

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**University Union 332**

Minutes – November 10, 2021 2:00 p.m.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Anderson-Lain, Karen** | COMM  CLASS | P | **Hutchison, Paul** | ACCT COB | P | **Olness, Gloria** | ASPL  CHPS | A | **Watson, Wendy** | PSCI  CLASS | P |
| **Aviles-Diz, Jorge** | SPAN  CLASS | P | **Joyner, William** | MUVS  COM | P | **O’Toole, Erin** | LIBR | P | **Williams, Lawrence** | WLLC  CLASS | P |
| **Baker, Rose** | LTEC  COI | P | **Ketron, Seth** | NCF | P | **Peak, Dan** | ITDS  COB | A | **Yeatts, Dale** | SOC  CLASS | P |
| **Bednarz, Jim** | BIOL  COS | P | **Lam, Chris** | TECM CLASS | P | **Perez, Jose** | PHYS COS | P | **Zhang, Tao** | KHPR  COE | P |
| **Belshaw, Scott** | DCJ CHPS | P | **Lane, Jennifer** | MUVS  COM | P | **Petros, Amy** | CHEM  COS | P |  |  |  |
| **Boesch, Miriam** | EPSY  COE | P | **Long, Chris** | TEA COE | P | **Philbrick, Jodi** | IS COI | P |  |  |  |
| **Britain, Jeff** | HTM CMHT | P | **Mann, Paho** | SART  CVAD | A | **Roy, Meranda** | LIBR | A |  |  |  |
| **Campbell, Doug** | LIBR | A | **May, Andrew** | MUCS  COM | P | **Sexton, Michael** | MGMT COB | P |  |  |  |
| **Cherry, William** | MATH COS | P | **McAfee, Jason** | CHEM COS | A | **Shahrokhi, Farhad** | CSE  CENG | A |  |  |  |
| **Christian, Jack** | ENGL  CLASS | A | **McKay, Melissa** | NCF | P | **Siller Carillo,**  **Hector** | ME  CENG | P |  |  |  |
| **Gerling, Daphne** | MUIS  COM | A | **Moreland, Kimberly** | ENGL CLASS | P | **Trudeau, Justin** | COMM  CLASS | P | **TEMPORARY SENATORS** | | |
| **Ginther, Jeannette** | TEA  COE | P | **Morton, Sophie** | WLLC  CLASS | P | **Walker, Jacqueline** | ENGL CLASS | P | **James Martin (VIII)** | MRTS  CLASS | P |
| **Hargis, Carol** | LIBR | P | **Mukherjee, Sundeep** | MSE  CENG | P | **Wang, Xuexia** | MATH COS | P | **Scott Tixier (VIII)** | MUIS  COM | A |
| **Hensel, Paul** | PSCI  CLASS | P | **Ojha, Divesh** | MLOM COB | P | **Warren, Scott** | LTEC  COI | P |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **NON-VOTING SENATORS** | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Andrea Ortiz | GSC | A |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Devon Skinner | SGA | A |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **NON-VOTING SUBSTITUTES** | | |
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Guests: Neal Smatresk (President), Jennifer Cowley (VPAA), John Bellon (Staff Senate), Brenda Kihl (AA), Holly Hutchins (AA), Mike McPherson (AA), Mike Fleming (Fine Arts Series/Union), Elizabeth With (Student Affairs)

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| I. | Welcome and Introductions | * Senator Belshaw began with a special thanks to our veterans. |
| II. | Approval of Minutes  (October 13, 2021) | **[vote]**   * Senator Ketron moved to approve the minutes; Senator Yeatts seconded.   The motion passed with two abstentions. |
| III. | Faculty Discussion (President Neal Smatresk / Provost Jennifer Cowley) | * Mental Health: President Smatresk made some remarks about the mental health challenges we are facing this year.   + Mental health concerns have been a serious problem this year. President Smatresk characterized the need for mental health services as more of a surge than a blip and does not see the problem going away soon. He suspects that there will likely be long-term mental health consequences of COVID for many in our community.   + At the moment, a COVID-cluster among our mental health counselors, 11 of whom are currently out with COVID is creating a big backlog in our ability to provide mental health services. We may have to go back to telecounseling.   + We are working to increase our mental health counseling capacity.   + President Smatresk asked the Senators to please share this with their faculty colleagues and remind everyone to be aware and alert for students who may need help or who are displaying behavioral or mental health issues. We have had several life-threatening situations. Please show as much compassion and care as possible. * COVID Update   + President Smatresk gave a brief update on COVID     - We expected a post-Halloween surge. This year our case count is 37 compared with over 200 last year at this time.     - We’ll be giving boosters. All faculty are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and boosted and to participate in the random testing program.     - We still have a little HEERF money to hand out next semester.     - Although we are in pretty great shape, COVID is not over, delta is not over, so please continue to be cautious.   + Provost Cowley mentioned the federal/state conflict over vaccine mandates.     - New federal contracts may have vaccine requirements.     - We’ll be working with PIs if you get a new contract with vaccine language * American Athletic Conference membership: President Smatresk gave an update on UNT switching from Conference USA to the American Athletic Conference   + We have been invited to join and agreed to join. They call themselves part of the power-6. Unquestionably, this is the best conference outside the power-5. It will result in a significant increase in television contracts on ESPN and network tv. All football games will be played on either ESPN or network television. This will provide better national exposure for UNT.   + There is a bunch of legal wrangling now with Conference USA and President Smatresk is no longer Chair of Conference USA.   + The change in conference is not likely to take place before fall of 2023. * Chancellor Search: President Smatresk gave an update on the search for a new system chancellor.   + Michael Williams, the current Health Science Center President, has been selected as the new system Chancellor.   + President Smatresk said that he wanted it known that he has no interest in being a system employee. He understands why the Board selected Michael. He said they are friends & colleagues. Michael was a CEO of a major hospital group. The Health Science Center has really grown in grant funding, and dramatically. They’ve also dramatically reduced faculty lines, which President Smatresk said he hopes doesn’t bleed over. President Smatresk said that in his role as a campus president, Michael Williams has been a fan of letting the universities do what they need to do to be good. President Smatresk hopes that will persist now that he will be chancellor.   + Michael Williams takes over Jan 1, and right now several system-level projects and initiatives are on hold.   + Right now, President Smatresk thinks that Michael will be an ally, and is looking forward to working on some things with him. * The Wednesday before Thanksgiving   + Provost Cowley was excited to announce that beginning in Fall 2022, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving would no longer be a class day. She credited Faculty Senate’s long-time advocacy for that.   + Provost Cowley said she is still working with the Registrar on the Saturday after Thanksgiving with regard to Saturday classes.   + President Smatresk said to expect that this year, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving would be a half-day, although he emphasized that this was still neither definite nor official.   + Senator Cherry pointed out that, in fact, Senate has been advocating for the whole week of Thanksgiving to be class free in exchange for an earlier August start to the fall semester. This would better align with the local school districts, and he pointed out that a significant number of our non-traditional students have childcare issues the whole week of Thanksgiving.     - Provost Cowley pointed out that there are other complications with an earlier start, and that for now she wanted to celebrate the win for the Wednesday. * Merit and raises update: Provost Cowley updated the Senate on merit and market raises.   + Letters to faculty are on their way out of the Provost’s office and will be sent to the Colleges, who will deliver them to individual faculty members.   + 18% of our faculty will be getting market raises.   + Provost Cowley gave some highlights from the faculty salary study:     - Principal lectures in the College of Merchandising, Hospitality, and Tourism were identified as an area of concern, and all the principal lecturers in CMHT will be getting a market adjustment.     - The study also identified above average compression about associate professors in the College of Business. More than one-fourth of the associate professors in the College of Business will be getting a market adjustment.     - A potential issue with principal lecturers in the College of Information was identified. Upon further review, it was not a market compression issue.     - Another potential issue was with New College lecturers, but that was a CIP-code alignment issue that was addressed this summer with some market adjustments that happened outside of this particular cycle.     - The salary study found no statistically significant pay disparities based on race or gender, but white and Asian women are paid $341 less than white and Asian men. 21% of white & Asian women had market adjustments, which will help reduce this difference.   + $1.1 million investment is making a huge impact but will not address everything.   + 272 faculty are receiving market adjustments.   + The average market adjustment is $3600 ranging from $119 to $28,585.   + Provost Cowley thanked the members of the faculty salary study committee.   + The salary study committee recommended that in the future a performance component be included. We reconvened the committee to talk about how that component should look.   + We will be moving to a five-point scale. We are currently taking comments on that. Brandi Everett in my office is taking comments.     - Senator Warren said that feedback was requested by the end of November, and he wondered if that deadline could be extended.       * Provost Cowley said that we really need a response this semester, but that finals week is OK.     - Senator Lane said that she was on her department’s PAC and wondered why she had not heard about this request for feedback.       * Provost Cowley replied that we are just getting the word out now. * Update concerning the student affordability initiative. Provost Cowley gave the Senate an update.   + It has been four years since we had an undergraduate tuition increase. We are asking for a modest tuition increase for next year.   + We continue to work on what can we do to drive down textbook costs.     - We’ve impacted 24,000 students saving $1.8 million/year.     - OER grants are still available. Please take advantage of that before the HEERF dollars run out.     - Kevin Hawkins (LIBR) is in-charge of OER.     - President Smatresk reported that Rudi Thompson said there were more applications than funding, so President Smatresk will consider increasing the funding for it. * Big data science collaborations on campus: Provost Cowley described some of the big data collaborations on campus.   + The Center for Integrated Intelligent Mobility Systems (CIIMS) is working on autonomous logistics and working for a Department of Transportation Grant.   + The Center for Agile and Adaptive Additive Manufacturing has a data analytics group in that team.   + The Health Science Center got a $50 million grant for artificial intelligence in health. * Senator Warren asked about UNT e-mail accounts for alumni.   + Several Senators talked about alumni e-mail accounts they have at their former institutions. * Senator Bednarz asked about the mask requirement on busses.   + Provost Cowley explained that this was part of a federal mandate. |
| IV. | Family Medical Leave Act and Family Leave Pool (Mary Atkins / Kate van Saaze) | FMLA presentation   * Mary Atkins and Kate van Saaze shared a presentation with the Senate on Family Medical Leave and the new Family Leave Pool. * The Family Leave Pool is a new, state mandated, pool that started 9-1-21. UNT will have its own pool. People can donate sick or vacation time. Donors will have to pay tax on donations, so we aren’t sure we’ are going to get a lot of donations. If we do get donations, this will be a great way to extend pay when other paid leave runs out. * Senator Walker asked about the details as to exactly which law requires donations to the leave pool to be taxed. * A visitor asked whether there would be an extra tax withholding after the donation.   + Yes * Senator Hutchison asked whether donations of sick leave are taxable.   + Not if the recipient has a medical need * Senator Moreland asked about donations for leave associated with the adoption of a child.   + It is complicated. * Senator Moreland asked why someone would want to donate to the family leave pool as opposed to the other pools.   + Only the family leave pool allows vacation time donations. * Senator Lane commented that the tax rate depends on the individual’s tax bracket and would not always be as high as 25%. |
| V. | Fine Arts Series Committee proposal (Mike Fleming / Devon Skinner) **[vote]** | * Senator Walker reviewed our previous discussion of the Fine Arts Series committee and began our discussion. * Mike Fleming gave a history:   + The idea to change the committee from a Faculty Senate committee to an Administrative Committee began with an e-mail from the Committee on Committees.   + The Committee on Committees voted to recommend the committee change from a Senate committee to an administrative committee.   + The Senate Executive Committee did not want to move forward at this time.   + Further discussion led us to bring this back up now.   + The Fine Arts Series committee voted 9 in favor, 2 against, and 1 abstaining in support of a motion to reclassify the committee. * Mike Fleming presented the committee’s motion to reclassify it from a Senate committee to an Administrative Committee. * Senator Hutchison asked if we needed a second.   + No, the motion comes from a committee. * Senator Lane, a member of the Fine Arts Series Committee, summarized why she voted against the motion in committee:   + graduate students were not able to attend the meetings this semester.   + Senate committee meetings are open whereas administrative committee meetings may not be.   + Senate committees regularly report to Senate.   + She had concerns about balance among the committee membership.   + She reminded us that the Senate EC voted 9-1against on the question several years ago.   + She expressed concern that UNT on the Square was discontinued shortly after its supervision was moved out of Academic Affairs to Student Affairs. * Senator Hutchison asked how the Fine Arts Series was funded.   + Mike Fleming responding that it was wholly funded from student fees. * Senator Lane moved to table the motion and Senator Yeatts seconded. The motion to table was defeated by about 8 votes in favor with 14 against and the rest abstaining. * Senator Anderson-Lain asked how the committee or the series would benefit from the proposed reclassification. She said that she did not find the argument based solely on funding sources persuasive as students pay for many things.   + Mike Fleming said that the committee composition consisting of 5 faculty, 5 staff, and 8 students was more appropriate to an administrative committee. Moreover, GSC has not appointed a member this year and there is nothing we can do about that. Students do not show up much. As an administrative committee, we think we could get better student participation if the committee were run more like the Distinguished Lecture Series committee and the We Mean Green committee, which are administrative committee with the student members selected through an application process. * Senator Anderson-Lain wanted to know why it was not possible to select the student members through an application process as a Faculty Senate Committee.   + Provost Cowley commented that they cannot run an application process now because they are required to have appointees from the elected student government bodies.   + Senator Hutchison asked for clarification: GSC is entitled to representation but has chosen not to appoint someone.     - Mike Fleming responded yes.   + Senator Hutchison asked who invites the artists.     - Mike Fleming responded that the committee does.   + Senator Warren asked about the committee’s bylaws.     - Senator Walker explained that as a Senate committee the committee cannot change its bylaws by itself.   + Senator Warren wondered whether we could solve the problem with a better committee charge but still keep the committee as a Senate committee.     - Senator Walker asked how would we feel if students were in charge of a committee related to something meant to benefit faculty. * Senator Lane talked about how in the past the committee has had a student and faculty co-chairs and robust student participation. * Senator Watson emphasized that the current student representatives are not invested and that an application process is not an option under the committee’s current structure. * Senator Belshaw said he does not see why this committee is under the Faculty Senate. * Mike Fleming confirmed that there had not been much interaction between the committee and the Faculty Senate. * Senator Anderson-Lain emphasized that the idea to reclassify the committee began with Committee on Committees. * Senator May asked if there was anything in the motion about how the members will be selected?   + Mike Fleming responded no but that this would be taken up by the committee if the reclassification motion succeeds here at Senate. * Senator Hutchison said he would like to hear from Vice President With.   + Vice President With said she supports the motion. 15-18 years ago, there was a great deal of discussion about this on the student service fees committee (which is a 9 member committee, 7 of which are students). Would allow greater flexibility from year-to-year-to-year. Reclassifying the committee as an administrative committee would allow accountability to the student services fee committee. The Fine Arts Series committee could continue to send twice-annual reports to Senate. Students want decision making authority on this committee. * Senator Avilis-Diz moved to call the question and Senator Hutchison seconded. The motion to call the question succeeded with four votes against. * The vote on the motion from the Fine Arts Series Committee to reclassify the Fine Arts Series Committee as an administrative committee passed with at least 22 votes in favor, six votes against, and four abstentions. |
| VI. | Committee on Committees (Chris Lam) **[vote]** | * Standing Committee Vacancies   + Senator Sexton moved to approve the Committee on Committees nominees for the Standing Committee Vacancies, Senator Avilis-Diz seconded, and the vote to approve was unanimous in favor. * Administrative Committee Vacancies   + There were no nominees for administrative committee vacancies. |
| VII. | Executive Committee report (Jackie Walker) **[vote]** | * Senator Walker reported that the EC recommended the appointment of Senator Lane to Student Media Committee.   + The Senate voted unanimously to approve the appointment. |
| VIII. | Other standing committee updates **[vote]** | * UUCC Report/Minutes (April Prince / Brenda Kihl)   + The UUCC minutes were approved by unanimous vote. * Graduate Council Minutes [September] (~~Dale Yeatts / Dan Peak~~)   + Senator Williams reported on the Graduate Council Minutes   + The Graduate Council Minutes were approved by unanimous vote. |
| IX. | New business | * No new business was brought up. Senator Belshaw reminded the Senators that they can always e-mail with issues of concern. |
| X. | Old business | * No old business was discussed. |
| XI. | Comments for the Good of the Order | * Senator Lane commented that we should never frame our differences as caring less or more about students. * Senator Belshaw reported that he was selected for a distinguished alumni award from his high school/ * Provost Cowley reported that Carnegie had their latest cycle of data analysis. We expect an announcement on Dec. 15. We moved up in every variable. We were the only institution in our group to do that. We will make a formal announcement after the 1st of the year, but all signs are good. * Senator Belshaw reported that the Provost’s office was sponsoring a social event for Faculty Senate to immediately follow the December Senate meeting. * Senator Morton volunteered to help coordinate Faculty Senate donations to the new Afghani students   + Provost Cowley said that an Amazon wish list had been set up. |
| XII. | Adjournment | * The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:35 p.m. |