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Dalton State Faculty Senate: Minutes of March 21, 2019, Meeting

Members Present:

Sharlonne Smith (proxy for Andrea Ridley), Matt Hipps (Senate President), Cheryl Grayson, Deb Richardson, Jennifer Hooker-Parker (proxy for Gail Ward), Donna Bledsoe, Jane Taylor, Cecile DeRocher, Christian Griggs, Baogang Guo, Jeff Stanley, Travis McKie-Voerste, Amy Mendes, Lydia Postell, Lorena Sins, Tami Tomasello, Amy Burger, Susan Burran, Nick Gewecke, Tim Hawkins, Jean Johnson, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, Samantha Blair, Mike Hilgemann, Garen Evans, Lorraine Gardiner, Ben Laughter, Bob Haverland, Pat Chute (guest), Eduardo Meraz, (guest), Logan Huggins (guest), Tanner McEntyre (guest), Fidel Arrequin (guest), Michael Hoff (guest), Ale Velazquez (and team, guests), Terry Bailey (guest)

I. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Senate president Matt Hipps called the meeting to order at 3:19 pm and established that a quorum was present. He asked for approval of the minutes of the February 14, 2019 meeting. Ben Laughter moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

II. Blocking of Email on College Email Server

Baogang Guo invited staff from OCIS to explain why and how emails from international locations are blocked or quarantined. He noted that a number of time-sensitive emails from

China related to study abroad that were addressed to him had been quarantined. Terry Bailey explained that Dalton State does not block any international addresses. OCIS had considered doing so for security reasons, but due to the faculty disapproval of such a measure, it was never instituted. However, many emails are blocked because they come from suspicious overseas servers, particularly from ones in China and Germany. This is not within the control of OCIS. It is a function of Microsoft's Office 365. Some emails are quarantined, but can be accessed eventually after the content has been assessed and has been verified as safe. Checking on Baogang Guo's email account showed that out of 130 emails BG received from overseas email servers that were subsequently blocked or quarantined, 126 of them were malicious, which underscores the need for extreme security measures to protect our system.

Matt Hipps commented that particular cases aside, the faculty should have a say in how OCIS makes decisions that will affect the whole community. Mike Hoff noted that there should be an OCIS Advisory Committee. This was at one time a committee that was populated by the Committee on Committees and is still a standing committee. Mike Hoff also stated that communication across campus was an important part of the Strategic Plan. Dr. Pat Chute asked Mike to share the list of actual committees with her because she was unaware of this committee.

Christian Griggs wanted to know why some emails go to the Junk folder. Terry Bailey explained that student email accounts are particularly vulnerable and have been compromised many times in the past. Students should be using their Dalton State accounts to communicate with faculty. He said OCIS is not trying to censor anyone, but that we face genuine threats from malicious and criminal organizations. Also, those who want to use email accounts when out of the country must give prior notification.

Matt Hipps concluded with acknowledging that OCIS's job is security, but that we need better communication between faculty and OCIS. Dr. Chute asked that the Committee on Committees work on reestablishing the OCIS Advisory Committee or that this might be something for the Faculty Resource Committee to work on. Matt Hipps and Dr. Chute decided to work together on deciding which committee should be in charge of this issue or whether a new committee should be formed.

III. The Well-Being Initiative

Matt Hipps called on Ale Velazquez to describe the Well-Being Initiative. Ale Velazquez introduced her team and described how the Well-Being Initiative works. She showed how it could be accessed on OneUSG Connect by both Dalton State employees and their spouses. Participants of the program could earn \$100 for completing certain “healthy” activities during the time period from Jan 1 to Sept 30. Ale then distributed prizes to Senators who could answer questions about the program from what she had just presented.

IV. Faculty Senate Bylaw Change Proposal

Matt Hipps presented the changes proposed by the Faculty Evaluation Committee concerning the campus Promotion and Tenure Committee. These changes were the result of the discussion during the Feb 14, 2019 Senate meeting. The significant change to note is the adjustment of term for committee members from two years to three years. Also, the chair of the P&T committee will serve for two years. This is to maintain more continuity from year-to-year in the make-up of the committee. The changes will come up for vote at the April Senate meeting. Also, more changes are being considered by the Evaluation Committee. Some of these changes may include limitations on the amount of supporting materials submitted, timelines for completion and the process of notification prior to submitting a portfolio. Matt Hipps asked for feedback from people who have gone through the process. He asked that comments and suggestions be relayed to James Wright, chair of the Evaluation Committee, or to any of the committee members.

V. Conversation Regarding the Budget Hearings

Matt Hipps introduced the topic of the recent budget hearings. Notification that the hearings were going to take place was sent to the faculty on Monday, March 18 (the Monday of Spring Break) at 6:48 pm. The email announcing the hearings stated that the hearings would commence the following day at 10:00 am (also during Spring Break) and would be livestreamed for those unable to attend. Matt was concerned about the extreme lateness of the notification.

It is not reasonable to expect faculty to leave their Spring Break plans at the last minute to attend the budget hearings. Matt suggested that this is part of a pattern of behavior from the administration marginalizing faculty and their concerns. When faculty or the Senate are not informed until the last minute of an important meeting, we cannot organize and send someone to the meeting. When no faculty show up, it gives the wrong impression that we don't care, which justifies further marginalization.

Dr. Chute commented that since she arrived, the budget hearings have been recorded and livestreamed so faculty can follow what is happening even if they cannot attend. Also, those watching the proceedings remotely can ask questions during the procedure. Faculty watching the event have asked questions during the livestreaming. Dr. Chute also explained that the deans and VPs who attend the meeting have the templates a month ahead of time. Amy Mendes asked when the schedule is set. Dr. Chute said she thought it was about 24 hours ahead of time.

Matt Hipps said the main issue is notification. He said it is not unreasonable for the faculty to ask to be notified in advance of such important meetings more than a few hours before they happen.

Susan Burran asked if the budget meetings could occur on the same day every year. Christian Griggs emphasized that the meeting should never be during Spring Break. Dr. Chute said it was not possible to make the meeting on the same day every year. She admitted that the process was late this year and everyone was informed late. She agreed that the need for more advance notification can be conveyed to other administrators.

Mike Hoff again referred to the Strategic Plan and its emphasis on communication across campus. He asked if there was still a committee tracking the progress of the Strategic Plan. Susan Burran said yes, the committee exists, but that it has nothing to work on at present because implementation of the plan is behind by one year. Dr. Chute explained that the Strategic Plan was extended by one year because we had fallen behind on some of the action items, etc. Matt Hipps warned that the Strategic Plan could not be changed without a vote of the full faculty.

Travis McKie-Voerste wanted to return to the issue of the budget hearings. He asked why there is not a member of the faculty on the budget committee. Matt Hipps asked if we wanted to formally request to President Venable that a member of the faculty Senate be included on the budget committee. Travis McKie-Voerste moved that we make such a request of Dr. Venable. The motion was seconded. During discussion, there was a question of whether one member of the faculty was enough. With no further discussion, Matt Hipps asked for a hand vote. The motion was carried. Matt said he is required to send the President a formal request within four business days. Dr. Venable then has 10 business days to respond.

VI. Committee Reports

a. The Faculty Resource Committee submitted a revised plan for the proposed Instructional Technology Certification Program. The revised version cannot be voted on yet because it was not submitted more than 10 days before the Senate meeting. The Senate will vote on the revised proposal at the April 11, 2019 meeting.

VII. New Business

a. Student Withdrawal Information

Starting several years ago, students were required to explain why they were withdrawing from a class on the Schedule Adjustment Form. Faculty would like to know what the data show about why students withdraw. Where are the data and how are they being used? Matt Hipps suggested we need to contact Dr. Jodi Johnson to answer these questions.

b. Department Funding Model

As of 2019-2020, the Dalton State Foundation will no longer be giving funds to departments. Schools and departments will have to raise their own money for things like travel. One of the methods for raising money will be students phoning potential donors. However, we have been warned not to contact local businesses as this would be poaching Foundation donors. This means it will be hard to raise money and travel will be even further restricted than it is now. Matt Hipps admitted that the Foundation should not be responsible for funding faculty travel. The college should be.

Ben Laughter said the community sees the Foundation as the same as the college. They might not make distinctions about where their money is going. Also, we can't get into a competition with the Foundation.

Susan Burran asked if deans are doing their own fundraising. Matt Hipps replied yes.

Mike Hoff said that the college funded travel up until the recession began. As a result of the budget limitations, saving jobs was considered more important than travel. Matt Hipps said he resents being told he needs to contribute or be seen as not supporting his colleagues.

The Senators agreed that they want to know how this new model was determined. A request for Nick Henry and Dr. Venable to attend the April Senate meeting to inform us on this was moved, seconded, and approved by hand vote.

c. Presence of Administration on Online Courses

An unnamed faculty member contacted Matt Hipps about the issue of administrators being allowed into classes on Georgia VIEW without showing up on the class list. The faculty member who noticed this felt it was an attempt at clandestine observation and potentially a violation of academic freedom. Mike Hoff commented that administrators need to check that class syllabi and grades are available on Georgia VIEW. Annabelle McKie-Voerste said it should be clear whenever an administrator is online. Mike Hoff explained that as an administrator he only has access to Content, not chats, etc.

There was no conclusion as to whether this is a topic that the Senate wants to take up.

d. Employee Game Day

Susan Burran invited all faculty to take advantage of "Game Day" to be held March 28 at 3:00 pm either on the quad or in the gym depending on the weather. It is an event designed to let Dalton State employees mix and get to know each other.

e. SGA Senator Tanner McEntyre wanted to thank the faculty for their support in attempting to reach an agreement on use of student fees. He explained that the SGA budget committee had met with Dr. Venable and Jon Jaudon and reached an agreement on allocation of funds. The increase promised for the next several years comes from the elimination of one of the salaries in the Dean of Students Office from someone who chose to leave their job for another opportunity. As a result, next year (AY 2019-2020), \$60,000 will go back to the students. For the

next 3-4 years after that, an additional \$10,000 will go back to the students. The goal is to make 50% of the student fees available to the students for their organizations and activities.

f. Matt Hipps reminded everyone that with the approach of the end of the year, some senators will be rotating off the Senate. Deans need to make sure to hold elections for the open positions.

VI. Adjournment and Next Meeting

The next Senate meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2019. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M Johnson, Senate secretary