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Dalton State Faculty Senate: Minutes of February 10, 2022, Meeting

Members Present:

Christian Griggs (Senate President), Karren Bennett, Jacqueline Boals, Alicia Briganti, Amy Burger, Omin Chandler, Cindy Davis, Cecile de Rocher, Carl Gabrini, Tom Gonzalez, Sarah Mergel (as proxy for Matt Higgs), Michael Hilgemann, Calley Hornbuckle, Elizabeth Hubbs, Mike Joseph, Clint Kinhead, Jon Littlefield, Luke Manget, Nancy Mason, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, Travis McKie-Voerste, Hussein Mohamed, Jennifer Parker, Jennifer Randall, Tammy Rice, Patrick Ryle, Sharlonne Smith, Laura Tolliver, Caleb Watkins, Lirong Yu, Xinghai Zhao, Margaret Venable (*ex officio*), Bruno Hicks (*ex officio*), Jodi Johnson (guest), Nick Gewecke (guest), Lisa Peden (guest), Barbara Tucker (guest), Mike D'Itri (guest), Stacie Kilgore (guest), Melissa Whitesell (guest), Tammy Byron (guest), David Brown (guest), Vallarie Pratt (guest), Molly Zhou (guest)

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Senate was convened remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty Senate President Christian Griggs called the meeting to order at 3:15pm and established that a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from Last Senate Meeting (November 11, 2021)

Christian asked for approval of the minutes of the November 11, 2021, meeting; Pat Ryle made the motion, and it was seconded by Carl Gabrini. The motion was passed via online vote.

III. Reports from Officers

a. General Update from Christian Griggs

Christian said that there's not really much to share, but we do have a lot to discuss this meeting. He wanted to thank everyone for keeping DSC functioning during the pandemic. Because there were no additional mitigation efforts put in place by the Board of Regents, we've had to push through it, and he appreciates the flexibility offered to students, as well as the help and support of everyone, including administration and the flexibility they've offered us. Thank you for all you've been doing to keep us going.

IV. Reports from Committees

- a. Academic Conduct Committee. Nothing to report.
- b. Academic Programs Committee. Nothing to report.
- c. Assessment Committee. Nothing to report.
- d. Faculty Development Committee. Nothing to report.
- e. Faculty Evaluation Committee. Omin Chandler reported that the committee met on February 2nd and discussed revision of the language in the Promotion and Tenure (P&T) ePortfolio items for P&T application year as written in the manual; this project is in progress. They also discussed whether signatures are required on the annual reports (the assessment of goals) and annual performance reviews, as they are in the process of updating these. Finally, they discussed how to approach student success based on the Board of Regions' documents. They believe that other committees should share in this project as well as providing a definition for student success and the assessment, which includes a rubric criterion. The committee agreed to delay this project until after meeting with academic affairs (Dr. Hicks & Nielson which was held on 2/4/22) so they could have more and clearer directions on how to approach the student success initiative, changes to the manual, and implementation on the DSC Campus. They will meet again on Friday, February 18, 2022.
- f. Faculty Resource Committee. Jennifer Randall reported that the committee met on Tuesday, February 8th where they talked about the virtual reality lab (VRL) and its policies. The committee will put together survey questions that will come out in April. They also talked about getting the VRL and laptop checkout policies put on syllabi so that these resources are more widely advertised because faculty often forget to

mention these resources to students. Putting these policies in syllabi will ensure more opportunities for students to learn about them.

- g. Faculty Welfare Committee. Jacqueline Boals reported that the committee met on February 2nd and discussed the free speech policy. They articulated their role as mediators between faculty and administration, and the document is on the agenda today for approval.
- h. Strategic Planning Monitoring Committee. Nick Gewecke reported that the committee met last week to sort out summarizing action plan results from the 2020-2021 academic year, and they are meeting on Monday to go over the final document to have it ready in time for the SACS accreditation.
- i. Student Success Committee. Carl Gabrini reported that the committee is waiting to see if they are needed for anything related to student success initiatives, so they did not want to start on anything else in case they are needed.
- j. Tenure and Promotion Committee. Alicia Briganti reported that the committee met on two occasions to evaluate and vote on the portfolios of the 21 candidates up for promotion and/or tenure this year. The committee made their recommendations, and letters will go out to the Provost on Monday February 14th.
- k. Ad hoc Calendar Committee. Christian Griggs reported that the committee will meet soon to compile data and make recommendations so that they can send a report on their findings related to the academic calendar to Jodi Johnson.

V. New Business

- a. Updates to Senate Bylaws (proposed updates are attached)
 - i. Adding Institutional Research Director to Academic Programs Committee as a non-voting member

Nick Gewecke stated that, following the transition to a new Institutional Accreditation Liaison in January 2022, and as part of our SACSCOC Compliance Certification self-study, some unreported substantive changes came to light related to actions taken by the Academic Programs Committee in recent years. In

order to more readily address SACSCOC accreditation considerations regarding changes to academic programs, it would be best for our SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison to be involved with the Academic Programs Committee in a non-voting advisory role. The role of the IAL on the committee would be to review proposals and advise the committee of any SACSCOC considerations, not to be involved in approving or denying proposals. Carl Gabrini made a motion to approve this change, and it was seconded by Jennifer Randall and approved via electronic poll.

- ii. Faculty Welfare Committee to have added role of resolving disputes between faculty and administration related to academic freedom

The Faculty Welfare Committee was asked to look at the role of academic freedom as we need a body responsible for resolving disputes related to academic freedom. Mary Nielsen suggested that these cases would be best handled by the Faculty Welfare committee which would entail adding this role to the committee's bylaws. The proposed language for this addition is attached. Carl Gabrini made a motion to add this language to the bylaws, and it was seconded by Mike Joseph and approved via electronic poll.

Christian reminded everyone that all changes still need to be approved by the full faculty at the April faculty meeting.

- b. Approval of Documents for Library – Jennifer Randall

Melissa Whitesell and the Faculty Resource Committee have been working on these documents since last semester, but they needed to finalize the language in the documents before bringing them to the Senate for a vote of approval. Both documents are attached.

- i. VR Lab Policies

This document outlines guidelines for checking out equipment and abiding by safety protocols when using the VRL.

- ii. Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality Release of Liability

This document explains that all participants in the VRL are required to sign a waiver releasing the Library from any liability regarding the use of this equipment and software.

After being approved, these forms will eventually move online, and priority for usage of the VRL will be given to students doing work and to faculty for class use. The tentative opening date is March 21st. Carl Gabrini made a motion to approve these documents, and it was seconded by Mike Joseph and approved via electronic poll

- c. Promotion and Tenure Support – ad hoc Committee for Student Success Definition and Activities

Christian Griggs let the Senate know that Staff Council offered to create their own ad hoc committee to offer suggestions on how to define student success and identify activities; in addition, Barbara Tucker offered assistance as chair of the QEP committee. Christian believes putting together an ad hoc committee would allow a wider net to get people across campus involved, including members of Staff Council, the QEP committee, and the Student Success committee. Carl Gabrini made a motion to create such as committee. It was seconded by Jennifer Randall and approved via electronic poll.

- d. Faculty Welfare Committee Request – Does the Senate want the committee to write a letter requesting cost-of-living pay increase due to inflation

Stemming from a conversation in the most recent Faculty Welfare Committee meeting, Robert Culp asked Christian to address this matter with Faculty Senate. Annabelle McKie-Voerste made a motion for the Faculty Welfare Committee to write a letter requesting a cost-of-living pay increase due to inflation; it was seconded by Nancy Mason and approved via electronic poll.

- e. Change to Faculty Senate Executive Committee – Christian Griggs informed the Faculty Senate that John Gullledge has resigned as President Elect, effective at the end of that week. John was willing to continue for the rest of the semester, but they decided to move forward to get a new president-elect in place so they could get involved as soon as possible. John is not present at this Senate meeting, but he is willing to discuss his reasons for resigning with anyone who visits him in his office. How to address this

matter is not in the Senate bylaws, so the Executive committee came up with a process to address it for this semester. They thought having someone else in place now was needed because the next election for Executive Committee members is coming up at the of this semester. Christian, as Senate President, with support of the rest of the Executive Committee, is recommending a replacement that is to be approved by all of Faculty Senate. Christian nominated Hussein Mohammed, professor of Biology, to take over the position of President-Elect. Carl Gabrini made a motion to approve this recommendation, and Mike Joseph seconded the motion. It was approved via electronic poll. Hussein thanked the Faculty Senate for their confidence in him, and he stated he will do his best to serve in this role. Christian said this matter is something that will be addressed in the bylaws going forward because there should be a process in place when this occurs.

VI. Announcements

- a. Next Faculty Senate meeting on Thursday, March 10 at 3:15pm
- b. Golf Signs put up on campus. Signs recognizing the golf team's national championship were put up around campus, one on each side of campus and one facing the freeway.
- c. Other announcements. There were no other announcements.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Briganti
Senate Secretary