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## Meeting of September 14, 2017, Faculty Senate Meeting

### Members Present

[Senate President] Sarah Mergel; [Wright School of Business] Garen Evans, Lorrain Gardiner, Ben Laughter, Bob Haverland; [Education] Anna Hart, Andrea Ridley; [Health Professions] Cheryl Grayson, Lisa Hunt, Gene Powers, Deb Richardson, Gail Ward; [Liberal Arts] Tammy Byron, Jenny Crisp, Christian Griggs, Baogang Guo, Kent Harrelson, Matt Hipps, Cathy Hunsicker, Travis McKie-Voerste, Sarah Min, Lydia Postell, Tami Tomasello; [Library] Lee Ann Cline; [Science, Technology, and Math] April Kay (proxy for Susan Burran), Norm DesRosiers, Nick Gewecke, Tim Hawkins, Jean Johnson, Annabelle McKie-Voerste, Gene Mesco, Vince Postell, Chris Wozny; [Provost and VPAA] Pat Chute; [Guests] Kerri Allen, Bonnie Semora

### Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Senate President Sarah Mergel called the meeting to order at 3:16. Bennie Laughter moved to approve the minutes of the April 13 and April 20 meetings. The motion was seconded and passed.

### Shared Governance

Matt Hipps stated that faculty are concerned over policy changes that have been made without input from the faculty, particularly policies on teaching overloads and eCore classes. He also stated that at the final faculty meeting in April, the revised college statutes that had been approved by the senate were not voted on by the full faculty because of objections by an administrator. Matt emphasized that it is his own opinion, but he feels that circumventing the

established procedures resulted in the derailing of a year's worth of work by the faculty and sets a dangerous and self-defeating precedent. If the college is serious about self-governance, everyone needs to follow the channels and procedures. He emphasized that this does not mean being combative or adversarial, but shared governance should be factual rather than hypothetical.

Travis McKie-Voerste asked how the problem could be addressed. Chris Wozny said that our communication could be improved, with better channels between the administration and faculty. He pointed out that organizational units such as the Center for Academic Excellence, FYES, and the Center for International Education seemingly no longer exist, although no announcement for the reasons has been made. Shouldn't the administrators responsible for these decisions at least email the faculty?

Dr. Chute stated that these were good points. The Centers such as CAE were changed to committees because of recommendations from the Carl Vinson study; a campus administrative unit must have staff to be called a "Center."

Sarah Mergel pointed out that the study has not been completed and that its findings have not been shared with the faculty. Chris Wozny asked if the committees will perform the same function as the Centers. Dr. Chute stated that she had asked Marina Smitherman of the former CAE to focus on orientation for new faculty. Annabelle McKie-Voerste asked if there would be a Teaching and Learning conference this year; Dr. Chute stated that there would not be.

Travis McKie-Voerste suggested having a faculty senator present at Deans' meetings and that Deans were not always passing information on to faculty. Dr. Chute said that the Deans should function as intermediaries between administration and faculty. Matt Hipps mentioned "collateral damage" to faculty morale when we receive only partial information; information coming directly from the President or Provost is different from that coming from a Dean. Dr.

Chute said that Deans' meetings are "boring" and "exhausting" but that the senate can send a representative to them.

Jenny Crisp stated that shared governance consists of more than just receiving information about policy changes; faculty should be in the conversation when decisions are being made.

Chris Wozny asked whether the minutes of Deans' meetings could be distributed to the faculty; Dr. Chute said that summaries of the meetings could be distributed.

#### eCore and eMajor

Dr. Chute stated that she made the decision to limit the number of eCore classes that faculty can teach based on budget and faculty course loads. She said that Dalton State is different from other schools in her experience and needs a committee to examine faculty teaching loads. Matt Higgs said that there is no indication of problems with teaching quality, so why limit eCore classes? Dr. Chute stated that some faculty members are teaching "way too much" and that she has "a lot of problems" with that. She said that the typical eCore load system-wide is one course per teacher per semester.

Matt said that there has been no conversation with the faculty on the issue; he has taught eCore classes while completing all of his assigned work. Tammy Byron asked whether there were any studies on the effects of teaching eCore on faculty performance. Dr. Chute said that although she is aware that Dalton State faculty salaries are "abysmal," faculty who teach more than the number of courses they are contracted for are "overburdening" themselves; faculty shouldn't go over their assigned number of courses.

Lisa Hunt said that she would not be here at Dalton State without the extra income from teaching additional classes. John Gullledge said that he teaches one or more eCore classes and overloads every semester and that it is "insulting" to say that he's not doing a good job, particularly seeing that he is tenured and was recently promoted to Professor. He added the question of why, if salaries at Dalton State are so low, the VPAA was seeking to limit our options for augmenting our earnings: "I would think the VPAA would be looking for ways to help us

increase our salaries rather than decreasing them, especially when she has no data to support her recent policy decision on the matter."

Annabelle McKie-Voerste said that eCore pays better than overloads, with less work, but there are fewer opportunities to teach it during the summer.

Dr. Chute stated that Dalton State's graduation rate is dropping; she feels this indicates that faculty are taking on too much work and not focusing on students. Matt Hipps asked how this correlation was established; no one saw it as a problem when he taught two additional courses without additional pay. He asked whether any link had been established between eCore and graduation rates; some of the most dynamic faculty teach eCore, and they are a consistently high-performing group.

Travis McKie-Voerste stated that the discussion was wandering from the agenda topic of shared governance. Dr. Chute said that the revised statutes were back on the senate's desk; Dr. Venable had rejected them. Matt pointed out that the established procedure for the document, once passed by the Senate, would be for it to be voted on by the full faculty and then sent to the President but that Dr. Venable did not allow the faculty to vote on it. Sarah Mergel said that we need Dr. Venable to tell the senate what her objections were; Chris Wozny said that Dr. Venable's response should be in writing so that the senate can understand what we need to change in the document. Sarah stated that she would request a written response from Dr. Venable.

### [Academic Calendar](#)

Jean Johnson stated that there are faculty concerns about the uneven distribution of weekdays in the fall calendar. There are 15 Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays on the schedule, but 16 Tuesdays and only 14 Thursdays. This is a particular concern with classes that meet only one day a week, so a Tuesday-only class would have two extra meetings compared with a Thursday-only class. Cheryl Grayson added that the discrepancy also affects half-term classes.

### Committee Priorities

Sarah Mergel stated that some Schools lack enough tenured faculty to provide members for certain committees. Matt Hipps made a motion to suspend the tenure requirement for the School of Education's member of the Faculty Welfare Committee for the 2017-2018 academic year. The motion was seconded and discussed.

**The motion to suspend the tenure requirement for the School of Education's member of the Faculty Welfare Committee for the 2017-2018 academic year passed unanimously.**

Sarah stated that the Faculty Development Committee will look into alternatives to the Teaching and Learning Conference. The Evaluation Committee will look at standards for faculty evaluation across disciplines. The Welfare Committee will work on revising the Faculty Handbook. The Academic Conduct Committee will work on revising the academic conduct policy in the Student Conduct Manual.

### October Senate Meeting

Jenny Crisp recommended that the senate decide on the date for the next senate meeting while a quorum was still present. Sarah Mergel said that since the October meeting would fall during the Fall Break, the senate would need to choose another date in October. Chris Wozny moved to hold the meeting on October 10. The motion was seconded and discussed; the vote was against it. Travis McKie-Voerste moved to hold the meeting on October 5; the motion was seconded and discussed.

**The motion to schedule the next senate meeting on October 5 was passed.**

Dr. Chute said that there was a need for an event for part-time and adjunct instructors; Sarah Mergel said that the Faculty Development Committee could create an ad-hoc committee for this purpose.

### Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted by Kent Harrelson, secretary