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Dalton State Faculty Senate: Minutes of October 14, 2021, Meeting

Members Present:

Christian Griggs (Senate President), Ali Akdeniz, Karren Bennett, Jacqueline Boals, Alicia Briganti, Amy Burger, Omin Chandler, Cindy Davis, Cecile de Rocher, Carl Gabrini, Nick Gewecke, Tom Gonzalez, John Gullledge, Matt Higgs, Calley Hornbuckle, Leah Howell, 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, Greg Smith, Sharlonne Smith, Laura Tolliver, Caleb Watkins, Kevin Yan, Lirong Yu, Xinghai Zhao, Margaret Venable (*ex officio*), Bruno Hicks (*ex officio*), Jodi Johnson (guest), Mary Nielsen (guest), Lisa Peden (guest), Barbara Tucker (guest), Mike D'Itri (guest), Elizabeth Dunaway (guest), Tammy Byron (guest), Jean Johnson (guest), Catherine Clinard (guest), Lori McCarty (guest), Katherine Hyatt (guest), Mike Hilgemann (guest), Eric Crisp (guest), Marilyn Helms (guest), Kimberly Buckner (guest), Tammi Walsh (guest), Mellanie Robinson (guest)

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Senate was convened remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 (September 9, 2021)

Christian asked for approval of the minutes of the April 8, 2021, meeting; John Gullledge made the motion, and it was seconded by Carl Gabrini. The motion was passed via electronic poll.

III. Reports from Officers

- a. General Updates – Christian Griggs, Faculty Senate President acknowledged that there is a lot going on right now, and he thanked Senate members for staying updated with current issues, talking with faculty within their respective areas, and staying in touch with him about matters of concern. He encouraged faculty to continue reaching out if he could be of any help.

IV: Reports from Committees

John Gullledge explained how to submit committee reports to Faculty Senate. He said that it is much like last year; he set up a page in GeorgiaVIEW named *Faculty Senate Committee Meeting Minutes 2021-2022*. To upload committee meeting minutes, the elected Chair or Secretary should go to the Content area, find the module for their committee, and upload the minutes into that module. These minutes are available for all senate members and the general faculty to review, but only the Committee Chairs and Secretaries have instructor level access to post the meeting minutes.

- a. Academic Conduct Committee. Nothing to report.
- b. Academic Programs Committee. Nothing to report.
- c. Assessment Committee. Ali Akdeniz reported that the committee met last week and elected a chair and secretary. The committee discussed some of the things that will need to be done this year.
- d. Faculty Development Committee. Kevin Yan reported that the committee met on October 6th and Kylie Berry was elected to serve as chair. They plan on having their next meeting in November during which they will discuss plans for the year, including the annual BOLD talks.
- e. Faculty Evaluation Committee. Omin Chandler reported that the committee met on October 6th and elected Molly Zhou as chair and as DK Kim as secretary. They briefly discussed including a statement in the Faculty Evaluation Manual regarding conflict of

interest when, for example, a Tenure & Promotion committee member is going up for tenure and/or promotion themselves. They discussed whether it should be required that the committee member excuse themselves from the discussion of their own portfolio. They will continue this discussion in the next meeting in November.

- f. Faculty Resource Committee. Jennifer Randall reported that the committee met at the end of September. She mentioned that the library has a new virtual reality space that faculty and students will be able to use however they like. The committee have been editing documents relating to lab policies and liability, and they are waiting on Nick Henry to approve them. Once approved, they will then send the policies to the Faculty Senate for a vote of approval before the facilities will be open for use.
- g. Faculty Welfare Committee. Jacqueline Boals reported that the committee elected Robert Culp as chair and Chuck Fink as secretary. The first meeting was more of an organizational meeting. Amy Burger described the work of the committee last year, and they discussed things that might be coming up this year.
- h. Strategic Planning Monitoring Committee. Nick Gewecke reported that the committee met on October 1st. They elected Nick as chair and Luke Manget as secretary. Their next meeting is in early November, and they will take a look at the results from the action plan reports from last year's Strategic Plan.
- i. Student Success Committee. Carl Gabrini reported that the committee met on October 4th and elected Carl as both chair and secretary. They discussed possible new business, and they are looking for ideas for smoothing out the process for faculty taking on more advising duties.
- j. Tenure and Promotion Committee. John Gullledge reported that he was elected chair at the committee meeting last year, but they haven't met yet as a full committee this year. As chair, he was tasked with evaluating the candidate portfolios for completeness before approving them to move forward in the Tenure & Promotion process. Because there were 24 candidates, John recruited Alicia Briganti to help him review the portfolios. Unfortunately, some candidates had to be disqualified because of missing documents. Also because of the large number of candidates, the committee may need

to meet more than once in early spring to review and discuss the candidates up for tenure and/or promotion.

V. New Business

- a. Senate Response to Veto of COVID-19 Resolutions. Christian mentioned that, as laid out by the Senate bylaws, we need to respond to Dr. Venable's vetoes. We can accept the vetoes, offer compromise resolutions, or reject the vetoes. If we reject the vetoes, they would then have to be sent to the full faculty for debate at the next faculty meeting in December. Christian suggested we accept these vetoes because we knew they were coming, and COVID-19 cases are going down. Although he acknowledged that the COVID-19 policies were handled very poorly by the Board of Regents, he also reminded everyone that we cannot change those policies ourselves. We can reconsider these resolutions again if COVID-19 cases start to rise again. John Gullede made a motion to accept the vetoes, and Mike Joseph seconded the motion. The motion passed via electronic poll without discussion.
- b. Updates to DSC Statutes – Mary Nielsen and Christian Griggs. Matt Hipps made a motion to approve these updates, and it was seconded by Carl Gabrini. Mary Nielsen mentioned that the changes are all very minor: essentially the Chief of Staff position no longer exists, so it needed to be removed, and Dr. Nielsen's position of Associate Provost in the Office of Academic Affairs was not in the statutes, so it needed to be added. All changes are highlighted in the document so that everyone can see them. All that is left to change is the Table of Contents, but Dr. Nielsen didn't want to remove anything before the changes were voted on. The motion passed via electronic poll.
- c. Resolution on Golf Team National Championship – Patrick Ryle mentioned that the last two years have been difficult on us for so many reasons, but we've gotten through it somehow, and we should be proud. Last year, the men's golf team won the national championship in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Pat doesn't think the team has gotten the recognition it deserves. When great things happen, we need to be proud about them and tell the world. Thus, this resolution recognizes the golf team's accomplishments during COVID-19, and he requested that Dalton State puts up banners

around campus to advertise their championship season. Pat made a motion to pass the resolution, and Jon Littlefield seconded the motion. Carl Gabrini commented that the team members were academically excellent as well, with an average GPA above 3.0. Pat emphasized that the resolution was authored by both him and Carl Gabrini. The motion passed via electronic poll.

d. Other New Business.

- Parking policy: Leah Howell talked to a faculty member who expressed concerns about students parking in faculty parking spots. The faculty member mentioned that the parking fee for this violation is only \$10, and there is an issue with certain people repeatedly parking in faculty lots and taking the risk of receiving these parking violations because the fee is so low. One idea is to give repeat offenders a higher ticket fee, but we may not have control over that. This faculty member had to ask a student to leave so that they could park. Christian stated that, as Leah mentioned, we don't have control over parking fees, but we could request to meet with Nick Henry or the police chief from Public Safety about this issue. Kimberly Buckner, the Senate SGA representative, mentioned that students who are repeat offenders have to meet with William Mast to go over the guides and regulations, so she suggested that before ticket prices are raised, make sure students are meeting with William Mast, and if they are still offending even after the meeting, then raise prices for those repeat offenders. Tom Gonzalez made a motion for Christian to discuss this issue with Nick Henry, and it was seconded by Matt Higgs. Jodi Johnson found the parking violation fee chart, and the document states that after the third parking ticket within a semester, the fine doubles. She shared the list of fines in the chat for others to see. The motion passed via online poll.
- BOR approved changes to post-tenure review: Christian stated that we need to discuss our response to the policy changes that were recently approved by the Board of Regents (BOR); the information about this was shared with faculty via email. The changes are reflected in Section 8.3 of the BOR policy manual.

Christian mentioned that the final version is better than the originally suggested changes, but that the whole process has been strange. When the Post-Tenure Review Committee was put together, they initially suggested changes that are quite different than what was approved. There have been some changes due to faculty pressure in the version that was approved earlier this week. However, there are still concerns and vague sections that are left open to interpretation. We have a chance to engage with these changes if we want to. Thus, we need to figure out how we'd like to proceed. We have the opportunity to meet with Dr. Tristan Denley, the Chief Academic Officer of the USG, for him to review these changes with us. He has already met with some other institutions, so that is an option we can pursue. There has also been discussion of a vote of no confidence at various institutions and even the possibility of USG Faculty Council being involved. At this point, it seems it might be beneficial to invite Dr. Denley to come meet with us so he can explain these changes. Carl Gabrini made a motion to invite Dr. Denley to meet with the faculty, and it was seconded by Hussein Mohammed. Matt Hipps stated that the USG Faculty Council passed a resolution in Senate to the interim chancellor, Teresa MacCartney, expressing concerns about how faculty senates were not allowed to be involved in this process before the BOR voted on it. Both Academic Affairs committee and BOR voted with no discussion to pass the resolutions. Matt's concern is that, after hearing Dr. Denley give his spiel multiple times now, we are already in the implementation stage, so explanations of the changes at this point don't matter all that much. There were actually six faculty members on the committee, and as someone on the Council for several years now, we never heard anything or had anything flagged, so Dr. Denley will likely state that they engaged in shared governance and did not get any feedback. At this point if Dr. Denley is coming, the conversation should be around implementation and what the changes actually mean because pressing him on those issues would probably do us more good than pressing him on the timelines. John Gullede mentioned that while student

success is mentioned throughout document, there is no detail about what that actually means. Also, the preliminary report and the recommendations that were made are essentially polar opposites of one another. It seems as if Dr. Denley didn't like the committee report, so he went with his own. Matt Hipps reminded everyone that it's not just Dr. Denley making and supporting these changes, it's also the entire BOR. Some of the pressure is coming externally (e.g., the legislature is wanting to reign "unruly" faculty back in). In having met with Dr. Denley multiple times, Matt's understanding is that individual campuses will determine what student success means; some campuses might create a fourth category and have student success on its own; others may choose to envelop student success in areas that already exist. Matt added as a word of caution that, as we are in the search for a new chancellor and whoever that person is will have serious ramifications for all of these choices being made. We currently sit with the devil that we do know and the devil that we don't know may end up being worse for us than the current situation that we have. So, as we talk about a vote of no-confidence, who his replacement might be could be concerning and it could further this narrative that we are a faculty that don't want to be evaluated and checked. Carl Gabrini noticed that in one of news stories, it spoke about student success activities as being advising and mentoring which sounds like activities outside the classroom that we are already doing. Matt Hipps said that the way it is currently worded, we could choose to ignore student success and focus on the other three areas already being evaluated. The motion to invite Dr. Denley to speak to faculty about these BOR policy changes passed via electronic poll.

VI. Announcements

- a. Next Faculty Senate meeting on Thursday, November 11 at 3:15pm via Teams
- b. Other announcements. There were no other announcements.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Briganti, Senate Secretary