

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**University Union 332**

Minutes – December 8, 2021

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| **Anderson-Lain, Karen** | COMM  CLASS | A | **Hargis, Carol** | LIBR | P | **Ojha, Divesh** | MKTG RCOB | P | **Walker, Jacqueline** | ENGL CLASS | P |
| **Aviles-Diz, Jorge** | SPAN  CLASS | P | **Hensel, Paul** | PSCI  CLASS | P | **Olness, Gloria** | ASPL  CHPS | P | **Wang, Xuexia** | CSE CENG | P |
| **Baker, Rose** | LTEC  COI | P | **Hutchison, Paul** | ACCT RCOB | P | **O’Toole, Erin** | LIBR | P | **Warren, Scott** | LTEC  COI | P |
| **Bednarz, Jim** | BIOL  COS | P | **Joyner, William** | MUVS  COM | P | **Peak, Dan** | ITDS  RCOB | P | **Watson, Wendy** | PSCI  CLASS | P |
| **Belshaw, Scott** | CJUS CHPS | P | **Ketron, Seth** | MKTG  CMHT | A | **Perez, Jose** | PHYS COS | P | **Williams, Lawrence** | WLLC  CLASS | A |
| **Boesch, Miriam** | EPSY  COE | P | **Lam, Chris** | TECM CLASS | P | **Petros, Amy** | CHEM  COS | P | **Yeatts, Dale** | SOC  CLASS | A |
| **Britain, Jeff** | HTM CMHT | A | **Lane, Jennifer** | MUVS  COM | P | **Philbrick, Jodi** | IS COI | P | **Zhang, Tao** | KHPR  COE | P |
| **Campbell, Doug** | LIBR | P | **Long, Chris** | TEA COE | P | **Roy, Meranda** | LIBR | P |  |  |  |
| **Cherry, William** | MATH COS | P | **Mann, Paho** | ASTU  CVAD | P | **Sexton, Michael** | MGMT RCOB | P |  |  |  |
| **Christian, Jack** | ENGL  CLASS | P | **May, Andrew** | MUCS  COM | P | **Siller Carillo,**  **Hector** | MEEN  CENG | P |  |  |  |
| **Gerling, Daphne** | MUIS  COM | A | **McAfee, Jason** | CHEM COS | A | **Scott Tixier (VIII)** | MUIS  COM | A | **TEMPORARY SENATORS** | | |
| **Ginther, Jeannette** | TE&A  COE | P | **McKay, Melissa** | NCF | P | **Trudeau, Justin** | COMM  CLASS | P |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **Moreland, Kimberly** | ENGL CLASS | P |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **Morton, Sophie** | WLLC  CLASS | P |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **Mukherjee, Sundeep** | MSE  CENG | P |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **NON-VOTING SENATORS** | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Andrea Ortiz | GSC |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Devon Skinner | SGA |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **NON-VOTING SUBSTITUTES** | | |
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Guests: Jennifer Cowley (VPAA), Brea Henson (LIBR), Amanda Fuller (UBSC), Mary Ann Venner (LIBR), Sue Parks (LIBR), Dreanna Belden (LIBR), Nolan Gaffney (MGMT), Elizabeth With (VP Student Affairs), Mike McPherson (VPAA), Holly Hutchins (VPAA), Brenda Kihl (VPAA)

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| I. | Welcome and Introductions | * Senator Belshaw reminded everyone to sign-in, that there would be a party immediately following the meeting, and that our next meeting would not be until February. |
| II. | Approval of Minutes  (November 10, 2021) | **[vote]**   * Senator Sexton moved approval of the minutes, Senator Watson seconded, and the motion to approve passed with two abstentions. |
| III. | Faculty Discussion (Provost Jennifer Cowley) | * Provost Cowley reported on the following:   + Amazon Web Services: Provost Cowley apologized on behalf of Amazon Web Services for an outage during finals week.   + COVID update     - We’ve seen a small uptick in cases this week.     - Spring COVID protocols and procedures will be mostly the same. We will now require documentation of a positive test through Dean of Students; returning to prior pre-COVID policy. It is time to move back to typical policy.     - Senator Sexton asked if reporting to [covid@unt.edu](mailto:covid@unt.edu) would still be required       * The Provost replied that reporting will be the same but that the Dean of Students will be stricter about documentation.     - We will still encourage masking.     - Syllabus statements in spring will be the same as they were in the fall.     - UNT will monitor omicron over the break.     - Senator Olness asked if the same process would apply for absences through Dean of Students for non-Covid absences?       * The Provost replied: yes, that hasn’t changed.   + Plagiarism     - A Senate task force made a series of recommendations. We have made a couple of steps forward.     - We’re acquiring iThenticate, a software program helpful for detecting plagiarism especially among grad. students. It has access to theses & dissertations.     - We’re requesting a part-time person to support the office of academic integrity. [not approved yet]     - We are working with UNT International to do education and outreach.     - Senator Moreland asked whether grad. students would be able to use iThenticate.       * The Provost responded: yes, we’re working on the details. We won’t purchase enough iThenticate licenses for undergrads.     - Senator Mukherjee asked whether the academic integrity process was the same for grads & undergrads.       * The Provost said yes.     - The Provost emphasized that UNT is not alone in its concerns over plagiarism.   + Libraries faculty salaries     - Librarian market study is separate from faculty. CUPA data is structured differently. Pay source (fee vs central funding) is also different So we have then on a different cycle. Next year will be the next librarian salary study. We used the past librarian study for the recent market raises. On the whole, our librarians are paid closer to the CUPA benchmarks than the faculty.     - A visitor asked when exactly next year the new study will be done.       * The Provost replied that it will be part of next year’s work plan.       * The Provost also emphasized that the library use fee will need to be raised before we can act on the next study.       * The Provost said that we will hope to increase the library fee in another year or two.     - Senator O’Toole asked if the CUPA data was only about academic librarians?       * The Provost said yes.     - Senator O’Toole asked if there was any plan to look at regional data and commented that Texas inflation is high now compared to the national average.       * The Provost replied that CUPA includes high cost of living areas like California and New York.       * The Provost said that we use CUPA rather than the Oklahoma data set because CUPA has more data.       * The Provost said that we are aware of inflation, and that’s why we made market adjustments a high priority.     - A visitor commented that inflation in North Texas is higher than the national average and said that staff were not being paid a living wage.       * The Provost responded that we’ve been paying attention to staff. We’ve increased staff minimum wage to $12/hr and the minimum wage for supervisors to $13/hr. We have put a lot of focus on bringing up our lowest staff salaries. * Student aggression and faculty safety   + Senator Petros said that in online courses, students acted like they were anonymous commenters on social media. She said the felt no social barrier to them expressing frustration as soon as they felt it. In her experience, the aggression has decreased now that we’re back to face-to-face. She said she had death threats online in the spring. She pointed out that students may think it is a joke, but we instructors don’t know whether to interpret it as a joke.     - The Provost said: If someone make a death threat or any other threat of violence, that is something to immediately report to the police.     - The Provost also pointed out that when we were virtual, we had a number of wellness checks based on threats.   + Senator Ginther explained how Teacher Ed completely redesigned their program around an anti-racist curriculum. She said that they’ve had active resistance and low-key threats from the students. For example, a student frustrated with the content wore a t-shirt with an assault rifle to express his opinion.   + Senator Lam shared an incident where he was brought in to mediate a discussion between an instructor and student. The instructor is still afraid to come to campus.   + The Provost said that physical threats go directly to the police. Other types of threats can go to the Dean of Students. Depending on the circumstances, you may or may not hear back.   + Vice Provost McPherson explained when to report to the CARE team. He explained that privacy rules sometimes mean you won’t hear what’s being done, but Moe McGuinness will tell you whatever she can.   + The Provost reported that the Surgeon General issued a mental health crisis warning. She said that we do not have enough metal health counselors to address the current crisis need on our campus right now. No campus can.   + Senator Watson asked whether legal counsel could create guidance on what our legal options are, such as restraining orders and how to identify precursors to violence.     - The Provost suggested that Vice Provost McPherson and Vice Provost Hutchins would work together to put some resource training together.   + Senator Hutchison shared an anecdote of a fake abduction staged in a classroom to film a Tik-Tok video. He commented that the Care team is not available at night, and so that’s an issue. He said he would like to be informed when these kinds of situations occur. He also pointed out that it has been a while since we’ve reminded faculty about the emergency response buttons on the classroom computers.   + Senator Bednarz said that he hasn’t experienced any aggressive behavior. He asked if there were data indicating a higher incidence of aggressive behavior.     - Vice Provost McPherson said that CARE team referrals have increased dramatically as well as the seriousness of the cases that are referred.     - Provost Cowley said that the Surgeon General reports that 25% of adolescents have signs of clinical depression. We’re set up to support minor health problems, but we’re not equipped to handle the kind of acute mental health problems that our students are having. Student affairs is part of a national discussion about how to support our students. We keep adding counselors, but we cannot add enough counselors to meet the needs of our campus.     - Senator Belshaw said that United Way of Denton does a mental health first aid course that is really good. If there is interest, maybe we can organize something with them. * Summer salary   + The Provost said that we all have things we would like to invest in. Everything we want to invest in needs a source of revenue. As our costs increase, revenue does not necessarily increase proportionally. We have not raised undergraduate tuition in four years. The Board is very concerned about affordability. We’re not sure if we will get a tuition increase this year or not. The President has proposed very modest tuition increases. The Board tabled it. We’ll see if they reconsider it at a future meeting. As we ask for things, be conscious that we need a source of revenue to pay for it. |
| IV. | Faculty Salary Study Committee (Tao Zhang) | * Summer school faculty compensation (Nolan Gaffney)   + Senator Zhang explained that the Faculty Salary Study Committee heard a concern from the College of Business about the summer pay cap and how it was preventing them from finding enough faculty to meet student demand for summer courses.   + Professor Gaffney expressed some concerns, asked some questions, and made some observations:     - Our compensation plan is not competitive (other institutions pay 1/9).     - Why is summer teaching paid differently than pay for instruction during the regular academic year?     - There is student demand for summer courses.     - Summer teaching generates revenue.   + Senator Warren said that LTEC has a 12-month program, but that they are also having trouble getting faculty to teach in summer since they can do consulting. He said that this makes it harder to recruit new students because they hear from current students that they can’t get the courses they need in summer.   + Senator Roy explained that she is also a doctoral student who has a need for summer classes. She has had multiple summer classes cancelled and sometimes she doesn’t feel that she has sufficient access to faculty during the summer for help with her dissertation.   + Senator Watson also wanted to know why we treat compensation for instruction during the summer differently than during the academic year.   + The Provost explained that there had been a recent change in summer compensation. Until recently, there were some enrollment incentives that allowed faculty to be paid more for summer classes with larger enrollments. The recent changes resulted in most summer instructors being paid more but limited summer pay in some units, such as the College of Business.   + The Provost explained:     - We can remove the cap, but that doesn’t solve the budget problem.     - We don’t have a dedicated summer budget.     - We pay for summer from salary savings from unexpected leaves and resignations.     - We have a $1 million deficit for the upcoming summer that I don’t know how we’re going to cover.     - Hurdle number 1 is a funding source for summer   + Senator Cherry said that he had colleagues at some Canadian institutions who can choose to teach in any two of the three terms, one being summer, as part of their regular workload. He explained that this can work well sometimes when a faculty member wants to attend a special research program that might happen during the regular academic year.     - The Provost said that she hopes we may be able to move in that direction in the long run, but that it creates a number of other challenges, such as shared governance.   + Professor Gaffney said that we need to respond to market forces.   + Senator Cherry pointed out that the current cap is a soft cap that can be exceeded with approval of the Dean when there is a need to exceed the cap.   + Provost Cowley said that her office has never denied a request to go over the cap but that she also has no problem removing the cap language. She emphasized though that this alone does not solve the summer budget problem.   + Senator Lane pointed out that even if the budget problem is not completely solved, removing the cap would help address a concern of College of Business faculty. * Resolution concerning summer salaries **[vote]**   + The resolution from the Faculty Salary Study Committee on summer compensation passed with a majority in favor and three votes against. |
| V. | Committee on the Status of Faculty with Disabilities update (Brea Henson) | * Brea Henson shared a detailed presentation about the activities of the newly formed Committee on the Status of Faculty with Disabilities. |
| VI. | Faculty Policy Oversight Committee  (Adam Chamberlin / Elizabeth Oldmixon) | First Read:   * 06.012 Payment of Nine-Month Contracts   + Senator Chamberlin and Professor Oldmixon summarized the changes:     - staff were removed from this policy; HR will create a parallel policy for staff.     - Making a change mid-year is work-intensive for HR, but the policy now makes explicit some emergency circumstances when a mid-year change would be approved. * 06.021 Orientation, Supervision and Evaluation of Academic Assistants [w. deletion 06.022]   + Senator Chamberlin and Professor Oldmixon summarized the changes:     - The enrollment threshold for when an instructor can expect an academic assistant was lowered from 75 to 60     - The revisions distinguish between teaching fellows teaching their own classes versus teaching assistants assisting an instructor     - The new policy has firmer guidelines on the annual evaluation of academic assistants. |
| VII. | Committee on Committees (Chris Lam) | * Standing Committee Vacancies   + Senator Sexton moved approval of the Committee on Committees nominees for our standing committees. Senator Lane seconded, and the nominations were approved by unanimous vote. * Administrative Committee Vacancies   + There were no administrative committee vacancies to fill. |
| VIII. | Confirmation of Executive Committee Actions / Report (Jackie Walker) | * Senator Walker reported on recent Executive Committee action:   + Designated temporary chair for Faculty Policy Oversight Committee   + Authorized creation of survey concerning department administrators   + Approved support for Academic Affairs Committee proposal to include Honors designation on transcripts (AAC will present at FS in February) |
| IX. | Other standing committee updates **[vote]** | * UUCC Report/Minutes [December] (April Prince / Brenda Kihl)   + Vice Provost Kihl presented the UUCC minutes, which were approved by the Senate with a unanimous vote. * Graduate Council Minutes (Lawrence Williams / Dale Yeatts)   + The minutes for Graduate Council were tabled. |
| X. | New business | None |
| XI. | Old business | None |
| XII. | Comments for the Good of the Order | * Senator Lane told of her positive experience with the passport office on campus. * Senator Hutchison celebrated UNT being scheduled to play in the Frisco Bowl. * Senator Cherry asked the Senate to wish Jill Stover Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. * Senator Belshaw thanked everyone for their work this term and announced the following:   + The University Writing Awards and Outstanding Teaching Fellows/Teaching Assistant awards processes will begin in January. Be watching for announcements with nomination forms and requirements for each.   + Next Senate Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, January 26   + Next Faculty Senate meeting is Wednesday, February 9 |
| XIII. | Adjournment | Senator Moreland moved to adjourn, Senator Aviles-Diz seconded, and the meetings adjourned at 3:40 p.m. |