44th Faculty Senate 2020-2021
Minutes for the 44th Faculty Senate Meeting
Monday, September 14th, 2020
6:00 p.m. (via Zoom)

Opening & Welcome
The official opening session of the 44th Faculty Senate was called to order at 6:20 p.m. by Dr. William Ndi, Chair. Dr. Ndi welcomed new members and thanked those returning for their presence and participation in the opening session. Dr. Ndi also encouraged us all to work as a team in that this is a collective effort.

Lead by Dr. April Jones, a moment of silent prayer/meditation was observed.

Updates
Dr. Ndi, in his overview of the Faculty Senate, stated that we are the representative body of Tuskegee University’s faculty, and that this body acts as a consultant to the President and administrative officers on matters pertaining to the welfare of faculty, and more specifically to the welfare of the University. The Senate is the primary mechanism for improved shared governance of Tuskegee University.

Dr. Ndi went on to list the six standing committees and the functions of each.

1. Academic Affairs Committee-Reviews issues related to the curricula and course development, and academic freedom
2. Academic Personnel Services Committee-Review matters of Tenure and Promotion
3. Research and Graduate Studies Committee-Oversees all issues pertaining to research activities and grants
4. Continuing Education and Outreach Committee-Organizes community and Town & Gown initiatives
5. Grievance Committee-Oversees any faculty grievances
6. Instruction Committee-Identifies new and creative approaches to instruction, and teaching and learning opportunities

Dr. Ndi noted that many of the goals set on last year were accomplished, however, some are still ongoing. For example, on last year an ad-hoc committee was established to address pay equity. However, this issue remains unresolved because the administration wants to see where the university is in relation to the pandemic and its outcome before offering a resolution.
Dr. Ndi ended his opening remarks by stating that overall, we (the Senate), meet as a body to exchange ideas to see how as a team we can move forward and become active players pertaining to faculty research and well-being.

Dr. Ndi also informed the Senate that the Board of Trustees will be meeting on Friday, September 18th, 2020. Senators were encouraged to submit any questions or concerns that they would like for him to bring before the Board, and assured members that all concerns are valued and would be heard.

The proposed goals to be shared with the Board of Trustees are as follows:

1. The Faculty Senate will continue promoting a research day to showcase faculty research activities and encourage collaboration across disciplines.
2. The Board of Trustees, during the last AY suggested that we should strive to move to a R2 or R1 research institution. Therefore, the Chair proposes that the Senate work with what we currently have in place. Presently, we have an inter-disciplinary seminar series. The Senate should fully support bringing scholars from all schools and colleges to promote research within TU. Suggestions and amendments are welcome.
3. Revamp the printing press at no cost to the University.
4. Develop a newsletter to showcase faculty accomplishments, publications, awards, etc. at the end of every year.
5. Work very closely with faculty and administration to resolve any issues arising between them.
6. The Faculty Senate endeavors to have mandatory participation of all faculty on the Senate and we will work on a modality to accomplish that.

Committee Chair Updates/Reports

Academic Affairs Committee Members- Ms. Mary Arrington-Chair
(Mrs. Arrington had a class and asked Mrs. Samuel to report on her behalf)

Three proposals have been submitted to the committee members for review:
1. The Booker T. Washington Leadership Institute proposes to offer a Micro-Credential (a graduate certification program) in Ethical Leadership
2. Naval Science Laboratory (NAVS 101L) credit to be changed from 0 to 1 credit.
3. New Master’s Program in Medical Sciences in collaboration with Ponce Health Science University

A meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2020 to evaluate proposals for approval.
**Academic Personnel Services Committee**-Dr. Li Huang-Chair

Dr. Huang reported that she is presently working on the new APSC committee and waiting to hear from two other departments, (College of Nursing & School of Construction Science). She has already reached out to existing committee members and most have agreed to serve another year.

**Research and Graduate Studies Committee**-Dr. Daniel Abugri-Chair

Dr. Abugri is in discussion with Dr. Jelani with regards to transitioning to a R1 or R2 institution. Problem areas include the websites on departmental pages needing to be updated, grant programs needing to be visible, and students doing research in one area having not taken courses in those areas. Dr. Abugri stressed the importance of this issue being resolved. He also recommended that the Senate does something more in working with the administration in providing start-up money. A certain percentage of the grant money should be given to the faculty, the department, and the college. The committee is still waiting to see if this has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Dr. Abugri welcomed suggestions and input from other members of the faculty.

Dr. Ndi interjected-informing the Senate that release time has been approved by the Board of Trustees. New hires are not required to teach more than three classes. If we are going to transition to a R1 or R2 institution, the teaching load and research should be balanced enabling faculty to do research/publish. If research faculty want to be tenured or promoted, they must adhere to Faculty Handbook. Anyone recruited/hired in 2018 to present is under the 2020 Faculty Handbook. Those hired prior to 2018 are under the 2003 Handbook. Dr. Bhuyan, Vice Chair of the Senate, was also thanked for his hard work toward the approval of faculty incentives.

**Continuing Education and Outreach Committee**-Dr. Yvette Essounga

Dr. Essounga reported that outreach initiatives have been impacted by the pandemic, however, they are willing to redesign their efforts and continue to move forward. On last year, they met with the principal of Tuskegee Institute Middle School (TIMS) and had plans to host a workshop to teach middle schoolers business basics/financial literacy. Dr. Essounga noted that there are only two committee members and asked for others to please join.

**Grievance Committee**-Mrs. Eunice Samuel, Chair

Mrs. Samuel reported that the Grievance Committee will carefully review grievances filed by faculty members of TU. Members from last year will be contacted, and once the committee is formed, it will begin working. There is a grievance on the table that needs to be addressed.
Instruction Committee-Dr. John Tilghman, Chair

Dr. Tilghman indicated that the Instruction Committee is interested in reinstating the Teaching and Learning Institute for new faculty. Secondly, he stated that there is a need to improve technology in the classroom (develop a long-term feasible plan).

At the end of the Committee reports, Dr. Ndi and the committee chairs, invited members to join a committee. Dr. Ndi also reminded us that members for the Academic Personnel Services Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee are selected by deans.

Other Business

Dr. Ndi opened the floor for questions and concerns.

Q: Re: Faculty Handbook
A: If hired in 2018 & 2019, when it comes to Tenure & Promotion faculty will be guided by 2020 Handbook.

Q: Can we get a list of the Standing Committee Chairs and their contact information?
A: Screen of Committee Chairs was shared by Dr. Huang.

Q: Are course releases only for faculty hired after 2018?
A: If you are already a senior faculty, this does not apply to you.

Q: What about library database access off campus since so many classes are virtual and faculty are off campus?
A: We need to work with IT on that problem, and it has been brought to their attention. A complaint has already been launched to that effect and our hopes are that this will be resolved soon. Let’s try to make the best of the situation we have as we continue to work on a solution to this problem.

Q: Can we establish a cooperative agreement between Auburn University so that faculty can benefit from using their library resources? Perhaps the Senate can push the Board to work toward that effort.
A: You actually cannot use Auburn’s databases without an Auburn I.D. It’s restricted. We need to have a research collaboration.

A: The Director of Library Services and her staff met with Mrs. Green to discuss the problem of database access from both on and off campus.
A: The library does have a collaborative borrowing agreement with Auburn University’s library however, this is limited to borrowing books only. When it comes to licensed databases which are paid for by each institution, access is restricted to the students, faculty, and staff of that institution. The Alabama Virtual Library (AVL) is another database available to all citizens in the state of Alabama.

Q: Can Mr. Foon or Ms. Green get with the vendors to exchange IP addresses?
A: That has already been done, and the library has and is putting forth every effort to get this problem resolved.

Q: What is the status of the Provost search?
A: To date, no information. It was suggested that we send our preferences to Dr. Ndi and he will forward them to the administration, letting them know the position of the majority of faculty. After discussion, it was agreed that a survey will be created and distributed to faculty. The names of the candidates for Provost were forwarded to Dr. Jennifer Ross who agreed to oversee this project.

It was motioned by Dr. Bhuyan and seconded by Dr. Tilghman that the meeting adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Eunice A. Samuel, Executive Secretary