

STC Faculty Senate Retreat Minutes  
Friday, September 18, 2020, 1:45 – 3:00 pm

Agenda

Members Present:

Dr. Aaron B. Wilson	Dr. Annette Wingard	Dr. Jacklyn Miller
Dr. Louis Lee	Dr. Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller	
G. Nathan England	Javier Reyes	Dr. Jesus Munoz
Mark R. Murray	Dr. Micah Bailey	Dr. Nihan Kayaardi
Dr. Pooja Rishi	Dr. Rainlilly Elizondo	Reynaldo Jasso
Richard Smith	Dr. Rolando Longoria	Sharon Rice
Dr. Sylvia L. Flores	Tim Weber	Dr. Wendi J.W. Williams

Ana Riojas

Meeting began at 1:45; started Teams Recording at 1:50 with no objections to recording brought forth.

Nathan England gave an overview of SACSCOC meeting he had with QEP Evaluation team. He had a meeting with Bradley Davis prior to SACSCOC meeting. Evaluation team asked for examples of shared governance. Nathan mentioned the Senate's work on Academic and Professional Credentials for Faculty (Policy 4151), Academic Classification, and creation of Handbook for Department Chairs.

1. New Business

- Senate Committees-Committee Needs  
Nathan England asked what committees existed, what committees needed members (committees need minimum of 3 members, best practice is 5).
- **Standing Committees:** Salary and Benefits Committee, Elections Committee, Constitution Committee

-The Salary and Benefits committee was left without a chairperson since Bruce Griffiths left. Nathan mentioned that a Senator would have to chair the committee. Mark R. Murray mentioned there were previously 4 to 5 members (possibly) and the information on the Faculty Senate Blackboard was outdated. Nathan will send email requesting nominations for new members since there were no volunteers at meeting. Nathan will also send an email to Bruce Griffiths for pertinent committee data and files.

-The Elections committee has been chaired by Mark R. Murray for 14 years. Mark mentioned that it was not difficult, but reviewing surveys and emails was time consuming. It would be nice if each committee had 5 people, 1 member from each division. Mark said he would be happy to continue to chair the Elections Committee. Sylvia Flores, Aaron Wilson, Javier Reyes volunteered to serve on the committee. Nathan will send email requesting more members.

-The Constitution Committee is chaired by FS Parliamentarian Richard Smith. He requested 2 or 3 more members. Mark R. Murray volunteered to serve and said it would be preferable if members were from different divisions. Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller also volunteered to serve on the committee. Nathan will send an email requesting for more members. Aaron B. Wilson asked if non-senator faculty members can serve on standing committees. Mark said any faculty can serve on a committee, just not chair it. Committee chairs need to be Faculty Senators.

- **Ad Hoc Committees:** Newsletter Committee, Synchronous vs. Asynchronous Online Committee, Covid-19 Committee

-Newsletter Committee - Nathan mentioned that the Faculty Senate newsletter committee welcomes contributions from Senators. Last newsletter sent in March.

-Synchronous vs. Asynchronous Online Committee- Aaron B. Wilson said the committee was focused on what can be done (if anything) and that it may need to be ongoing. Rainlilly Elizondo said the committee name may be changed at the next Faculty Senate meeting. A motion to rename will be put forth for vote if new name is necessary. The committee plans to

meet with Dr. Sale on Tuesday to discuss synchronous sessions and possible attribution codes.

- COVID-19 Committee – Both Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller and Sylvia Flores discussed committee needs. They are looking for participation from the entire college. The committee plans to hold a meeting prior to next Faculty Senate meeting. Mission statement can be found in Teams. Sylvia mentioned that they planned to poll faculty members for input and that it will take a qualitative research format. Input from senators with expertise in qualitative research is appreciated.

- Department Chair Selection Committee (is there still a need?). Department chairs to hold 3-year appointment period. If voted by department peers, Nathan wants to have clarification of process.

- Academic Classification Committee – Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Geller will send email.

Nathan brought up Program Coordinators had been tabled. A vote would be needed to bring it off the table and put back into action.

## 2. Other Business

- Office Hours Rebranded for Clarification and Inclusion (Dr. Wendi J.W. Williams)

- Dr. Wendi J.W. Williams provided a document with a link to a colleague's blogpost about rebranding of office hours. There is a current trend happening across disciplines of rebranding office hours to make clear to students that these hours are for them to visit their professors. She would like for the Senate to discuss this more fully at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

-Mark R. Murray mentioned that these were previously known as "visiting hours." Aaron B. Wilson asked if there was any kind of measure in place to see what students understand "office hours" to mean. Perhaps it could be a cultural or generational divide. He suggested a survey through RAS to ask

students' view of "office hours." Pooja Rishi said that for many first-generation students, they may not be familiar with the college culture so rebranding of "office hours" would make their purpose more obvious. Pooja agreed that it could be a cultural issue or a lack of communication. A name change would be a harmless change. Rolando Longoria asked if we could add Dr. Rainlilly Elizondo's research to the survey.

- Emergency hires/ Late hires for Fall 2020 Semester
  - Dr. Jaclyn Miller brought up the issue of late hires for the semester. Because of the last minute appointments, some of these faculty members did not have access to Blackboard until after classes had started. Also, the time in which the new hires were contacted was not satisfactory. Example given: An emergency hire was called at 1:20 pm on the Saturday before classes started with the message to call back by 2:00 pm to accept appointment.
  - Discussion was had among members: promises were made to make hiring decisions in July, but approvals did not occur until after faculty report date. This lateness has been a "chronic issue" on administrations' part, and was especially problematic this semester, given extenuating circumstances. Nathan said if the Senate were to take up the issue, it would need to bring it with recommendations.
  - Dr. Mahmoudian-Geller brought up the meeting the executive committee had with the VPAA at the end of the Spring semester. She said the VPAA cited Mid-July as the earliest that a decision could be made on hiring/rehiring lecturers due to student enrollment numbers. Mehrzad reported this back to the FS in a follow-up email.
  - Aaron B. Wilson said it seemed to be a general problem and the Senate could make suggestions for improvements, perhaps limit the number of sections offered; then incorporate mini-mesters. Pooja Rishi agreed that there needs to be some established practice. Nathan England agreed- the college sets hard deadlines for faculty to complete trainings, faculty is expected to do so. Administration should meet hard deadlines as well. Nathan mentioned he would be willing to take the issue up, but that the Senate needed to figure out what recommendations are needed.

- Q&A Session
  - Rolando Villarreal asked if any response had been received from the Vice President's office regarding the hybrid memo. Nathan said administration directed faculty to ask their chair or dean because it was a work-related issue. Nathan said he would get together with Rolando through email for further information.
  - Certificates for past term are in process. Certificates from previous terms are finally signed and will be distributed soon.
  - Pooja Rishi asked about the issue of incorporating three assignments for all courses. Mark R. Murray asked this to be added to next meeting's agenda.
  
- Virtual Care Package
  - Dr. Sylvia Flores provided a Care Package document filled with activities, lectures, and music to help alleviate the stress and pressure as the semester progresses.

Nathan mentioned that at next meeting, we will start with rounds for speaking since it will be first formal meeting of the year. This will ensure that everyone who wants to be heard is heard. He asked for senators to send any concerns or issues to him, the executive committee, or the entire senate.

Meeting adjourned at 3:09 pm

Next Faculty Senate Meeting: Tuesday, September 29, 4 - 5:30 pm