

**Austin Peay State University
Faculty Senate
Meeting of Thursday, October 22, 2009
University Center, UC 307
Minutes**

Senate President Lori Buchanan called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Recognition of Guests: Al Bekus, Michèle Butts, Ann Wood, Roy Baker, Ryan Forsythe, Catherine Winn, Kristin Hershey

Roll call of Senators – Secretary Mercy Cannon. Senators Brennan, Diehr, Goldstone, Hardin, Hayes, Kanervo, Moore, Myers, O'Connor, Robertson, Salama, Scanlan, Schlanger, Silverberg, Smith-Francis, and Williams were absent.

Agenda approved, with no changes.

Minutes for meeting of September 24, 2009 – approved, with no changes.

Remarks

1. Senate President – Lori Buchanan

- Questions for Ryan Forsythe – PLAN accepted for a sophomore/junior, but not once they reach the typical status to take ACT? Ryan amenable to that suggestion.
- Announcement: Status of grade appeal policy discussed with President Hall & Provost Denley. President Hall's concern is that the wording didn't pay sufficient deference to faculty member. Suggested that unless the grade can be shown to have been given prejudicially or arbitrarily, the grade should stand. Senators Wadia and Cannon will change the policy's wording to reflect this.

2. University President – Dr. Tim Hall

- Compensation plan: Important for universities to review such plans periodically. Does not want to constrain starting salaries to non-competitive levels. Has changed view on merit after researching the issue on this campus. Wishes to support compensation plan approved by committee, chaired by Senator Griffy.
- Budget issues: Email sent out to explain situation, which has now changed. 6% general cut (all state agencies). State plans to use one-time, non-recurring money to cover this cut. THEC & TBR believe that any cuts should fall more heavily on universities rather than community colleges. Right now, expect the cut to be 12% (1.5 million to over 3 million). Where will the money come from? Provisional answer:
 - 1) Budget prepared in spring for next three years, plan to address the cut, estimated enrollment growth & tuition increases (about 5% a year). At conclusion of three years, we'd meet cut & have a surplus of about 1.4 million. Right now, we'll be using this surplus to meet the new projection for cut. Allowed to use some federal stimulus money to cover the gap.
 - 2) Also, using 8 million to enhance energy-saving measures. Combined savings = 1.4 million (not built into budget) – now we may use that savings to meet 3 million loss.

- We saw an 8% increase in enrollment – if growth continues, then we might see a surplus of 2 million.
- Plans to add faculty – need to add if we continue to grow. The cuts will not affect these plans, yet.
- Next fall's raises planned (3%) still on the table, unless we get further bad news this summer. If no one else in TBR can offer raises, it may be difficult for us to do so.
- President Hall continues to advocate for APSU, against simply calculating graduation rates as measure for funding.

3. Provost – Dr. Tristan Denley

- Research support: Faculty development leave – may apply for 3 slots for coming spring. Summer research fellowship – 10 @ \$5000 – information will be forthcoming. Next spring, March 2, a graduate research extravaganza! Leading to the selection of a graduate student who will take part in sharing research to Tennessee legislators (part of a larger group).
- New faculty – money from President Hall combined with \$100,000 from online fees to fund 7 new lines. Lines may come with stipulations for departments.
- \$300,000 from summer monies will be distributed for departments to use for special projects.
- Senate President Buchanan thanked Provost Denley for taking care of a problem regarding full-time charges for Ft. Campbell courses taken by main campus students (over 12 hours).
- P-Card available.
- One calendar is now available to post events on university website.

4. Professor Emeritus Al Bekus

- Retirees association is active on campus, just became a formal organization in August. Interested in scheduling a series of seminars for those who are anticipating retirement. This can help employees negotiate the various procedures and issues related to retiring from the university.
- Click on "Retirees Association" in the A-Z index.

5. Registrar – Catherine Winn

- Priority registration: Nov. 9-20 – schedule of classes for Spring 2010 now available.
- Self-service / OneStop advising page. A central location for faculty about advisees – all information about the student available on one page.
- Upcoming additions: indication of major GPA & overall GPA; major/minor designation.
- Electronic grade change forms will be tested starting mid-November. Hopeful to roll out by end of Fall 2009.

6. Advising Committee Chair – Dr. Michèle Butts

- Examining student advising issues; preparing recommendations for faculty senate.
- Enrollment Management is preparing more organized information for the committee.
- Survey from faculty being reviewed; new survey information being gathered, encourages candid and wide-ranging responses. Looking at past surveys as well for a historical perspective.
- Provost Denley is supporting the committee's efforts.
- Talking with Telaina Wrigley, registrar, to gather more information.

7. Reports from Faculty Senate Representatives

- Dean's Council – Senator Bill Rayburn
 - 4 items already covered by Provost Denley.
 - Other items: Ryan Forsythe encouraging participation in Academic Decathlon; November AP Day may be the largest yet.
 - Report on Dickson Center – small audience, but working to expand. President Hall wants to offer a full degree at Dickson. Questions about delivery methods.
 - Bill Persinger (PR & marketing) – wants to create gonfalons, a kind of banner or flag, representing each college at graduation. Looking to deans & faculty about symbolic representations. Target for Spring commencement.
 - Compensation Plan general discussion – Bill Cox brought up issues of approval process for hiring offers (min/max); questions about target salaries and merit pay.

- Academic Council – Senator Phil Kemmerly
 - Meets for the first time this semester next Wednesday.

- TBR Faculty Sub-council – No report

Old Business

1. ACT-PLAN addition to dual/joint enrollment admissions criteria
 - President Buchanan: executive committee asks that the senate not support changes.
 - Discussion: Felt that the presentation made sense and questions why the exec committee recommends against.
 - Concern that we're bringing marginally prepared, young students to campus. An ACT of 19 is too low for such students.
 - Point of clarity – Tenn pays for PLAN, so affordability issues could be a reason for the acceptance of PLAN. Noted that this may signal a problem, at-risk elements.
 - Prediction of PLAN means that if a student took the ACT the next day, then the ACT score would be a 19; two years down the road, it would be three points higher.
 - Motion proposed to not support proposed changes = one nay; one abstain. Motion carried.

2. Bylaws revision – Vice President Major

Asks for further discussion to changes. Main change was to reorganize groups of representation and to include faculty not assigned to specific departments. Moved to accept revisions, all in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Reports from Senate Committees

Amy Hamlin – report from Academic Red:

 - The committee received much information. No recommendations at this time.
 - Motion carried to accept report of committee and to make information available electronically online for entire faculty.
 - Discussion – concerns about MC students taking up classroom space that is needed for the increased enrollments.

4. Compensation plan update – Senator Loretta Griffy
 - Senate has been gathering concerns about the compensation plan. Senator Griffy will begin to show us some of the issues at stake, including the two philosophical issues of merit and inversion/compression.

- Two types of raises: 1) across the board raises (mandated by Tennessee legislators); 2) equity raises (money “found” within the university and permission needed by TBR to distribute money).
- Last target salaries were computed in 2007.
- Senator Griffy demonstrated how target salaries are computed. These examples will be posted online, with additional examples.
- Interest in tying years of service to moving target salary. Also, questions about how to assess merit were raised. How can we get there fairly? That will need to be explored and developed for our campus. A task for Faculty Senate? Is there a model for how to distribute merit incentive?
- Money motivates; merit keeps on giving. The merit incentive as proposed, while not initially funded, does get funded down the road when there’s an equity opportunity permitted by TBR.
- Concerns about initial excitement from faculty and short-term gains which were not sustained long term. Expressed desire for merit rewards as an encouragement to faculty performance.
- Problem with determining merit across disciplines – how can a finance faculty member understand meritorious performance in dance, for example?
- Question raised: Why just award 25% of faculty in department within given year- what if 40% of faculty are meritorious? Can merit incentive part of plan be tweaked? Will there be other types of incentives, such as for research?
- Why the cap on the numbers of years of service in this plan? (if no cap, then lose distinction in rank – associate makes more than professor) This does make the merit incentive even more important.
- Issues: Equity money rarely available, at the pleasure of TBR and only if there is money in the university budget.
- Problem with faculty salaries = we are nearly all below target, not even at minimum of range, and equity would need to be distributed to almost all faculty, if we received equity monies. Possible animosities raised by inversion and compression, beyond the merit issue.
- Support for merit = essential for raising visibility of APSU outside of Montgomery County. Merit establishes a track record of excellence. Reminded that we are evaluated in three areas, so there might be different kinds of meritorious performance.
- Better to have merit incentive toward target salary rather than one time bonuses because merit adds money to the base salary.
- Report in *The Chronicle* indicates that new faculty hires frequently desire a system of merit incentives. But if money not available, there’s risk of impacting morale adversely.

New Business

- Nomination process to Academic Council – Vice President Major
 - Existing statement: “The colleges of the University shall be represented in rough proportion to the number of faculty in the college.”
 - Considering leaving nomination process as written, or changing the language.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.