

# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes April 29th, 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, Karen Pugliesi, John Georgas, Roger Bounds, Tarang Jain, Michael Smith, Kyle Winfree, Christopher Sthultz, Devon Burr, Hal Tagma, Travis Pinn, Igor Steinmacher, KT Thompson, Juliana Suby, Pete Fule, Gioia Woods, Andrew Stevens, Cindy Ivy, Shelly Thomas, Kara Attrep, TS Amer, Robyn Hansen, Maria Machelor, Claudia Rodas, Katie Tullman, Blue Brazelton, Paul Bakke, Andrew Arvayo, Kevin Tague, Lisa Bliss, Lynn Jones, Melissa Lawton, Karen Sealander, Jennifer Duis, Karen Jarratt Snider, Donna Simon, Laura Umphrey, Jemery LaBuff, Brandie Reiner, Heather Thomas, Miriam Espinoza, Michael Leverington, Eric Cerino, Christy Arazan, Scot Raab, Jill Navran, Michael McCarthy, John Lynch, Samantha Clifford, Rachel Starks, Maribeth Watwood, Jennifer Russell, Diamond Bracey, Natasha Dmitrieva, Laura Bounds, Ashley Vaughan, Oaklee Rogers, Gayle Blanchard, Carmin Chan, Cynthia Childrey, Angie Hansen, John Tingerthal.

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

The 4/29 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 3/18 Senate meeting minutes and 4/15 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 states that Andrew Arvayo has been selected for the Faculty Senate Scholarship.
- President Ellis offers her thanks to all participants of the Senate/VP Breakfast.
- She also offers her thanks to all FSEC members & senators who are rotating off their current role.
- Letters will be prepared and sent to all senators outlining what was completed in the previous year. This letter can be used by senators for their annual review process.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis also wishes a warm welcome to all new senators who are attending today's meeting.
- A letter from the student organization of Fossil Free NAU will be sent out to senators after the meeting.
- Senate President Ellis states some topics for the upcoming year:
  - Examining and reviewing the current Curriculum Process and academic catalog.
  - Discuss more challenges and benefits regarding AI integrations into the classroom.

- Summer Senate meetings will be on Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> & July 1<sup>st</sup>. These meetings will be from 3:30 – 5:00pm and are completely optional to senators. There will be no in-person location for these meetings and will be held via Zoom.
- Due to increasing costs for University Transit Services, parking permits will go up in price in the coming academic year.
- Due to the retirement of senator Michael Leverington, chair of the Parking Citations Appeals Committee, the senate will be looking for another representative. If any senators are interested in this opportunity, please contact [Faculty.Senate@nau.edu](mailto:Faculty.Senate@nau.edu). This committee meets four times a year.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis announces that the current Faculty Senate Administrator, Andrew Stevens, has accepted a full-time position with the faculty senate for the upcoming year. Andrew has also been accepted into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program located in NAU's College of Education. With this new endeavor, the senate provided Andrew with a gift to help support him for the coming years. Andrew offers his thanks to the senate for their constant support and kindness that they have shown him throughout his time on the senate.

#### **4. Senate Scholarship – Kate Ellis**

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares information regarding the Faculty Senate Scholarship and the recipient Andrew Arvayo shares.

- Andrew Arvayo is currently majoring in Philosophy, Politics & Law with an earned GPA of 4.0. He is looking to pursue his lifelong goal of attending Law School. In addition to his academics, he is also currently interning at DNA Legal Services, and gaining professional legal experiences that will be vital in the future. Andrew also holds a position at Career Jacks, where he assists new hires and leads other Career Jacks. Finally, Andrew participates in many student organizations, and spends time volunteering at the Holy Trinity Catholic Newman Center where he supports events and ceremonies.
- Andrew states that he will use the Faculty Senate Scholarship money to help fund his study abroad program this summer.
- Andrew thanks the Faculty Senate for the opportunity and shares how grateful and ecstatic he was when selected.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis thanks the chair of the Faculty Senate Scholarship committee TS Amer, along with the other volunteers of the committee, Ashley Vaughan & Miriam Espinoza.
- Chair TS Amer shares that this was one of the most qualified group of applicants that the Scholarship has ever received and congratulates Andrew for being selected.
- Chair TS Amer also offers his thanks to senate admin Andrew Stevens, as he helped collecting the data and assembled the resources.

#### **5. Provost's Office Report – Karen Pugliesi**

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- Provost Pugliesi offers her congratulations for any faculty members who were promoted or received tenure last week.

- In the previous Academic Leadership Collaborative Meeting there was a discussion about the student struggles regarding the FAFSA changes. This challenge will be discussed further in the Fall.
- NAU has had an increase in student retention from previous years.
- Vice Provost John Georgas & Assistant Vice Provost Amy Rushall will be working together to create a professional development symposium to create a space where faculty can have further dialogue on AI and the effects it has in the classroom. Previously, we have collaborated with Community Colleges in Arizona for these symposiums, and we will look to do the same in the future.
- Provost Pugliesi recognizes the message that was sent out by President Cruz Rivera regarding protests across campus. She reminds the faculty that NAU has a deep commitment to providing an environment on campus that is robust in protecting the students, faculty, and staff member's right to freedom of expression. With this, we also must be mindful regarding the physical safety of students on campus. Provost Pugliesi also asks that faculty be mindful of these topics while supporting students during finals.
- Provost Pugliesi has submitted the latest draft of best practices and resources regarding academic freedom & freedom of speech on campus to NAU's General Counsel who will be reviewing and providing input on this document.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods shares that currently, the faculty in the arts & humanities are suffering greatly from the student's use of generative AI in the classroom. She asks to please keep in mind the potential differences between colleges and departments when creating discussions and professional development opportunities focusing on AI.
- Vice Provost John Georgas offers his thanks to Amy Rushall and the TLC for their continuous work on Generative AI professional development opportunities.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis states that many faculty have been reaching out for support in case they find themselves in a situation where there may be publicly challenged via social media or doxed, and the best ways to respond. These resources are being developed currently.
- Provost Pugliesi shares the current progress that Cody Canning & Michelle Miller have made on the FYLI refresh.
  - There is a change in name from First Year Learning Initiative (FYLI) to First Year Together (FYT). This emphasizes the new importance of creating community.
  - They are moving away from a process of certification to an emphasis on community and collaboration among faculty across the university.
  - New community of practices will be created so that selected course coordinators are seen as stewards for FYT and are able to connect with others.
  - Student Consultants have been enlisted to provide support and alternate perspectives to faculty members to improve their courses.
- Provost Pugliesi shares her excitement for this program and the implications for improving the First-Year experience for NAU students.
- Cody Canning and Michelle Miller will come to an upcoming Faculty Senate meeting to share updates and answer questions regarding this program refresh.

- FSEC Member Michael Smith mentions the importance of collaboration between coordinators and faculty, as many faculty have skills that may not fit well with these new changes but can still be successful with collaboration and flexibility.
- Vice Provost John Georgas states that this program is not focused on Quality Control of courses, but coordination and consistency in pursuing effective learning outcomes.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods states that they have been practicing this model in her college, and it has had great success.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith suggests that Graduate Students who teach these sections are included in the discussion of improving processes.
- Vice Provost John Georgas gives an update regarding a previously discussed equitable access program, in which students can pay one fee per semester for all the learning materials required in their courses. These efforts have been put on pause due to potential changes that the Department of Education is considering as these changes would prevent institutions from creating these types of programs.

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

Vice Provost Roger Bounds gives an update on changes to CoFS. The senate will also vote on these changes.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares that there were four topics that were sources of concerns, these concerns will be discussed in this meeting and then the changes to CoFS will be voted on.
- The first change to be discussed is section 1.2, where the description of the Teaching Track was created. This description then changes and influences other areas of CoFS.
- FSEC Member Jill Navran asks about the location of the professional reassignment program which allows career track faculty to go on academic leave. The location of information regarding this topic is shared by Vice Provost Roger Bounds.
- The Faculty Senate motions to vote on the first change in CoFS as Voting Block 1.
- The second change is regarding language to remove barriers for pre-promotion sabbatical applications.
- There were a few departments across campus who allowed their faculty to simultaneously apply for sabbatical and promotion for the upcoming year. This change of language would allow all tenure track faculty across campus to apply for promotion with tenure and sabbatical simultaneously.
- The Faculty Senate motions to vote on the second change in CoFS as Voting Block 2.
- The third change is regarding Annual Review Committees. Previously, it was required that the members of these review committees be sitting, tenured faculty members. This proposal no longer requires the members of the Committees to be tenured faculty, but faculty members that represent the roles and tracks of the unit. Faculty must have completed their first promotion. This change also allows flexibility for units to appoint or elect the members of the committee based on local unit processes and policies.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods states her excitement for this change.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith states that his department has been practicing these changes in previous years to great success.

- The Faculty Senate motions to vote on the third change of CoFS as Voting Block 3.
- The fourth change is regarding clarification on early promotion or tenure. Currently, CoFS states that after a faculty member has completed 5 years of services, they may go up for promotion and tenure in their 6<sup>th</sup> year. This change would allow faculty, with special permission from their chair and dean, to go up for promotion in their 5<sup>th</sup> year (one year early).
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares a comment that raises concern regarding the gatekeeping of promotion and tenure, which may force faculty to wait an extended period for promotion, despite their excellent work.
- President Ellis states that this change will help increase equity across campus and recognize the excellent work done by faculty members.
- Provost Pugliesi states that it is important that we view each promotion case differently, as faculty can have vastly different workloads that may favor certain aspects such as research, or teaching. With this, it is important to retain equity among faculty who apply for promotion and take in mind their workload distribution.
- There is a question regarding using the ability to go up for early tenure as a way to make a counteroffer to a faculty member who may have received an offer of a position at a different university. Provost Pugliesi states that the situation described gives maximal degrees of freedom to the unit, and this policy does not inhibit any of those freedoms.
- The Faculty Senate motions to vote on the fourth change as Voting Block 4.
- There is a final voting block that includes many small changes to wording and clarification around the document. There is little to no discussion on this block as many changes do not drastically change the current policies.
- The Faculty Senate motions to vote on the changes in the fifth block.

The Faculty Senate votes on the changes proposed to CoFS. The results are as follows:

Voting Block 1: 34 Yays, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain

Voting Block 2: 35 Yays, 0 Nays, 2 Abstains

Voting Block 3: 30 Yays, 6 Nays, 1 Abstain

Voting Block 4: 32 Yays, 3 Nays, 1 Abstain

Voting Block 5: 34 Yays, 1 Nay, 1 Abstain

All the changes to CoFS were voted on by the Faculty Senate and **approved**.

## **7. Professional Development and the SOE – Sara Rinfret**

Associate Vice Provost Sara Rinfret gives an update on a Professional Development in SOEs.

- The proposal is that faculty be able to have 0% - 10% of their workload for faculty professional development. This is not a requirement but allows faculty the opportunity to negotiate with chairs to allow time for faculty professional development.

- The allotted time for professional development in a faculty member's workload may not be taken out of their teaching workload.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith shares that the initial thinking of this task force was to think of ways to incentivize faculty members to participate in different professional development opportunities.
- Provost Pugliesi states the importance of allowing the opportunity of assigned time for professional development as it provides many valuable experiences for faculty to continue to learn and improve.
- Associate Vice Provost Amy Rushall brings up the concern of a faculty member being assigned a 0% for professional development on their workload. She hopes that faculty still strive to learn and grow from professional development activities whether assigned specific time or not.

Faculty Senate approval of these changes are voted on and **approved**.

#### **8. Task Force: Annual Review – Roger Bounds & Sara Rinfret**

Requested changes to the annual review process are discussed and voted on by the Faculty Senate.

- The first suggestion from the Task Force is to move Annual Reviews to the Spring. This would help alleviate the pressure of completing Annual Reviews during the busiest time of the semester.
- The second suggestion of the Task Force was to remove the requirement of simultaneous reviews for faculty going up for promotion. For example, currently a faculty has to apply for promotion, as well as prepare a portfolio for annual review at the same time.
- If these two parts of the proposal are approved the senate can discuss the remainder of the proposal during the Summer and then work on and vote on the proposal in Fall to implement them next year.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis raises the concern regarding a situation where a faculty member in their second year of teaching would no receive feedback from a review committee before the Annual Review process begins. This situation would only happen in the first year of implementation.
- Provost Pugliesi responds to this concern saying that this is the bare minimum of feedback required by the policy. Often units go much farther in terms of providing feedback to faculty.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith also raises the point that the Annual Review Committees need to be prepared and assembled by January.

The Faculty Senate votes on the moving annual review to the spring semester, and no longer requiring simultaneous annual review and promotion review. These two provisions of the proposal are **approved**.

#### **9. Councils and Committee Reports: Elections – Tarang Jain**

The Internal Faculty Senate Elections are held by Faculty Senate Vice President Tarang Jain.

- The Faculty Senate votes on the internal positions of the senate and the results are as follows:
  - President – Kate Ellis
  - Vice President – Tarang Jain
  - Treasurer – Lisa Bliss
  - Secretary – Miriam Espinoza
  - Parliamentarian – Blue Brazelton
  - Member at Large – Marco Cabrera Geserick
  - Member at Large – Juliana Suby
  - Chair of Council on Learning – John Tingerthal
  - Chair of Council on Faculty Rights & Responsibilities – Michael Smith
  - Chair of Council on Career Track Faculty Issues – Jill Navran
  - Chair of Distance Education – Donna Simon

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

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis will be sending out a survey to see how senators will be attending meetings next academic year. This data will be used to plan the locations for meetings in the upcoming year.

The Senate applauded Faculty Senate Kate Ellis for her great work this year.

**Meeting is adjourned at 5:01pm.**