Diamond Bracey**

President of the Graduate Student Government Diamond Bracey gives a quick introduction.

- The focus of the GSG is Visibility, Connectivity, and Transparency amongst Graduate Students.
- The GSG provides over $45,000 worth of travel stipends for students to present and conduct their research.
- They will be looking to simplify this process to increase accessibility and support more graduate students.

- The GSG has also been working to create more community between graduate students across the university, as they have often been connected with those in their cohort, but not with other students across campus.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood commends Diamond for her commitment to the GSG and their work.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis offers her support to the GSG and suggests that she reaches out to the Senate for any support needed.

9. **Council & Committee Reports**

   Council and Committee Reports are shared.
   - Chair of the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Issues Council, Jill Navran, has met with the Council and they are looking to change their name to Career Track Faculty Issues.
   - Council on Learning will continue their work on AI, along with looking and outlining teaching expectations.
   - Faculty Rights and Responsibilities will also be looking at the Faculty Handbook.
   - Council on Career Track Faculty Issues will be looking to have a meeting with all career track faculty to learn what issues need to be addressed.
   - Council on Distance Education will be looking at Generative AI and how that impacts their education.

10. **New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis**

    Meeting is adjourned at 4:58pm.