

Austin Peay State University
Faculty Senate Minutes—Special Called Meeting
April 4, 2004

President Tim Winters called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Senators Berg, Black, Christian, Goldstone, Griffy, Gupton, Kemmerly, Kenney, King, Maurer, Menser, Rainey, Rayburn, Rocheleau, Silverburg, Tracy, Winters, Zeigler

Absent: Senators Clark, Franks, Hogan, Jator, Kitterman, Koch, Magrans, Newport, Salama, Shepherd, Steinberg, Witherspoon

The called meeting was to discuss a procedure advocated by the Administration that Faculty Search Committees send two names to the Vice President after the interview process is completed.

President Winters presented the following resolution:

In all searches below the level of chair, the search committee shall send forward a single name to the VPAA as a recommend for hire.

-If the VPAA finds a compelling reason to reject that candidate, s/he will identify the reason and discuss it with the full search committee.

-If the problem cannot be resolved, the committee will send forward a second name.

-If the recommended candidate rejects the offer or withdraws his/her name, the VPAA will notify the search committee and they will submit a second name.

Question: Why is the Administration wanting this practice?

Answer from President Winters: The VPAA wanted to make sure the candidate was viable for tenure and had adequate English language. The candidate would spend time with the VPAA.

Dr. Hoppe's Response: Sometimes the decision is made at the end of semester, and if one name is submitted and the person rejects our offer or has accepted another offer, and if we have a second candidate then we can speed up the process. Many times we lose candidates because of timing. There are occasionally issues related to affirmative action goals. In some of the academic disciplines there is shortage of diversity especially for Hispanics. We are trying to meet all of our affirmative action goals. There are times when the VPAA or Dean may notice something about a candidate that the committee does not notice. For example a candidate had worked at multiple schools for 4 years at a time and that may need additional questions as to why.

She is willing to have the names in rank order, and Dr. Speck would honor that ranking unless he found some compelling reason not to hire that person and then would go back to the departmental committee/chair to discuss the issue. The department chair would have ample opportunity to converse with the VPAA.

If the department chair did feel that there was only one viable candidate and only sent up one name and that person did not accept the job, then the process would have to be restarted since the others were deemed as unacceptable during the first cycle. The ultimate goal is to get the best person to fit within Austin Peay.

Dr. Kemmerly believes that most of the faculty hires are people just out of graduate school, and that the faculty in the particular discipline probably have better contacts from that candidate's background to check out the faculty member. Since there is such a rotation of senior administrators around the country that there may be less of an opportunity to check out faculty with other administrators as faculty do with their peers at other schools. Department chair has to sign off if the candidate has the English-speaking skills before the

person is hired. The Chair would normally check that out fully before making a recommendation. The committee and chair should have the ability to check out applicant when they see something which is suspect such as someone switching jobs every 3 or 4 years.

Dr. Hoppe thinks it is highly likely that they will agree with the committee's choice, and it will be a minority of occurrences for Dr. Speck to find a compelling reason not to hire the recommended faculty member. Dr. Speck will interact more with hiring of Dean's than with faculty.

Dr. Kemmerly--Once the pool has been approved by Affirmative Action, then it seems that the process has been working. It would appear too late to decide that affirmative action has not been met at the recommendation level which is after the interviewing process.

Dr. Hoppe says that if the group does not have diversity then the vitas will go to Richard Jackson and he will look at the vitas and he will see if both candidates are equal.

Dr. Kemmerly supports the recommendation by Executive Committee.

Dr. Winters believes the system we have now works, so why change?

Dr. Rayburn wants to know why the practice is being done now instead of in the fall or some other time.

Dr. Hoppe does not really think that the timing is a factor. Dr. Hoppe believes they are trying to build in enough flexibility, and she is not sure why there is dissatisfaction from faculty. The goal for both sides is the same--to find the best faculty member.

Dr. Steve Ryan—guest of the Senate: The committee has gone through the process with one candidate ranking a 10 and another ranks a 6. The second candidate is a minority, and if both names go forward, and if both are acceptable then what if the VPAA would decide to hire the 2nd ranked person. Dr. Hoppe said that that would not happen without discussion with the committee.

Dr. Gupton: To go back to the committee should not be a major time delay--only a matter of one or two days to get the committee back to discuss. Dr. Hoppe says that it may be after the semester has ended and may be difficult to get the faculty back together. The purpose is to expedite the process, but not to override the faculty in the process. Dr. Gupton feels that this is a departmental issue and that the Administration is coming down too far in the process. Dr. Hoppe indicated that the President is the final authority to make a decision regarding hiring faculty.

Dr. John Foote--guest of the Senate: He remarked that the perception is that this is creeping micromanagement. The bottom line is that this is a matter of trust-which is based on past records. This has possibly been the case in many Administrations, but under the past six or so Administrations--there have been different levels of trust.

Dr. Hoppe says that if the fear is arbitrary and capricious activity; she could do it. If the trust is not there, the administrators can win for at least a short period. She has prided most that she and Faculty Senate have been able to talk about issues and worked hard to build a relationship. She is dedicated to working with faculty at APSU. A resolution says that we have not been able to agree.

Dr. Steve Ryan: When there is a change in the hiring process then we don't know what will happen two Administrations from now. He does not think Dr. Hoppe will do that but somewhere down the road someone else may take advantage of the practice.

Dr. Richard Gildrie—guest of the Senate: How is the resolution different from what we currently do?

Dr.Griffy: The resolution was not drafted to say that we have met an impasse. The resolution allows for the VPAA to go to the department if he finds a compelling reason not to hire the first recommendation.

Dr. Hoppe: There are so many aspects of the hiring process that the time frame is very long--sometimes because some of the required paperwork is delayed.

Senator Kell Black--not only is there the feeling that the faculty does not trust the Administration, but some faculty members believe the Administration does not trust the faculty to make appropriate decisions.

Dr. Tom King believes the resolution is a good compromise.

Dr. Floyd Christian: Is Dr. Hoppe's practice based on some type of model? What is our history of sending in recommendations for faculty?

Dr. Hoppe has asked for department chairs and deans to come to her unranked, but they usually come in as ranked. We all share the responsibility and authority in the process.

President Winters: The purpose of our resolution was just to codify the process. There is nothing substantially different in this except that the work that the faculty do in committee is trusted by the Administration.

Dr. Hoppe was asked about her view of the role of departmental faculty in choosing a chair? She believes that the role of the department is important, but the Administration does need some input. She sometimes thinks that the Administration may not always be able to work with a particular chair, and they look for someone who can work on both sides--faculty and Administration.

Senator Griffy: Regarding the resolution, she is having a hard time understanding why our resolution will not work for the Administration. Dr. Hoppe wants the committee to send two names at first and the faculty want to send one at first with the option of sending a second name if the first one does not work out.

Senator Kemmerly called for the question, and it was seconded. The resolution passed with majority voice vote. One opposed vote and one abstention. The Senate will forward the resolution to the VPAA and Dr. Hoppe.

There was no additional business for this special called meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Sue Evans, Secretary