**Minutes of**

**THE FACULTY SENATE OF**

**ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

This meeting of the 2023-2024 Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, in Rothwell 456 and via Webex. The following members were present:

Mr. Stan Apple Ms. Tara Malone

Dr. Michael Bradley Dr. Tom Nupp

Dr. John Clements Dr. Michael Rogers

Dr. Rene Couture Dr. Michael Rogers

Dr. Melissa Darnell Dr. Kuldeep Singh

Dr. Peter Dykema Ms. Sherry Tinerella

Ms. Jasmine Greer Dr. Ellen Treadway

Dr. Jacob Grosskopf Dr. Erica Wondolowski

Dr. Newt Hilliard Dr. Azin Sanjari Pirmahaleh

Dr. Virginia Jones Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman

Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon

Absent: Dr. Bethany Swindell, Ms. Susan West,

Also present: Dr. Adolfo Santos (VPAA/Provost); Dr. Shellie Hanna (Faculty Athletic Representative to NCAA Division II); Ms. Tammy Weaver (Registrar)

1. **Call to Order**-Dr. Newt Hilliard
2. **Approval of the February 2024 Minutes**-Motion to approve by Dr. Clements; seconded by Mr. Apple. Motion carried.
3. **Move to change the order business** by Mr. Apple, seconded by Dr. Clements. Motion carried to allow Dr. Shellie Hanna, Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) to NCAA Division II, to give the attached FAR report for 2023-2024.
4. **Committee Updates**
   1. **Standing Committees**
      1. Budget Advisory Committee (Nupp) No report.
      2. General Education Committee (Tinerella) No report.
      3. Institutional Aid Committee (Taylor) No report.
      4. Shared Governance Committee (Hilliard) No report.
      5. Campus Space and Utilization Committee: (Singh) No report.
      6. Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee: (Hilliard) This committee has completed its work. Move to remove this committee by Dr. Rogers, seconded by Dr. Clements. Motion carried.
      7. Institutional Scholarship Appeals Committee (Swindell) No report.
      8. Professional Development Committee (Dykema): In the fall, the committee was allocated $50,000 to disburse for the year. Grants of approximately $30,000 were awarded in the fall. In the spring, the committee was allocated $30,000 to disburse. In 2023-2024, 55 grant applications were approved with approximately $60,000 disbursed. Applications approved by academic college include: 10 for STEM; 11 for Education and Health; 12 in Business and Economic Development; and 22 in Arts and Humanities.
      9. Technology Prioritization and Impact Committee (Apple) No report.
      10. Emergency Management and Safety Committee (Laffoon) No report.
   2. **Ad Hoc & Senate Committees**
      1. Faculty Workload Committee (Darnell) No report.
      2. Insurance Benefit Committee (Clements) No report.
      3. Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee (Wondolowski) No report.
      4. Exploratory Committee on P&T Salary Increases (Hilliard) No report.
      5. Prior Learning Assessment (Mikles-Schluterman) No report.
      6. Micro-Credentials (Bradley) No report.
      7. Rules Committee (Dykema): Dr. Peter Dykema provided a follow-up Rules Committee report related to Dr. Jeanine Myer’s request to close Ad Hoc and Senate committees that have completed their work. A review of the Faculty Handbook and Faculty Senate By-Laws reveals no stated procedures. Therefore, it is suggested that committees simply notify the Faculty Senate that the committee may be dissolved, and the Faculty Senate will approve dissolution by acclamation. For a Faculty Senate committee, the committee and Faculty Senate leadership may propose dissolution and the full Faculty Senate can approve by acclamation, which is a simple voice vote. Dr. Myers will address some Ad Hoc committees at a future Faculty Senate meeting.
      8. Recruitment and Retention (Laffoon): this committee continues to meet monthly. Dr. Cass spoke recently to the committee about best practices for recruitment and retention.
5. **New Business**
   1. VPAA/Provost Update – Dr. Adolfo Santos: Dr. Santos attended his first Faculty Senate meeting on March 12 and took the opportunity to meet senators, to introduce himself, and to share his priorities for university programs and faculty. Dr. Santos spoke enthusiastically about working closely with faculty to guide the institution in its mission to inspire and unleash skills in ATU students that will enable them to be successful in the world of work. Dr. Santos encouraged faculty to support the Wonder Boys basketball in their bid for the championship and to see them off on their journey to the Great American Conference Tournament.
   2. Ad Hoc Committees Update-Dr. Jeanine Myers: No Report.
   3. Curriculum Changes – Ms. Tammy Weaver: Ms. Weaver presented the following curriculum changes. Motion to approve from Dr. Clements, seconded by Dr. Laffoon. Motion carried.

College of Education & Health – Department of Kinesiology & Rehabilitation Science

1. Modify the Curriculum in Rehabilitation Science, as follows: Move RS 4003: Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability, RS 4123: Ethics and Professional Development, and RS 4243: Psychopathology, to the Senior Year. Move 9 hours of Elective or Minor to the Junior Spring Term, in preparation for the accelerated program; and
2. Add the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Science to Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health Track; and Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Science to Master of Science in Counseling Rehabilitation Counseling Track.
   1. FAR Annual Report – Dr. Shellie Hanna: Moved to III.
   2. Eclipse Update-Ms. Susan West: Ms. West was unable to attend this meeting, as she was training students to assist with eclipse events. Faculty and staff are invited to campus during the April 8 eclipse to participate in the events planned for the day.
   3. Merit Pay Committee-Dr. Newt Hilliard: A merit pay committee with faculty representatives from Russellville and Ozark will meet after spring break to consider a formula for merit pay awards. The committee has already started reviewing formulas from other campuses.
   4. Faculty Salary Compression and Equity Committee-The Faculty Salary Compression and Equity Committee will also start work after spring break. Both the merit pay committee and the salary compression and equity committee have been formed at the request of Dr. Russ Jones.
   5. Expedited Promotion and Tenure Timeline-Dr. Newt Hilliard: Dr. New Hillard shared the attached example of an expedited timeline that would allow promotion and tenure to take place at the same time as annual evaluations over a period of 15 weeks, ideally starting in January, in response to Dr. Jones’s request for Faculty Senate to consider a change to the timeline for both. The attached is one example for faculty consideration that can help jumpstart conversation in departments Senators were asked to discuss with their constituents this example and other possible scenarios, along with pros and cons, and share feedback at the next Faculty Senate meeting.
3. **Old Business**
   1. Committee for Reduction in Force Policy Update – Dr. Michael Rogers: Dr. Michael Rogers reported on feedback on the draft Faculty Retrenchment Policy and Faculty Termination Policies Comparison and thanked faculty for participating in two open forum meetings to review the policy last month. Dr. Hillard asked senators to discuss the proposed policy with faculty and to email feedback on the policy to Dr. Rogers before the April meeting. In order to solicit additional faculty input, the timeline for vote to recommend the policy has been extended to the April meeting so that the policy can be submitted in time for the final ATU Board of Trustees meeting in June. Dr. Dykema reminded senators that they are elected representatives of the faculty and will vote on their behalf, according to the Faculty Senate Handbook.
   2. Academic Calendar Report - Dr. Carey Ellis Laffoon: The committee will survey students and ascertain attitudes toward moving fall break to Thanksgiving break.
   3. Faculty Choice Award –Dr. Virginia Jones: A recipient of the award has been chosen by Faculty Senate. The award will be given before the end of the semester.
4. **Open Forum**
5. **Announcements and Information Items**
6. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by , seconded by . Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Newt Hilliard

**Dr. Newt Hilliard, Chair**

Ellen Treadway

**Dr. Ellen Treadway, Secretary**

**2023-24 Annual FAR Report to Faculty Senate**

**Dr. Shellie Hanna**

Accomplishments this year since I last reported:

1. Questions about schedules are answered frequently during the spring semester, especially regarding baseball and softball whose schedules change frequently and at the last minute for game times and travel. Athletes may not be able to give a lot of notice for changes. This is due to availability of officials and/or weather.
2. We instated the initial steps of our FAST initiative to assist the university and students with retention efforts. We had several departments participate. We will be offering training to include even more training for faculty who advise athletes who are in their departments.   
     
   In the meantime, I am providing some information that you can share with all faculty that is a “cheat sheet” Amy Anderson made to help advisors. The athletics committee would appreciate your sharing with your faculty.
3. I have attended many events that involve our student athletes this year, including the GAC basketball tournament last weekend. Our athletes work hard to represent ATU and appreciate it when our faculty attend their events. They also work hard in the classroom and have very high GPAs, as well as a lot of community service hours. Please support your student athletes either through simple words of encouragement, congratulations, or your attendance at games and events.

4. Committees that I participate on as FAR—Athletics Committee Chair, Athletic Hall of Fame

Committee, and the Athletics Diversity Audit Committee.

5. I meet regularly with Dr. Jones and report out to him on accomplishments of student athletes.

6. I assist with recruiting in several sports, including attending the nine recruiting days for

Football, as well as individual meetings with potential volleyball and tennis athletes.   
  
7. FAR job description--Last year I created a job description for the FAR, because our university

did not have one. Dr. Bowen asked me to research the NCAA guidelines, as well as other

universities throughout the country. I did so in order that those who come after me will know

their expectations up front and to provide a sense of security for myself and future FARs.   
  
One thing that was unusual that Dr. Bowen had me institute was a three-year term limit with a potential of one three-year extension. No other university that I could find anywhere had such a thing.   
  
The position of FAR can be political and can be used to the university’s advantage, but placing a term limit hinders the FAR from being able to make connections. It takes a year or two just to truly learn the job and begin making connections within the conference and nation.   
  
My first meeting with Dr. Jones addressed this. He took some time to do due diligence and agreed to change that requirement to align with what most universities do.   
  
If you are interested in reading the muti page document, it is available in Academic Affairs office.   
  
8. FARA Executive Council—because the term limits were removed, I was able to accept a

position that I was nominated and elected to at the national level. I will represent ATU and

all of Division II on the NCAA FARA Executive Committee. This is a great honor and also

assists ATU in a couple of ways. It helps cover costs of my travel to our annual meeting, but

more importantly, it puts me in front of potential legislation so that we know what is coming.

It also gives me the ability to give input on changes that benefit D2 and ATU best. Being on

the Executive Council also means the addition of a couple more committees and a lot of extra

meetings, but the benefits are worth it to represent ATU in this capacity. It is a huge honor as

a FAR only in her second year.

9. As always, I am here to assist as a liaison between you and athletes and/or athletics staff.

Please feel free to contact me any time.