

# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Please email corrections to [Faculty.Senate@nau.edu](mailto:Faculty.Senate@nau.edu).

## 1. Call to order – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis calls the meeting to order at 3:02pm.

**Those Attending:** Kate Ellis, Michael Smith, Roger Bounds, Karen Pugliesi, Pete Fule, Juliana Suby, Andrew Stevens, Nora Timmerman, Erik Nielsen, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Robyn Hansen, Shelly Thomas, Karen Sealander, Kara Attrep, Corey Oshikoya, Maria Machelor, Karina Collentine, TS Amer, Samantha Clifford, Amy Rushall, Paul Bakke, Tarang Jain, Donna Simon, Aimee Quinn, Jennifer Duis, Miriam Espinoza, Jessie Finch, Melissa Lawton, Diamond Bracey, Michael Leverington, Laura Umphrey, Mahendra Joshi, Victoria Damjanovic, Devon Burr, KT Thompson, Katie Tullmann, Melinda Treml, Yiyan Li, Eric Cerino, Ashley Vaughan, Lisa Bliss, John Lynch, Blue Brazelton, Christy Arazan, Don Carter, William Mahan, Kaitlyn Davis, Karen Jarratt Snider, Jill Navran, Jill Christensen, Tarang Jain, Cindy Ivy, John Tingerthal, Blake Rayfield, Mark Manone

## 2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 3/18 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 2/19 Senate meeting minutes are voted on and **approved**.

## 3. Faculty Senate President’s Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis extends her sympathies to everyone in the College of Health & Human Services as former Faculty Senate President & faculty member Dr. Allen Reich has recently passed away.
- President Ellis states that Allen was truly a good man and accomplished many goals in his previous role as Senate President. Many of these accomplishments greatly supported Shared Governance between faculty & administration.
- Allen was a deeply kind, honest, and generous man. He greatly influenced those around him and will be deeply missed by the NAU Community.
- The Senate has a moment of silence for Dr. Allen Reich.

## 4. Provost’s Office Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- April 26<sup>th</sup> will be the next Faculty/Administrator breakfast. This event is in place to increase the dialogue between various university officials and NAU Faculty. The topic for this breakfast will be “What is it like to be a faculty member at NAU?”
- NAU will be submitting a new program for ABOR approval, a Bachelor of Science in Arts and Cultural Management.
- The Regent’s cup will be this coming weekend. NAU has assembled a team that will be traveling to Phoenix to compete. There will be a structured debate category, followed by a storytelling category.

- NAU will be submitting information to the Enterprise Executive Committee (EEC.) This committee was put in place by ABOR to learn more about each of the universities' international activities.
- A search committee for the next dean of the College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Sciences (CEIAS) has been convened. The chair of this Committee is Jason Wilder.
- Last Thursday there was an Academic Leadership Summit. At this meeting academic leadership discussed topics such as the fact that NAU currently has both 7.5- and 8-week courses. Discussion regarding these courses led to a suggestion that they both be consolidated into one consistent 8-week period.
- Course modalities were discussed whether online, blended, or in-person, along with any expectations associated with those categories. A task force will be convened in the fall to work on this topic.
- Provost Pugliesi has been reframing a document that provides the best practices for academic freedom and freedom of speech. She will take this document to the Full Faculty Senate for further feedback.
- The provost office has received each college's draft workload policies. They have begun to review these policies and discuss feedback with the Deans. All the policies were sent out to each Dean, so that they can review similarities and differences among the colleges and to facilitate continuing revisions to college policies. Sara Rinfret has been examining each of these policies and is creating a document that provides Deans with trends and information that best support them in the editing and creation process.
- Provost Pugliesi states that there have been very prolonged multi-meeting discussions in the President's cabinet regarding stewardship of resources and the prioritization of NAU's efforts. There has been a strong commitment to invest in the people of NAU. Due to changes in the higher education environment and conservative enrollment projections, it is required that we be very rigorous in think about priorities of the university. What priorities have the greatest scope of impact and how can we best utilize our resources to support these priorities. This will be regularly discussed with the Faculty Senate throughout upcoming years.
- Provost Pugliesi also states that it is important that we look to streamline current processes to help free up current resources.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that the Deans currently have a large workload and asks the senate, chairs, faculty, and other administrators to be understanding of the large amount of work they are doing this year.

## **5. CoFS Discussion – Roger Bounds**

Vice Provost Roger Bounds leads a discussion regarding proposed changes to CoFS.

- Vice Provost Roger Bounds states that a large portion of changes to CoFS are operational and simply updating the document to show our current practices.
- Most other changes would be updates to the current language of CoFS that would promote greater equity. Some examples of these changes to promote equity are changes to the promotion sections.

- There is also a change to the composition of annual review committees to comprised of peer faculty that represent the department.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis raises a the potential concern from tenured faculty members being uncomfortable with the idea of having non tenured faculty on a promotion and tenure committee. With these new changes, it would alleviate a large amount of stressed placed on chairs to fill FSC and college P&T positions. There are many departments at NAU that can fill those committees with tenured faculty.
- FSEC member Pete Fule raises a question regarded proposed language that requires that a faculty member have been awarded tenure prior to applying for a sabbatical. Current practice in some colleges is that faculty can apply for a sabbatical at the same time they apply for promotion and tenure. Vice Provost Bounds brings up issues regarding dates, and how when applying for sabbatical, there are often assumptions that are made that could lead to problems if the faculty member that is applying for a sabbatical does not get tenure.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis mentions a positive change with CoFS regarding a lecturer that has been hired receives a terminal degree while employed, they will be promoted to the appropriate track and equivalent current rank.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis stresses the importance of CoFS and that senators bring concerns and discussion points to the next senate meeting.
- CoFS will further be discussed at the Faculty Senate meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup>. With a goal for the Full Senate to vote on approval of these changes by April 29<sup>th</sup>.
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#### **6. Inclusive Excellence for Teaching – John Tingerthal**

Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, shares and discusses the Best Practices for Teaching document.

- Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, shares the document on Inclusive Excellence for Teaching. These inclusive excellence teaching practices will be voted on by the Full Senate today.
- One main point focused on is the simplification of these teaching practices and organizing them in an effective way.
- Previously, these were recognized as “Best Practices in Teaching,” but since Inclusive Excellence is an overarching theme of these practices, the title was changed to “Inclusive Excellence in Teaching.”
- This document was fully endorsed by the Teaching Academy.
- The graphic is currently organized into three primary groupings: Structure, Environment, and Design. These groups then have practices and strategies that faculty members can implement in their courses. All these groups and strategies fully support the overall theme of practicing Inclusive Excellence in Teaching.
- The implementation for these practices should include workshops and professional development opportunities to support faculty in employing these practices in their courses.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis asks for clarification on who should be attributed with the creation of this document. Dr. Tingerthal states that it was a collaborative effort from the Council on Learning and Teaching Academy, with support and feedback from many other faculty members.

- Dr. Tingerthal asks senators to give suggestions and feedback on what would be the best way to send out and integrate this document and graphic in university processes.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith offers his praises to this document as it offers many different suggestions for effective practices that apply across many different disciplines.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her praise for this document and states that it can provide support for faculty in annual review processes. This document can assist all faculty and provide information to better improve their current teaching practices.

**The Inclusive Excellence for Teaching Document endorsement is voted on by the Full Faculty Senate. This Document is endorsed by the Senate.**

## **7. Carbon Neutrality Plan – Erik Nielsen**

Chief Sustainability Office Erik Nielsen shares information regarding NAU's Carbon Neutrality Plan.

- This presentation's goal is to share what faculty can do to be involved in the NAU's Carbon Neutrality Plan.
- [Link to the PowerPoint.](#)
- The second most concerning topic for current students at NAU is the climate crisis and environmental issues, thus it is important for faculty to be educated on NAU's plan and policies to obtain Carbon Neutrality by 2030.
- Students at NAU have an expectation that the university is aware and proactive regarding the Climate Situation.
- There are many policies that NAU will be implementing behind the scenes to improve NAU's Carbon Footprint.
- NAU's Elevating Excellence program provided guidelines for the creation of a Climate Action Plan. This Action Plan has been approved and a roadmap has been created to raise awareness and provide information on what measures are being taken.
- Dr. Nielsen asks senators to provide feedback and come up with ideas of how to integrate this information into classes.
- Currently, there is a plan to use AI and technology on campus to help increase energy efficiency around campus. The goal of this plan is to reduce the use of energy by 30%, saving the university more than five million dollars every year.
- The Carbon Neutrality Plan will also be examining the university's emissions impact. This data examines commuting emissions for faculty, students, and staff, researching current NAU Foundation investments, and whether they increase emissions, and many other NAU related processes that increase emissions.
- Dr. Nielsen has worked with first- and second-year courses to provide opportunities for students to support the university in reducing emissions.
- There is also a mention of a change coming to the Flagstaff Campus regarding increasing recycling bins and reduction of large waste bins.
- Dr. Nielsen also brings up recent collected data that provides feedback on certain areas of campus. This can be used to pinpoint behaviors that can be analyzed and changed to reduce carbon emissions.

## 8. Divestment Advocacy Letter, Endorsement Request – Nora Timmerman

Faculty Member Nora Timmerman discusses a Divestment Advocacy Letter with a goal to have it endorsed by the Faculty Senate.

- Dr. Timmerman is the Faculty Advisor for the student club Fossil Free NAU. This club has put together a letter and statement that recommends that the NAU Foundation Divest from the Fossil Fuel industry, along with making the investment process more transparent.
- Dr. Timmerman states that this would align with the university's Carbon Neutrality plan, as well as better aligns their investment strategies with the Elevating Excellence Plan.
- Currently the students of this club have been reaching out to faculty members, student organizations and alumni associations for support of this letter.
- Provost Pugliesi states that this letter would be a suggestion of opinion to the NAU Foundation as they have a formal policy of neutrality, and there is a board of directors that are the responsible parties for directing investments. The board of directors' primary responsibility is to maximize financial return to support the university.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith raises concerns regarding counterintuitive effects that divestment can have, as there is good evidence that divestment could have less impact on modifying the behaviors of corporations. He also states that there could be a negative political impact and increase risk for NAU.
- Dr. Timmerman states three counters to this point.
  - Divesting in Fossil Fuel industries can lower the investment risk.
  - Divesting also allows us to align our policies with our current values as a university.
  - Divesting puts pressure on the fossil fuel industry.
- ASU has recently made changes to their investment portfolio and support a commitment to change their policies to align their values with their investments.
- PhD Student Brandon McNamara is a consultant for carbon accounting and shares information regarding the impacts of divestment. Divestment would have little impact on the company that we would divest from, but it would align with our values as a university. It also may be safer to not invest in the fossil fuel industry due to potential downfall based on the climate crisis.
- Senators state their support for this, as many other universities are divesting in the fossil fuel industry as well.
- Faculty Senate Treasurer Blake Rayfield agrees with FSEC member Michael Smith. He states that currently the NAU Foundation is not only run by professional money managers, but students also manage funds for educational purposes. Passing this letter would limit to students experiences and learning as they examine how to invest are prepared for their future careers. He also states that the research he has shared with the members of Fossil Free NAU has shown that Divestment does not work in terms of impacting the goals of the companies.
- Treasurer Rayfield suggests that a more impactful process would be to create shareholder proposals for these companies. This has a greater impact because, if we own shares for these companies, we are partial owners.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis tables this discussion to the Senate meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup> due to limitations on time and the need for further consideration.

**9. Councils and Committee Reports**

Council and Committee Reports are shared.

- The Faculty Senate Scholarship has received applications from students. These applications will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate Scholarship Committee.
- Faculty Senate Vice President Tarang Jain states that we have received the names for the new senators, and we will be voting on the internal Senate positions on April 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Any Senators who are interested in these roles, please reach out to [Faculty.Senate@nau.edu](mailto:Faculty.Senate@nau.edu)

**10. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis**  
**Meeting is adjourned at 5:04pm.**