

**Austin Peay State University
Faculty Senate
Meeting of Thursday, February 26, 2009
University Center, UC 307B
3:00 pm
Minutes (unapproved)**

Call to order – Senate President Tim Winters called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. President Winters recognized Senate guest, Dr. Uma Iyer who is a member of the Compensation Committee. Patrick Perdeu was also a guest of the Senate.

Roll call of Senators – Senate Secretary Elaine Berg called the roll. The following senators were absent: Culley Carson-Greife, Taylor Emery, Christopher Hardin, Marcus Hayes, Sheila Pirkle, Ann Silverberg, Melan Smith-Francis, Jackie Vogel, Mickey Wadia, and Greg Wolyneec.

Approval of today's agenda – Senator Kay Haralson made a motion to approve today's agenda. Senator Ron Gupton seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the agenda was approved.

Approval of minutes for meeting of January 22, 2009 – Senator Phil Kemmerly made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22nd, 2009, meeting and Senator Sara Gotcher seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the minutes were approved without corrections.

Remarks

1. Senate President – Dr. Tim Winters

President Winters discussed the work of the Compensation Committee. The Committee has been meeting with the consultant, Joel Myers, whose firm was hired to conduct the compensation study. His firm is based in Memphis. The Committee has been trying to come up with a set of guidelines by which to move forward and put a plan in place. They are ready to put the guidelines before the faculty. There are questions about how to distribute any discretionary money (funding on top of across the board raises) if it is available. Should discretionary money go toward equity or merit pay? The Committee is trying to figure that out. The problem with equity pay is that we never get to our goal since it is a moving target. Merit pay would reward only those selected, not everyone. It is hard to work through the pecking order. There need to be safeguards in place in order to avoid favoritism. Another possibility would be a combination of the two options. There will have to be a major conversation on campus regarding various compensation options. President Winters asked senators to start this conversation in their respective departments. Please ask colleagues what they prefer. A means for faculty to give input will be set up. Comments will be posted to the Faculty Senate website.

Senate Vice-President Buchanan and President Winters met with Tennessee legislators on behalf of the Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) on February 24, 2009.

Everyone they spoke with thought that the federal stimulus money earmarked for higher education must be spent on higher education and not on another area. President Winters told faculty to feel free to contact our legislators: Senator Tim Barnes, Representative Curtis Johnson, and Representative Joe Pitts. There is room for faculty to weigh in on issues in higher education. Make your feelings known.

Questions: Senator Greg Moore asked if the Compensation Committee had a preference on how any discretionary money was distributed (merit or equity). President Winters said the consultant preferred the equity model. They used CUPA salary data, TBR (4-year institutions) salary data, and salary data from other sources to come up with their salary figures. Starting salaries need to be raised. This will create a salary inversion. The plan will try to move everyone to mid-point salaries. Senator Karen Meisch asked if a person's effectiveness and productivity will be considered under merit pay. Dr. Iyer said we would need to have a new evaluation system that would have to be approved by the President (university). There is much more work to do. Senator Roger Clark mentioned that merit pay criteria will differ greatly by department. Faculty needs to decide what they want 1) equity, 2) merit, 3) or a combination. The Compensation Committee is trying to write the guidelines which are due to TBR shortly to be loose enough to do what we want.

2. University President – Tim Hall

President Hall provided a current budget update. Budget information is available on the APSU website at www.apsu.edu/budget. Just before our senate meeting President Hall heard that the University of Tennessee-Knoxville has proposed cutting 800 jobs and implementing a tuition increase. APSU is prepared to take a very significant budget cut if we have to. We are prepared for a tuition increase. The initial numbers for post-retirement deals indicate that 2 years at 20% will produce revenue for the University. We would lose money if we go above this. Post retirements should help us not to have so many adjuncts. He's crunching the numbers now. He is also looking at what happens when we start paying competitive starting salaries. He would really like to reduce adjunct costs by using post retirement faculty. President Hall said faculty could help with fund raising and development by participating in the phonathon. The phonathon is scheduled for April 1-28. The important thing is that we are attaching our alumni to the university and this will pay off big time down the road. Please contact Kim Scott at ext. 7350 scottk@apsu.edu if you want to participate. Chancellor Manning is not stepping down at this time. President Hall said that this part of the governor's plan to reorganize higher education. THEC has approved our reorganization plan. It will go into effect in Fall 2009. President Hall commented on the proposed revised Student Travel Policy. He talked to Senate President Tim Winters and Senator Phil Kemmerly. There is no official written document about what expectations there are of faculty while traveling with students. President Hall shared his expectations of faculty when they are traveling with students. During academic events the rules here at APSU are in effect. During non-academic time there are not expectations that faculty are totally responsible the entire travel period. This is where he thinks we are now.

President Hall discussed the compensation plan being developed by the Compensation Committee. He said if we are going to do anything with a plan this year, we have to submit a statement of principles by March 16th, 2009, and by June we have to submit a formal plan. He wants to do this in a wise and orderly fashion. He's afraid there is not time to do the talking we need to do across campus to have a good plan by the deadline. He's willing to wait a year. There are two big things to consider. We will try to pay market salaries and this will create salary inversions. Those inversions will create controversy across campus. He would not want to implement merit pay until the worst equity problems were worked out. We need to look at options. There is diversity of opinion on this issue. He asked if we really had enough time to do the issue justice.

Senator Said asked if President Hall thought TBR is doing away with across-the-board salary increases. He replied that there is variety in Tennessee as to how they distribute raises. President Winters mentioned that faculty are concerned with their own protection when something happens to a student while on trip and asked if the University would afford faculty any legal help. President Hall replied that the University will be the primary defendant and will be looking out for the faculty member. He said faculty are not expected to be on guard 24 hours a day. There is no rule we can write to shield us in every situation. President Winters said he was hoping for a guideline/statement of principle that would demonstrate to the courts that we were aware of the expectations on us. President Hall said that when you write something down, you are held tightly to it. Senator Gilbert Pitts asked if there is a real need to have the guidelines submitted to TBR. President Hall is concerned about the starting salaries (market value) and being able to offer competitive salaries.

3. Provost – Dr. Tristan Denley

Provost Denley was unable to attend. President Winters said he had talked with Dr. Denley about student evaluations. We will have paper evaluations for the spring semester. We will probably go to electronic evaluations for the fall semester.

Reports from Faculty Senate Representatives

1. Academic Council – Dr. Phil Kemmerly

Academic Council has met twice since the last Senate meeting, on February 13th and 25th. During the meeting of 2/13 the following items were acted upon:

- a revision was approved to the Women's Studies minor (WS 3080, a practicum/internship);
- revisions to the General Psychology major (BA & BS) and revisions to the concentrations of School Counseling (MS) and Community Counseling (MS);
- a new program—Chemical Engineering Technology (A.A.S.) was approved in the Chemistry Department;
- a new concentration, Networking (BS), was approved in the Computer Science and Information Technology Department

During the meeting of 2/25 the following items were acted upon:

- a revision to the Asian Studies minor to include 2 years of Japanese was approved;
- the Grade Appeal Policy will go into effect as soon as the President signs it. Senator Amy Hamlin asked if faculty will be required to keep student work for 1 year any longer. Senator Phil Kemmerly said that a student will have to document what they think their grievance is in writing. This should help in dealing with frivolous complaints before they get to the committee. He said it was still a good idea to keep student work for 365 days.

2. Deans' Council – Dr. Ron Gupton

Deans' Council met February 4, 2009.

- Conditionally admitted students are now being advised in the Career and Advisement Center.
- Michael Becraft reported that new programs will not be approved by TBR/THEC in the current economic climate. Concentrations will be approved like majors. We may need to use language such as “guided electives” in the APSU Bulletins, but it would not be listed on the transcript.
- Online evaluations are still under discussion. The response rate remains a concern, but there are statistics that show that over time the response rate increases.

3. TBR Faculty Subcouncil – Senator Kay Haralson

The TBR Faculty Subcouncil has not met since the last Senate meeting. They had asked that the chancellor withdraw his business plan and he did. The tuition cap may be lifted, but tuition will be reduced for credit hours ranging from 12-15 hours. The President of the TBR Faculty Subcouncil was forceful in pointing out the cost of the TBR, THEC and UT Boards. He said it costs \$91 million to run these three boards. President Winters said the legislators he talked to were all interested in how they can reduce the cost and inefficiency of having three boards.

Old Business

1. **Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Student Travel Policy** — Senator Greg Rabidoux echoes President Hall's comments. There should not be an expectation that faculty are responsible for students 24/7. This ad hoc committee has crafted similar language. When something does happen, the University is going to protect the University's interests. Sometimes the fall guy may be the faculty member because there is not specific language in place. Senator Rabidoux said in his experience he hasn't seen enough protection for the faculty member with loose guidelines. Maybe a memo from Provost could suffice. This committee wants it made clear what a faculty member's responsibilities are after academic activities are completed for the day while traveling with students. We need something between an elaborate policy and loose guidelines. Senator Kemmerly mentioned the *peacock rule*: if you are doing your job in a

responsible manner and something happens to someone, the state has a rule saying that you cannot be held responsible if you are doing your job and following guidelines. Senator Mike Gotcher said the issue is not just being sued, but how the administration is going to view/protect the faculty member. Senator Rabidoux thinks the issue needs further discussion. Senator Sara Gotcher asked about having students sign something stating that they are responsible for themselves. Senator LuAnnette Butler mentioned that the University of Kentucky has a *hold harmless* form the student signs and is turned into the dean's office.

2. **Report from Faculty White Committee on RTP Issues** —the committee met with Senator Mickey Wadia (Chair of the Faculty Handbook & Policy Committee) and Michael Becraft. They recommended the committee hold off until all departments have criteria. Senator Wadia said the committee might want to wait until the called meeting in April to present. A discussion followed about departments who have very minimal guidelines and encouraging them to tighten up their guidelines. A question was raised about how to get departments to do this. Deans, college committees, Provost's Office, Faculty Handbook Committee, and this Faculty Senate committee could work toward encouraging academic departments to tighten their RTP guidelines.
3. **Report from Faculty Red Committee on Faculty Sick Leave**— Senator Sara Gotcher gave a report for the committee. There were two questions the committee had been charged with exploring.
 - A. What is the real meaning and implication of APSU's policy regarding a faculty member's minimum requirement of 37.5 hours per week? APSU and TBR clearly state "as a general guideline, all faculty members have responsibilities Monday through Friday for a minimum of 37.5 hours of any week in which the institution is in session." (APSU Sick Leave Policy 5:045, p. 3). To the committee this appears to be an arbitrary, confusing, and somewhat insulting policy which raises several questions:
 - Upon what basis is the number of 37.5 hours estimated?
 - Is this 37.5 hours only counted when the faculty member is in their office, the classroom, on campus for meetings, theatre, dance, art, music, or any other kind of research—mentorship of campus organizations, attending campus activities (student contact hours)?
 - Does all of the work a faculty member does at home not count?
 - Aren't faculty members hired and paid for their credentials, experience, and quality of work? (surely we will not be expected to punch a time-clock—it's the quality of the time: we are "salaried workers")
 - What about those of us who teach online classes? Typically, the reason students take online classes is because they work during the day. The only time faculty can efficiently respond is after the regular work day is over. Now, how you account for that?
 - Quite honestly, how do you account for most of the above?

The above are the questions generated by the Faculty Red Committee so far. Certainly faculty must be available to students. However, physical presence

on campus is not always the answer. The general consensus is that present APSU and TBR policy does not adequately reflect the reality of the current situation and should be amended.

- B. Why do state employees who retire under one system (TCRS) have unused accumulated sick leave credited toward retirement, yet those state employees who retire under other retirement plans do not? Is such a circumstance ethical? APSU policy which conforms to TBR policy states: "TCRS member employees who terminate due to retirement shall have all unused accumulated sick leave credited toward retirement. Employees who retire under the ORP will not have unused sick leave credited toward retirement" (p.5 of above mentioned policy).

President Winters said he and Vice President Buchanan discussed this issue with legislators when they met with them on February 24, 2009.

New Business

1. **Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Student Evaluations**-- no report was made. President Winters has asked the committee to examine the viability of moving to an online system. Scantron is dying a slow death and will not be an option soon.
2. **PASS Course Summary** – Senator Haralson mentioned that this document is on the Faculty Senate website. Senator Sara Gotcher asked how this course is different from APSU 1000. Senator Haralson replied that it will cover some of the same things, but also some different things. Students who flunked APSU 1000 will take the PASS course.
3. President Winters asked the Senate to stand for a moment of silence for the two APSU students who died this week.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.