



Faculty Senate

Minutes of THE FACULTY SENATE OF ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

This meeting of the 2023-2024 Faculty Senate was held at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 22, in Rothwell 456 and on Webex. The following members were present:

Mr. Stan Apple	Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman
Dr. Michael Bradley	Dr. Tom Nupp
Dr. John Clements	Dr. Azin Sanjari Pirmahaleh
Dr. Rene Couture	Dr. Michael Rogers
Dr. Melissa Darnell	Dr. Kuldeep Singh
Dr. Peter Dykema	Dr. Bethany Swindell
Dr. David Eshelman	Dr. Arwen Taylor
Ms. Jasmine Greer	Ms. Sherry Tinarella
Dr. Jacob Grosskopf	Dr. Ellen Treadway
Dr. Newt Hilliard	Dr. Erica Wondolowski
Dr. Virginia Jones	Ms. Susan West
Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon	

Absent: Dr. Asim Shrestha

Also present: Dr. Sean Reed (outgoing Chair); Dr. Julie Furst-Bowe (VPAA); Dr. Jeanine Myers (Associate VPAA); Ms. Tammy Weaver (Registrar); Dr. Russell Jones (Interim President)

- I. **Call to Order:** Dr. Sean Reed called the meeting to order at 12:14 p.m. Dr. Reed formerly handed the Senate off to Dr. Hilliard.
 - a. **Introduction of Senate members.**
 - b. **Approval of the Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes from the April 26 meeting from Stan Apple, seconded by Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman. Motion carried.
- II. **Committee Updates:** Delegates to each committee affirmed or changed
 - a. Standing Committees
 - i. Budget Advisory Committee: Dr. Tom Nupp
 - ii. General Education Committee: Ms. Sherry Tinarella
 - iii. Institutional Aid Committee: Dr. Arwen Taylor
 - iv. Shared Governance Committee: Dr. Newt Hilliard
 - v. Campus Space and Utilization Committee: Dr. Kuldeep Singh

- vi. Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee: Dr. Newt Hilliard
- vii. Institutional Scholarship Appeals Committee: Dr. Bethany Swindell
- viii. Professional Development Committee Dr. Peter Dykema
- ix. Technology Prioritization and Impact Committee: Mr. Stan Apple
- x. Emergency Management and Safety Committee: Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon
- b. Ad Hoc & Senate Committees
 - i. Faculty Workload Committee: Dr. Melissa Darnell; Dr. Myers is now the chair of this committee.
 - ii. Insurance Benefits Committee: Dr. Jon Clements
 - iii. Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee: Dr. Erica Wondolowski
 - iv. Exploratory Committee on P & T Salary Increases: Dr. Newt Hilliard
 - v. Strategic Planning Steering Committee: Dr. Darnell noted this committee no longer meets and could be dissolved. Motion to dissolve the committee from Dr. Newt Hilliard, seconded by Dr. Arwen Taylor. Motion carried
 - vi. Hiring Processes: Dr. Dykema explained the no longer relevant background to the committee. Motion to dissolve the committee from Dr. Peter, seconded by Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman. Motion carried
 - vii. Prior Learning Assessment: Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman
 - viii. Transfer Students Committee: Dr. Furst-Bowe reported this committee has been dissolved.
 - ix. Micro-Credentials: Dr. Michael Bradley
 - x. Ad-hoc Committee on Course Evaluations: Dr Laffoon reported that eval response rates went from 40 to 48% last semester, the certificate option has been turned on, and evaluation dates will now align with the drop deadline. Per Dr. Furst-Bowe, further improvements to the response rates will be handled via professional development, rather than a committee.
 - xi. Rules Committee: Dr. Peter Dykema
 - xii. Recruitment and Retention: Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon

III. New Business

- a. Election of new Secretary: Dr. Arwen Taylor nominated Dr. Ellen Treadway, seconded by Dr. Virginia Jones. Motion carried
 - b. Registrar: Ms. Weaver reported on AB2M proposals: five were submitted this summer, the Grad College voted to accept all five, and the Curriculum Committee tabled two, which will be tweaked and reconsidered at the next meeting. Motion to consider these curricular changes as a block from Dr. Tom Nupp, seconded by Ms. Sherry Tinarella. Motion carried. Motion to approve from Dr. Jon Clements, seconded by Dr. Arwen Taylor. Motion carried.
- Ms. Weaver noted that after the August 29 Curriculum Committee meeting, the Senate will see 600+ pages of catalog changes and curriculum material, all

bookmarked and organized; you might want to start on the homework early, so it can be submitted by the ADHE deadline of November 1.

- c. VPAA Update: Proposals for OER, Hyflex, Study Abroad, and undergrad research grants are due September 15. The VPAA search failed in the Spring; a new search is beginning almost immediately, with the goal of having a provost/VPAA starting in January. Currently four Deans are interim; a search for a permanent Dean of the Graduate School has begun. A draft of
- d. Reduction in Force policy: Dr. Hilliard circulated a draft of the policy created by a committee over the summer, looking for input so that it can begin its ascent up the hierarchy. This document addresses a worst-case scenario in which a program is eliminated, meant to assure there are agreed-upon procedures in place, rather than an opening for outside interests to interfere. We'll need to get this revised and voted on by the end of September, so it's critical to get feedback from faculty before our next meeting.

IV. **Old Business**

Faculty Satisfaction Survey: Last Senate meeting saw a robust discussion of the Survey. Senate will need to discuss how and whether to continue running the Survey, looking at a first ad-hoc committee meeting in September sometime.

V. **Open Forum**

Dr. Wondolowski noted that with the center of the campus under construction, there's no accessible parking; Dr. Singh agreed to take this up with the Campus Space and Utilization Committee

VI. **Announcements and Informational Items**

-Dr. Treadway gave information on the Walton Family Foundation loan forgiveness program for students from underrepresented populations who teach in NWA, now expanded to include Pope and Sebastian county.

-Dr. Rogers noted that September 17 is Constitution Day and he'll need volunteers for activities in local school and at the tailgate.

-Interim President Jones conveyed that he plans to attend Senate meetings as invited, is starting the VPAA/Provost search, and hopes for input on the reduction in force policy. Faculty can contact him at president@atu.edu and he will respond and attend meetings whenever possible.

- VII. **Adjournment:** Mr. Stan Apple moved to Adjourn, seconded by Dr. Ellen Treadway.
Motion carried.



Faculty Senate

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sean Reed'.

Dr. Sean Reed, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Arwen Taylor'.

Dr. Arwen Taylor, Secretary