

Minutes

The Faculty Senate met February 2, 2021, via Zoom, due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements. A recording of the Zoom session can be found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKe3h1S9Ewg>.

Note: Due to technical difficulties, the beginning of this month's meeting was not recorded. I have done my best to summarize this part of the meeting, and would like to thank Joe Reid for being willing to share his PowerPoint slides and some brief commentary with me for inclusion in these minutes in place of a recording of his presentation. I have indicated in the minutes below where the recording begins, and from there on the minutes continue normally. I would appreciate any and all corrections/additions to the minutes for the part of the meeting that was not recorded.

Attendance/Quorum

President Don McDonnell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. All Senators or alternates were present except for Tracey Coon and Mark Clark, who were represented by alternates Maureen Sevigny and Kevin Pintong, respectively.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the December 8 2020 meeting were approved, with one minor correction suggested by Addie Clark.

New Business

Joe Reid

- The meeting began with a motion to alter the agenda to allow Joe Reid to present new business before the reports of the officers. This motion passed unanimously.
- Joe provided Senate with a current, detailed analysis of Oregon Tech faculty's salaries. Unfortunately, his presentation was not recorded; however, you can view his slides on **pages 11-24 of this packet**. These slides contain the quantitative data that Joe discussed during his presentation.
 - When questioned, Joe expressed concern over how our current salary situation will affect retention, specifically at the Assistant and Associate Professor levels.
 - In response to the data presented, Kyle Chapman raised the point that without a robust rank, promotion, and tenure policy in place, compression would make the salary for full Professors almost flat over time.
- When I wrote Joe after this meeting and asked if he had any commentary to add to the minutes, considering that his presentation was not recorded, he wrote back in response: "The key point that needs to be made clear is that this is a presentation of the current state and NOT aspirational, goal setting, or bargaining. I tried not to make value judgements (especially in terms of what a lowest acceptable amount and goals about where the averages should be), and just make a point of where we are."

Reports of the Officers

Report of the President – Don McDonnell [\(0:00\)](#)

- Don began by encouraging everyone present to take care of themselves, and to keep an eye on their students' mental and physical health.
- His first update was that courses will be offered the same way in spring as they did in the fall and winter. The hope is that the COVID situation will improve before fall term begins.

Note: Here is where the recording of the session begins. Minutes continue below accordingly.

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- Don reported that at the request of Faculty Welfare, SenEx discussed the future of Welfare’s current charge to review the tenure relinquishment policy. Ultimately, relinquishment was decided to be under the OT-AAUP bargaining team’s purview currently, and the state of the policy will be decided via bargaining.
- We hired a new VPFA, and he will begin at Oregon Tech on March 1st.
- Don reminded the Senate that SenEx sent a letter to Dr. Naganathan in December, and then followed up earlier this month when it failed to receive a reply. This letter requested that the administration bargaining team’s lead negotiator be replaced as a matter of faculty morale.
 - Don noted that this request was made as an effort to improve faculty morale, and should not be seen as collaboration between the Senate and OT-AAUP.
- HECC is pushing forward with efforts to streamline transferability, both from community colleges to universities, and between universities. If you have any input on this matter, please contact your IFS representatives.
- Oregon Tech will be receiving \$4.3 million dollars from federal relief funds. \$1 million of this money is earmarked for student support.
- Don gave a report last Thursday to the Board of Trustees. He brought up a number of topics:
 - Concern about the direction of Oregon Tech’s culture.
 - Concern about decisions being made that are contrary to the goal of quality course delivery.
 - A request that going forward, when making decisions and communicating with others, we all consider the Rotarian “Four-Way” question model:
 - Is it the truth?
 - Is it fair to all concerned?
 - Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
 - Will it be beneficial to all concerned?
 - Concern about how faculty morale has been affected by the extended negotiation sessions.
- Don said that he has begun walking the halls of campus buildings with the Deans, and he has found this experience to be “enlightening,” and plans to continue the practice.
- Don has confirmed that Dr. Naganathan plans to move his office to the new CEET building. He plans to follow up on this with Dr. Naganathan directly, and will report back.
- SenEx wants to collect data on faculty morale. To this end, Kyle Chapman will be meeting with SenEx to help them construct a survey to collect this data in a meaningful way.
- Don said that SenEx will continue to lead efforts to improve faculty morale, and to reimagine what Senate’s purpose will be once OT-AAUP has taken over most of the work of advocating for faculty welfare. He hopes Senate’s focus, at that point, can be more on academics and less on university politics.
- Questions?
 - I commented to clarify that my concern with the rumor that Dr. Naganathan is taking space in the CEET building for a new office came from a place of wanting to see students’ ability to use the building for educational purposes maximized.
 - Lindy Stewart made the point that Senate’s role hasn’t changed yet because there isn’t a union contract yet.
 - Don agreed, and expressed the hope that this transition can happen soon, and that it can be a positive one.
 - Kyle asked Don how he thought his message to the Board was received.
 - Don felt that the more critical aspects of his message were not received well.
 - Cristina Negoita thanked Don for being the voice of faculty in front of the Board.
- End of report.

Report of the Vice President – Christopher Szymyk [\(14:24\)](#)

- Christopher has heard from his constituents that they want SenEx to “share more” with the faculty. He said that SenEx does not try to hide what they’re doing, but will try to communicate better in the future.
- The MarCoPa Executive Director search has been a success.

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- Christopher said that the delayed IFS ballot is his fault, but that it will be sent out via email this week.
 - Don said as a follow-up that he plans to send a letter to faculty this week, updating them on SenEx's activities.
- Questions?
 - There were no questions.
- End of report.

Report of the ASOIT Delegate – Mason Wichmann [\(16:13\)](#)

- Mason was able to give a report to the Board, covering a number of things:
 - Attempts to reestablish a connection with the ASOIT Portland-Metro group.
 - Efforts to redevelop a lot of ASOIT's internal documentation.
 - ASOIT's view on the current tuition-setting process.
- Questions?
 - Ryan Brown asked for more details about Klamath Falls ASOIT's efforts to reestablish a relationship with Portland-Metro ASOIT.
 - Mason said that the groups have struggled in the past to establish a meeting schedule that both can stick to.
 - He also said that part of the problem is that both campuses share a constitution, but it doesn't serve both equally well.
 - Don made a comment to make sure that the Portland-Metro ASOIT President attends Senate meetings in the future.
- End of report.

Reports of the Standing Committees

Faculty Rank Promotion & Tenure (RPT) – Monica Breedlove [\(18:19\)](#)

- Monica said that RPT has not yet met this term, so there is no report.

Faculty Welfare – Yasha Rohwer [\(18:32\)](#)

- Yasha acknowledged Don's earlier point, that Welfare no longer has to consider its first charge.
- He said that the committee's last charge is "to figure out the status of welfare," and that that can't be done until a contract is decided upon.
- End of report.

Academic Standards – Addie Clark [\(19:12\)](#)

- Addie said that Standards has met once since the beginning of the term.
 - Wendy Ivie was invited to this meeting to discuss the committee's remaining three charges, which deal with the waitlist policy, transcript evaluation, and the add/drop timeline.
 - As a result of this discussion, it was discovered that the transcript evaluation process was recently slowed down as the result of a software change in the Registrar's Office. This problem has since been fixed.
- Addie also said that the discussion about transfer equivalencies is being had in GEAC as well, and that this isn't an effort coming only from HECC, but also from the state legislature.
 - She encouraged anyone with concerns to reach out to GEAC and/or the Registrar's Office.
- Questions?
 - Maureen asked if the effort toward common course numbering also includes common credit counts.

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- Addie replied that yes, it does. It's possible that the final version of the legislation won't require *every* course across universities to match in terms of course numbering *and* credit number, but it will likely require that many of them do.
- End of report.

Faculty Compensation (FCC) – Sean Sloan [\(24:10\)](#)

- Sean said that FCC still needs to meet to discuss the data that Joe presented. They also need to discuss the possibility of updating the metrics used to analyze our salary data.
- Questions?
 - There were no questions.
- End of report.

Reports of Special or Ad Hoc Committee

- Currently, there are no Special or Ad Hoc committees.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

New Business

- There was no new business.

Open Floor

Dibyajyoti Deb [\(25:22\)](#)

- Deb reported on the Student Award process. Information regarding the Student Awards and the process by which you can nominate a student is described on the handout as included in the [February Senate packet](#).
- If you have questions or want more information, Deb suggested that you contact Rachel Winters.

Kyle Chapman [\(27:28\)](#)

- Kyle provided the DEI Committee's compliance report as part of the [February Senate packet](#).
- He said that the DEI Committee is planning to offer some workshops and organize some focus groups, so there will be more communication from the committee soon. If you are interested in helping out, there will be many opportunities to do so coming down the line.
- Questions?
 - Cristina asked about talk around hiring a DEI Director.
 - Kyle said that he doesn't think that anything has been decided on this one way or another yet.
 - Maureen stated her concern that part of "inclusion" should be making sure that the Portland-Metro campus is included the way the university is talked about: Oregon Tech isn't just the Klamath Falls campus. She suggested in particular that the phrase "across campus" is not inclusive.
 - Kyle said that this is something that the committee is aware of in general, and would like to get suggestions from faculty on how to change our vocabulary in the future.

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- Kevin Pintong spoke to a lack of feeling welcome as part of the university as an issue that's affecting both student and faculty retention.
 - In particular, he said that students and faculty have both left the Klamath Falls campus in response to racism and other forms of discrimination.
 - He also expressed concern that by being so behind the times on this issue, the Klamath Falls campus is opening itself up to potential lawsuits.
 - Kyle responded that Kevin's concerns are the kind of thing that the DEI Committee was brought into being to address.
- Cristina asked if the DEI Committee is looking to take a baseline survey.
 - Kyle said that 2015 was the last time Oregon Tech did a campus climate survey, and two years ago there was a small survey that was sent out. The plan going forward is to use a standardized evaluation tool, the CECE, to poll Oregon Tech university members on a biennial basis.
- Don took a question from the chat: will Oregon Tech be using the "Unlearn Movement" to address DEI issues?
 - Kyle isn't sure how or if the Unlearn Movement will be used.
- Ryan took a moment to plug the International Youth Leadership Conference.
 - He encouraged people to get involved and participate.
 - Kyle agreed that this is the sort of thing that the DEI Committee wants to bring to the university.

Addie Clark [\(46:12\)](#)

- Addie had a concern expressed by one of her constituents about communication to faculty when one of their students is in isolation because of COVID. In particular, how do we know when students are missing class because they are in isolation versus when they are missing class because they are just choosing not to show up?
 - Don suggested that the lack of notification might be a HIPAA issue, but Kyle says that HIPAA would not apply in this instance.
 - Don said that SenEx will look into this.
 - Terri Torres said that she has had experience with students who have directly notified her that they tested positive for COVID, and it is her understanding that when a student tests positive, everyone else in the class would be told.
 - Don said that SenEx will look into this also.

Report of the Provost – Dr. Joanna Mott [\(51:25\)](#)

- Dr. Mott began by thanking Kevin for his earlier comments.
- She also just emailed Erin Foley in response to Addie's and Terri's concerns above.
 - Erin wrote back to say that she will notify faculty upon request of the affected student. Sometimes, students will notify faculty on their own, so there's no need for Erin to send out a notification in that case.
 - Terri asked for a verification that affected faculty and students are being notified when a student gets a positive COVID test.
 - Dr. Mott verified this, and said she would follow up with Erin to get this communicated more clearly to faculty.

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- Dr. Mott thanked everyone for being vigilant and careful as COVID wears on.
- She said that there are currently a number of legislative bills that could potentially affect the university, the most significant of which is the transfer bill that Addie discussed earlier.
 - There has been a lot of discussion to find a way to come up with a version of the bill that is logistically reasonable without eroding its efficacy.
 - She also said that if Senate has concerns about this bill and its potential impacts, the best route for expressing those is through our IFS representation.
 - There might be requests for information going out to individual faculty in the future; Dr. Mott said that if these requests have short deadlines to have patience and that your input is appreciated.
- Thanked the group of faculty who presented to the Board from the Academic Quality and Student Success Committee.
- Currently, the plan for spring term will be the same as fall and winter terms. Tentatively, the plan is to schedule fall term in the same way that we scheduled *last* spring.
- Dr. Mott says that the budget build is just getting started. There remains a lot of uncertainty around the budget, for the expected reasons.
- The Tuition Recommendation Committee and FOAC have started meeting.
- Dr. Mott seconded Don's earlier comments about the incoming VPFA.
- Enrollment was flat overall this fall. This is better than the other Oregon regional universities. There will be more information to come soon.
- The deadline for sabbatical requests just passed for the year. There were no new requests, though three faculty deferred until next year.
- Equipment requests have been received by the Deans, and responses will be coming soon.
- Dr. Mott said that Carrie Dickson has collated the responses to the supplemental questions that were added to the fall student evaluations.
 - She shared some of these results (at the university level, but not the department level) during the meeting, but did not provide them for inclusion in this packet. For the sake of (relative) brevity, I am not typing the results directly into the minutes.
 - When concluding her report of the findings, Dr. Mott said there was still more analysis of the data to be done before it could be presented more fully.
- Questions?
 - Addie asked if the fall academic calendar would be altered this coming year in the same way that it was for this past year.
 - Dr. Mott said that that decision hasn't been made yet, but that she suspects that the calendar will go back to normal next year.
 - Addie made the point that the sample size of respondents to the supplementary evaluation questions is small, and wondered if that is being taken into consideration when the data is interpreted.
 - Dr. Mott said that yes, this will be considered when interpreting the data.
 - Joe asked if there is an effort to follow up with students who reported struggles with issues like food insecurity.
 - Carrie responded that this is difficult to do because the survey didn't collect any personal identifiers.
 - Kyle said that CampusLabs has previously said students' individual information can be provided upon request.
 - There was no clear answer provided about whether this is actually possible or not.
 - Andria Fultz suggested that if you have a concern about a particular student, you can use the Student Early Alert System on TechWeb.
 - Terri asked if Dr. Mott had any recommendations based on the supplementary questions' results.
 - Dr. Mott once again expressed concern about particular departments that seemed to be struggling.
 - Terri asked if Dr. Mott was going to be moving to the CEET building.

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- Terri also asked to clarify that next term will not be *exactly* the same as winter term, because we won't be starting with two remote weeks.
 - Dr. Mott also verified this.
- Terri asked how the initial round of COVID money was spent, and how the *next* round of COVID money can be spent.
 - Dr. Mott said that the most important thing at first was to prepare classrooms for COVID-safe instruction, so much of the initial money went to classroom renovation and IT. There was also a significant investment in PPE and cleaning supplies.
 - The CARES Act site provides a detailed breakdown of how the money was allocated; Dr. Mott suggested that Terri reach out to Stephanie Pope for more details.
 - The “new” CARES money isn't divided up by division, so it will be allocated based on “what the needs are for the institution in terms of COVID costs.”
- Terri asked if departments can send suggestions on how the new money might be spent.
 - Dr. Mott replied that yes, departments should send suggestions.
- Terri asked if we are going forward on the track renovation project.
 - Dr. Mott said she doesn't know much in terms of details, but yes the project is going ahead.
- Terri also asked if Dr. Mott still intends to develop an in-house leadership training program.
 - She said yes, it's something that's still on the table, but hasn't happened yet.
- Lindy asked that now that ATAC has been dissolved, if their work is going to be done by another committee, or if that committee will be reinstated.
 - Dr. Mott didn't have an immediate answer, but will look into it.
- Cristina asked if we are still trying to hire a grant writer.
 - There was a search this fall, but apparently the finalist backed out after not being willing to move to Oregon. The position will be reposted in the future.
- Lindy asked about the Associate Dean position(s).
 - Dr. Mott said there's currently no funding and those lines have been cancelled.
- End of report.

Report of the President's Council Delegate – Don McDonnell [\(1:31:29\)](#)

- President's Council has not met, so there is no report.

Report of the Association of Oregon Faculties (AOF) Representative – Mark Clark [\(1:31:36\)](#)

- Mark Clark was not present, so there was no report.

Report of the Inter-institutional Faculty Senate (IFS) Representative – Lindy Stewart [\(1:31:50\)](#)

- Lindy gave the report this month because Mark Clark was not present.
- IFS did meet since the previous Senate meeting.
 - They met with the Legislative Action Team representatives.
 - The first revenue forecast is going to come out on February 24th.
 - They are looking at GED scores, and how those are used for placement.
 - They are advocating for more funding for higher ed.
 - They also met with state senators and representatives.
 - Most of this discussion dealt with the bill requiring common course numbering that has been brought up a few times during this Senate session already.
 - Senator Dembrow is also working on a bill to extend healthcare to part-time faculty.

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- Representative Alonso Leon is also working on a Student Voices bill, which would ensure that students are being supported when pursuing post-secondary education.
- IFS concerns:
 - The common course numbering bill.
 - IFS has been invited to attend weekly meetings with Senator Dembrow about this.
 - Dembrow wants to see every course at 200-level and below fit into the common numbering scheme.
 - The Transfer Committee composition has been determined.
 - Lindy described a timeline for future meetings, and for the conclusion of the implementation of common course numbering; details have been omitted for the sake of brevity, please see the video.
 - IFS recommended that the Transfer Council meet with universities' union leadership as part of this process.
- Lindy said that a takeaway from Dembrow's perspective is that students who transfer are much less likely to graduate than students who don't.
- Questions?
 - Maureen asked Lindy for the Senate bill number.
 - It is #233.
 - Maureen also asked if there is going to be funding made available to universities to implement this change.
 - Lindy said this hasn't been considered yet.
 - Maureen asked if there has been discussion about how this new numbering will mesh (or not) with existing MTMs.
 - Lindy replied that she assumes this will come up later as part of the conversation.
 - Don asked what "MTM" stands for.
 - "Major Transfer Maps"
 - Dr. Mott weighed in to explain that the common course numbering bill is perhaps a "new" way to make transfer easier, since the MTM effort seems to have stalled.
- End of report.

Report of the Fiscal Operations Advisory Council (FOAC) Representative – Christopher Syrnyk (1:44:45)

- FOAC has not yet met this year, so there is no report.

Report of the Administrative Council Delegate – Brenda Campbell (1:44:57)

- Brenda says that Administrative Council has prioritized their goals throughout the year and they continue to work toward them. In particular:
 - They have conducted a professional development program on "smart goals." This was well attended and received.
 - They are collaborating with HR this month on a book discussion group, on the book *Burnout*.
 - They began an initiative to welcome new administrative and unclassified hires to Oregon Tech this is retroactive to those who have been hired since September.
 - They are working with Student Involvement and Belonging to promote events for Black History Month.
 - They are hosting an "agenda-free" social time on February 4th at 10am, and faculty are invited.
- Questions?
 - Don asked if faculty are welcome to Administrative Council-sponsored events.

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- Brenda replied that yes, faculty are invited to all events.
- End of report.

Adjournment

Don McDonnell adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Bunting, Secretary