

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes April 15th, 2024

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 3:02pm.

Those Attending: Kate Ellis, Karen Pugliesi, Roger Bounds, Michael Smith, Blake Rayfield, Tarang Jain, William Mahan, Devon Burr, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Andrew Stevens, Michael Leverington, TS Amer, Karen Sealander, Heather Thomas, Shelly Thomas, Karina Collentine, Gioia Woods, Robyn Hansen, Donna Simon, Luke Maring, Sara Rinfret, Paul Bakke, Pete Fule, Juliana Suby, Corey Oshikawa, Kara Attrep, Lynn Jones, Laurie Dickson, Nora Timmerman, Tinna Traustadottir, Victoria Damjanovic, Christy Arazan, Jessie Finch, Diamond Bracey, Dale Cummings, Jeremy LaBuff, Melissa Lawton, Oaklee Rogers, Eric Cerino, Bonita Switala, John Lynch, Jill Navran, Samantha Clifford, Laura Bounds, Karen Jarratt Snider, Katie Tullman, Jennifer Duis, Lisa Bliss, Emily Manone, Melinda Treml, Miriam Espinoza, Maribeth Watwood, Cindy Ivy, Aimee Quinn, Jennifer Russell, Nicole Price, Gretchen McAllister, Abby Fisher, Mahendra Joshi, James Palmer, Jane Marks, Yiyang Li, Amy Rushall, Jerry Gile, Jermaine Martinez, Sara Abercrombie, Gavin Zhang, Mark Manone, Miriam Espinoza, John Tingerthal, Cynthia Childrey, David Willy, Vicki Fimea, Sterling Gabbitas, Bill Heibel, Angie Hansen, Brandon McNamara.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests an amendment to the current agenda due to a communication error resulting in documents regarding CoFS and the Annual Review Task Force were not shared. The amendment is to remove the Annual Review discussion off the agenda and shorten the discussion regarding CoFS.

The amended 4/15 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 3/18 Senate meeting minutes were not sent out and the senate will vote on their approval on 4/29.

3. Task force: Professional Development in SOEs – Sara Rinfret

Assistant Vice Provost Sara Rinfret gives updates from the Task force focused on getting Professional Development into Faculty member's SOEs.

- The task force has worked the past year and has suggested a change in the statement of expectations in which faculty members have an option of receiving 0 – 10% of their SOEs in Professional Development. The discussion of this workload and time would be between faculty and department chairs. To allow for professional development, faculty will negotiate to adjust research or service assignments, teaching assignments will not adjust. Professional development will be assigned to the corresponding area of assignment, if the professional development is in teaching, then it would be assigned to teaching.
- Senator Juliana Suby asks if there was any discussion in the task force regarding budget for professional development, as currently the amount set aside for each faculty member is not large enough to support most development events. Sara Rinfret

- responds by stating the task force was looking at incorporating the change in the statement of expectations, and not focusing on the budget.
- Provost Pugliesi states that it is important that faculty speak with their chairs regarding professional development that may be outside of the preset budget but could provide skills that would align with the strategic goals of the unit and department.
 - Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis states that the senate will not be voting on the approval of these changes due to the fact the documents were not sent out.
 - Senator Paul Bakke states that currently the faculty in his department mainly teach a 4x4 teaching load, leaving little time for there to be professional development offered to him and his colleagues. He suggests that the provost office thinks about the current staffing of these departments, after they are properly staffed then faculty would have available time in their SOEs to participate in professional development.
 - To clarify, the professional development will be an optional section of every faculty member's SOE, the suggestion of the task force asks for is an assignment of 0 – 10%.

4. Faculty Senate President's Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.

- President Ellis sent out individual invitations to all senators for the Faculty Senate/VPs breakfast on Friday, 4/26. This breakfast is modeled after the annual ABOR breakfasts. Current and incoming senators have been invited, with the topic of discussion focusing on what faculty members do in the classroom and in research and creative activity..
- President Ellis will be in Tucson this weekend for the ABOR meeting. The AFC has met prior to this meeting and brought up the fact many universities have begun to look at their humanities program.

5. Provost's Office Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- Provost Pugliesi recommends that Senators attend the Faculty Senate/VPs Breakfast, as it is a great opportunity for dialogue.
- Recently, NAU's Regents Cup team traveled to Phoenix to compete in the annual Regent's Cup competition. Unfortunately, ASU walked away with the Regent's Cup, but this was still a great experience for the students and faculty involved.
- Next year's Regent's Cup competition will be held in Flagstaff.
- The provost office has recently worked alongside a Demographer in collecting data regarding potential enrollment trends in the future. It is expected that NAU's proportion of students enrolling directly out of high school will rise next year, but level out in the years to come. With this information, it is vital that NAU looks at a greater array of populations who are seeking additional learning opportunities.
- The 3 Universities will be giving private presentations to the board on each universities' international activities, NAU's Yimin Wang will be sharing this report.
- The search for the new dean of CEIAS is continuing, there are 10 different semi-finalist that will be interviewed this week.

- On April 3rd, university leadership had a design summit with regional partners to discuss design and developments for the creation of a medical school. It is vital that this school be founded on partnerships with the community, instead of the University standing up an individual healthcare operation.
- A national advisory board will be convened in order for NAU to ask strategic questions regarding the design and planning of the medical school.
- Provost Pugliesi has been working on developing materials and resources that support faculty regarding Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech. These recourses have been sent to NAU's General Counsel and will be shared with the senate in upcoming meetings.
- There have been 3 key leadership searches that were recently completed:
 - New director for the School of Communication.
 - New executive director for the School of Forestry.
 - New chair for the department of Dental Hygiene.
- The College of Nursing is emerging, and university leadership has been working to configure a team of staff that will support this process.
- Provost Pugliesi brings up a concern regarding the circulation of outdated documents from task forces and so on. She mentions, when reviewing these documents please make sure that they are the final draft.
- Provost Pugliesi previously met with over 100 career track faculty to answer questions and listen to their concerns. This was organized by the Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran. Many questions were asked, but some main focuses were CoFS and Career Track Faculty's impact on academic momentum.
- In this meeting provost Pugliesi was also asked if Career Track faculty could serve in leadership positions. The response to this is an emphatic yes, as there are many current academic leaders who are career track faculty and there are no constraints on their ability to pursue higher leadership positions.
- The provost office will be implementing a protocol that would link multiple year appointments for faculty to promotion tracks.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods offers her thanks for the ability to support these career track faculty, but also voices her concern regarding the limited amount of availability for folks to be offered multiple year appointment due to budget constraints. Dr. Woods also suggests that chairs have a greater say in recommendations of career track faculty for appointment, due to chairs having a closer oversight and relationship with faculty, compared to deans.
- Provost Pugliesi responds that deans will be speaking with faculty and chairs directly, to ensure that they obtain the information to best select the career track faculty deserving of multiple year appointment.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis mentions a question that was recently brought up to her regarding grandfathered faculty in the Teaching Track. Are these grandfathered faculty, who do not have terminal degree, able to be promoted? The answer is yes, all grandfathered faculty are still able to be promoted. If their colleges or departments are developing policies that would not support this promotion, it directly conflicts to university policy and will not be approved.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds states that there is currently a provost list of all terminal degrees for each department, this document is reviewed and updated annually.

6. CoFS Discussion – Roger Bounds

Vice Provost Roger Bounds gives an update on changes to CoFS.

- Since the previous discussion, there have been two larger changes made to the CoFS revisions.
 - The first change better articulates what “early” means regarding faculty promotions. The previous version of CoFS offered no guidance on whether early promotion was allowed. The new document mentions the possibility of early promotion by a year, along with the process in which an early application might be considered.
 - The second change offers clarity surrounding the language of sabbatical eligibility and applications being sent before tenure is awarded to faculty. This change added language that states that an approval of a sabbatical is contingent on the faculty member being awarded tenure.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds mentions the importance of CoFS being general, so that every department or college on campus can be supported by it. With this generality, CoFS also allows units to elect or appoint FSC members. This selection process will be decided by the local units.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods offers concern regarding the potential Conflict of Interest when chairs have the ability to appoint members of the FSC.
- FSEC Member Pete Fule offer his thanks to Vice Provost Roger Bounds for listening to his suggestions and making these changes.

7. Task Force: Annual Review – Roger Bounds & Sara Rinfret

This Agenda Item will be pushed to the next Full Senate Meeting on 4/29.

8. Divestment Advocacy Letter, Endorsement Request – Nora Timmerman, Jennifer Stevenson, Sterling Gabbitas, Bill Heibel

Members of the NAU Foundation and Student Organization Fossil Free NAU share information regarding the Divestment Advocacy Letter to the Senate.

- NAU Foundation Board Chair Vicki Fimea speaks on behalf of the board and provides information of the processes of the board.
 - The Foundation is an independent and private entity from NAU and is structured as a nonprofit and is recognized by the Internal Revenue Services as a 501C3 organization.
 - The Foundation is governed by their bylaws put in place by their board of directors. These directors are volunteers and are not paid for their time, almost all of them are NAU alumni as well.
 - The directors of The Foundation are obligated to act with the highest trust in their investments and stewardship of the money that they receive.

- To ensure sustained growth and continuity The Foundations employs a conservative and long-term strategy in investing.
- The Foundation has created and supported a student managed investment fund that allows for an experiential learning opportunity for finance students in the Franke College of Business to directly manage a portion of foundation assets with the guidance of a faculty member.
- The Foundation has committed to open dialogue regarding this student managed investment fund (ESG) and has recently had conversations regarding a portfolio with no Fossil Fuel investments.
- Much of The Foundations portfolio is comprised of index funds, with a goal of matching exposures of the overall markets, and minimizing costs, remaining fully diversified and focused on long term outcomes.
- The Foundation's exposure to Fossil Fuels is very small, slightly over 6%.
- Faculty Senate Treasurer Blake Rayfield states that The Foundation mimicking the market is implicitly a Neutrality Statement, due to the lack of a specific decisions to invest.
- Faculty Member Nora Timmerman asks Vicki Fimea if there are any restrictions on what The Foundation can invest in. The answer to this is there is no restrictions on The Foundation's Portfolio, but there are some restrictions in place for the student managed investment fund.
- Faculty Senate Treasurer Blake Rayfield also shares with the senate that he is the faculty member who teaches the course where students manage the ESG fund. He states that this is an extremely valuable class structure where students have the opportunity to experience a very interactive process, and that they are able to learn more about investing in Green Companies and Emission Scopes without being limited.
- Faculty Senate Kate Ellis asks how The Foundation would respond to collaborating with this Letter and how it would impact the work of The Foundation. Chair Fimea shares that the letter would be reviewed by the Board, then a response would be formulated and shared.
- A representative from the student organization Fossil Free NAU speaks that the letter has not been formally sent to The Foundation from their organization, as they have received more signatures from other students and faculty on campus. Once all the signatures are received, they will formally send this letter to The Foundation for review.
- Senator Jane Marks offers her thanks to all the students leading this effort and mentions how members of the Fossil Fuel Industry deliberately undermines Climate Science Research.
- Senator Michael Smith offers his thanks for the passion of the students, but states that he believes that the Faculty Senate should stay non-partisan in this topic. He also states that the letter mentions that this would recruit more students to NAU, when this may not be the case, due to potentially taking the side of a political party. In his view, neutrality would support student recruitment.
- Dr. Smith also states that if this limits the student's ability to invest in the ESG, it could be actively going against NAU's educational mission.

The Faculty Senate Endorsement of this Divestment Letter is voted on. The Senate has voted to **not endorse the Divestment Letter.**

9. Councils and Committee Reports

Council and Committee Reports are shared.

- Faculty Senate Vice President Tarang Jain discusses the internal Faculty Senate elections that will occur on 4/29.
- Currently there are nominees for President, Vice President, Parliamentarian, and one Member-At Large position.
- Currently, there are no nominees for, Secretary, Treasurer, and one Member-At Large position.
- There is also an open chair position for the Senate Council on Distance Education.
- Any senators who are interested in these positions should reach out to Vice President Jain.
- All positions listed are also members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC). Meaning they will be meeting monthly to discuss and work on topics that are discussed in the monthly Full Senate Meetings.
- Faculty Senate Treasurer Blake Rayfield discusses the task force that was convened to look at faculty tenure and promotion raises. This raise previously changed from a percentage amount to a flat amount for faculty members.
- In the work of this task force, they found that many universities proceed differently, so the task force has come up with a recommendation for the university.
 - The university should consistently review this amount due to it being fixed and can lose value as time goes on.
- Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, Michael Smith, has been working with the FSEC to create an NAU Faculty Code of Ethics.
- There has been a group of 20 members of the university who have been working on this, with hopes that it be prepared to share in Fall of 2024.
- The Senate Charged General Studies Committee (GSC) has requested to change their Bylaws and Director of the General Studies Program Emily Manone & Chair of the General Studies Committee Jermaine Martinez, field questions regarding these changes.
- Many these changes are language updates of committees or departments that have gone through a name change. There are changes regarding how the GSC meets, along with how the GSC works alongside other committees. The duties and work of the subcommittees in the GSC have been added to support the volunteers in the development of their SOEs.
- New references to a Best Practices document have been implemented to share procedures of the GSC.
- Provost Pugliesi suggests that the GSC also makes a change to their bylaws in order to align with the emergence of new colleges, such as the College of Nursing, in coming years.

These changes are voted on and **Approved.**

10. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis
Meeting is adjourned at 5:03pm.