**FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES**

**North Carolina A&T State University**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Dr. Julius Harp, Chair Presiding**

**Senate Members Present:** Stephen Bollinger, Dong Yang Deng, Zachary Denton, Nicole Dobbins, Yewanda Fasina, Galen Foresman, Julius Harp, Kimberly Harper, Evelyn Hoover, Karen Jackson, Yahya Kamalipour, Abebe Kebede, Hyung Nam Kim, James Kribs, Yu-Tung Kuo, Lyubov Kurkalova, Minyong Lee, Ahmed Megri, Nicole McCoy, Carmen Monico, Shona Morgan, William Randle, Ioannis Raptis, Dave Schall, Amy Schwartzott, Roberta Claro da Silva, Kalynda Smith, Shon Smith, Evelyn Sowells-Boone, Hong Wang, James Wood, Omar Woodham, Osei Yeboah

**Departments Not Represented:**  Biology; Chemical, Biological and Bioengineering; Computational Science and Engineering; Computer Science; and Nanoengineering

The meeting was called to order by Chair Julius Harp at 3:00 pm.

**Approval of the January Faculty Senate Minutes**

It was properly moved (by Dr. Cobb) and seconded (by Dr. McCoy) to approve the January minutes. Senators unanimously approved the minutes.

**Open Floor**

Dr. Harp stated that concerns raised in the January meeting have been voiced to administration. He then opened the floor for **sharing**.

Dr. Raptis asked for clarification about when the new **office hours policy** would take effect.

* Dr. Denton said that it is currently awaiting final approvals. Dr. Harp shared that there had been some question about what constitutes an office hour, but Dr. Denton worked closely with Dr. Luster-Teasley and Legal to ensure that the final language was as intended.

Dr. Bollinger requested that the Executive Committee offer some insight into our discussions surrounding **shared governance**.

* Dr. Harp said that shared governance is an ongoing issue. There are multiple initiatives taking place to ensure cooperation of administration and faculty. Dr. Luster-Teasley is working closely with Faculty Welfare, Educational Policy, and New Programs and Curricula Committees to ensure our voice in policies.
* Dr. Cundall said that it is concerning that administration discounted the flawed Chair’s hiring in Liberal Studies as an issue of faculty being upset about not getting what they wanted. It does not seem that faculty input is anything more than a recommendation that does not have to be listened to or acted upon. At this point, we either need to remove the façade of shared governance or make real efforts to encourage it. While there have been discussions about going through an external review of processes for shared governance, Dr. Cundall also has concerns that this will delay real progress, particularly for issues that need to be addressed now.
* Dr. Foresman said that our Faculty Handbook makes no mention of shared governance. He has personally experienced different issues with shared governance as Chair of the NP&C Committee. He has seen curriculum submissions that appear to be pushed through by college administration and he has worked hard to ensure faculty input. It is important for faculty within colleges to monitor and ensure input in curriculum processes. Faculty should voice their concerns if they feel that process or policy has not been followed. True shared governance requires faculty time and service which means that we have to value service.
  + Dr. Harp asked if there is a step built into the NP&C process to allow for faculty challenges? Dr. Foresman said that faculty should originate all curriculum changes and should also have opportunity to voice concerns at department and college level reviews. In addition, faculty and administration should solicit input from outside areas that might be connected to/affected by proposed new courses and curricula to ensure broader faculty input.
* Dr. Harp would like to prioritize our concerns related to shared governance.
  + Dr. Cundall suggested administrative (Chair and Dean) review.
  + Dr. Jackson proposed that a committee in the Senate work on defining our idea of shared governance. We need to be intentional and create a document to share with administration. She said that co-construction is a big part of shared governance, which requires all parties to be involved – students, faculty and administration need to be at the shared table.
    - Dr. Randle said that the Faculty Welfare Committee plans to work on this issue in the near future and reminded the group that shared governance is a focus for the Faculty Assembly. He believes that there are signs that administration wants shared governance but more work to be done.
  + Dr. Randle suggested that we ask for involvement in Fall 2021 scheduling, specifically whether or not we will follow the 2.5 hour time blocks for scheduling.
  + Dr. Foresman said he hopes that we can focus on immediate problems in shared governance. Faculty form the backbone of the institution and are frequently left holding policies created by administrators in short-term roles.

Dr. Kurkalova asked for an update on the request to allow anyone employed in February 2020, at the start of the pandemic, to take a one-year break for **PTR and RPT applications**.

* In the chat, Dr. Woodham shared that this question was raised in the recent Faculty Forum and the Provost said there would be no extensions. Dr. Cobb said the “break” was offered this year to individuals going up for PTR and RPT; faculty scheduled for review were asked to notify their Chair and Dean if they wished to forgo the extension and apply this year.
  + Dr. Kurkalova responded that both are correct, but is concerned that the pandemic affected everyone, not only those going up for RPT or PTR this year. She knows of many other universities who have extended the opportunity to go one year later to all faculty. She identified several arguments in favor of an extension for all faculty: 1) NC A&T might lose otherwise strong faculty because the break was not offered; 2) The hardship falls disproportionately on faculty with children and women; 3) There could be lawsuits from those who have not been offered the break this year; 4) Many book and journal publishers have slowed down, leading to longer reviews and slower review/publication process
  + Dr. Woodham added bereavement as a factor justifying an extension.
* Dr. Kebede proposed that we survey faculty to determine how they have been impacted (welfare, health expenses, professional development, etc.) by COVID-19.
  + Dr. Dobbins suggested that we go back to the previous survey that was sent out, revise it and resend it.
  + Dr. Kurkalova offered that we ask faculty if they want an extension and if so, why?
* Dr. Kurkalova would like the Senate to make a formal request to allow any faculty member (tenured or tenure-track) employed in February 2020 to have a year extension on their RPT or PTR schedule.
  + Dr. Harp said that he has seen some documentation related to this issue that he can share with the Faculty Welfare Committee. He believes a Senate request to administration will receive a response.
  + Dr. Foresman asked if Faculty Assembly has a document we can model for this?
* Dr. Randle believes that the Executive Committee can put a document together. In it, we should include the arguments made by Dr. Kurkalova and others. We are all underperforming due to COVID-19 and associated restrictions.
  + Dr. Morgan asked about the timeline of a document being presented? Does it need to come back to the Senate in March?
    - Dr. Harp said that he believes we can review something in March, with a response coming through in April.
    - Dr. Randle suggested we look at the timeline for notification and discuss timing within the Executive Committee.
* In the chat, Dr. Schall asked if delaying the tenure process effectively penalizes the faculty in terms of the benefits of promotion? Just because a faculty member might not be as productive, it does not mean they are not still working as hard as they can. For example one might be working harder at teaching and developing new materials for online classes, but sacrificing research as a result. Why not change the way we evaluate faculty on their productivity instead of delaying the process all together?
  + Dr. Kurkalova believes that revising evaluation criteria will involve every academic unit/department, thus resulting in a much more complicated process than a blanket allowance of a one-year delay.
* In the chat, Dr. Cobb said that – if extensions are granted – it will be important to be clear with applicants about the number of years of evidence that can be submitted with PTR or RPT applications. For instance, if a person due for PTR is given an extension by 1 or 2 years, will the faculty be able to submit 6 or 7 years of evidence or will it remain at 5 years? Also, this could introduce even greater challenges for administration trying to “track” when faculty are supposed to be reviewed.
  + Dr. Kurkalova agreed and said that this could be a problem if not clearly spelled out.

In the chat, Dr. Kebede raised several workload concerns:

* Are there limits for how many DL courses can be assigned? Too many can cause injury.
  + Dr. Randle said that he thought DL courses were considered the same as face-to-face in determining load.
  + Dr. Cundall said pre-covid, faculty could not have more DL than face-to-face.
* In the College of Science and Technology there is a policy of overloading people who do not bring research money with courses and students are suffering. The situation will worsen if/when someone gets grant funding.
* Dr. Cobb shared that there are also instances where department chairs are increasing the number of students who are able to enroll in one section of a course in order to decrease the number of sections of a course. A faculty may be teaching one section of a course that may have enrollment that is equivalent to two or maybe three sections of a course.

**New Programs and Curricula Committee Dr. Galen Foresman**

The committee met on February 9, 2021 and reviewed 9 packets: Social Work and Sociology, Business Information Systems and Analytics, Nanoengineering, Computer Sciences, Math, English, Leadership Studies, Applied Engineering Technology, and the Graduate College.

All were approved except the packet from the Graduate College, which had recommended a change to the Graduate Course Repeat Policy for certain course numbers (785, 797, 799, 885, 997, 999), making them infinitely repeatable. While there was a Graduate College number standardization that went through in previous years, the committee was concerned that there may be some departments still using these numbers for courses that should not be infinitely repeatable. Dr. Foresman suggested that all departments review their course catalog to ensure that courses with these numbers are appropriate to be infinitely repeatable.

* Dr. Kebede asked for a definition of “infinite repeats,” to which Dr. Foresman replied that it will allow graduate students to take certain courses over and over, without limit.
* In the chat, Dr. Redd said that he believes courses should have some limit on repeats to ensure that a repeat policy isn’t exploited.

Dr. Dobbins made a motion to approve the course changes presented and Dr. Smith seconded. The motion passed with no abstentions or oppositions.

**Presentation from the Chancellor Dr. Harold Martin**

After the January meeting, Dr. Harp followed up on the Senate’s recommendation to invite Chancellor Martin to the February meeting to have a conversation about shared governance. Chancellor Martin shared a presentation about several items that he believes are critically important for faculty to be knowledgeable about and understand:

1. COVID-19 Updates – A review of testing, on-campus vaccination efforts, and education
2. Critical Appointments – A summary of recent appointments, including Mindy Sanders as the Director of Internal Audit and Sanjiv Sarin as Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships
3. BOT Identification – An overview of the BOT nomination process and a discussion of NC A&T’s efforts to nominate strong candidates
4. New Peer Institutions – Background information on our former peer institutions and a summary of recent efforts to identify new peer institutions (approved by the UNC Board of Governors in November 2020)
5. Capital Campaign and Endowment Growth – A review of the university’s capital campaign, which ran from 2014 through 2020 and raised over $180 million; also included a historical discussion about NC A&T’s fundraising efforts and a comparison of our endowment against other UNC System, Peer Institution, and HBCU endowments

*Q&A following presentation*

Dr. Harp asked where can faculty find the information about peer institutions?

* Chancellor Martin said they will appear on our website in the Academic Affairs section

Dr. Harp asked why fundraising efforts are lower among HBCUs?

* Chancellor Martin said it is not only an issue with HBCUs. For instance, High Point targets wealthy students, charges high tuition and has a modest endowment. NC A&T cannot do that. NC A&T (and many other institutions) did not previously have a culture of private philanthropy or of fostering fundraising through alumni.

Dr Harp asked if Howard is able to invest since it is a private institution, and if NC A&T has limitations on investments?

* Chancellor Martin said that being public does not restrict our ability to foster fundraising. Our Board of Trustees is demanding that fundraising become fully cemented in our culture. Every UNC System school has a BOT Endowment Committee responsible for building the culture and managing the endowment and investment strategies. The committee is skilled and able to manage current and new investments. Chancellor Martin said he is happy to share the Endowment Committee member names and more information about our investment strategies.

Dr. Kebede asked if the identification of peer institutions includes research dollars?

* Chancellor Martin said the peer benchmarks /indicators are being determined right now for our new peer group, and turned it over to Provost McEwen for more information.
  + Provost McEwen said there are several indicators: enrollment, 4/5- year graduation rates, retention rates, average salaries by rank, research productivity. Her group will come up with a comprehensive list and then align that with our institutional strategic plan. The benchmarks will be motivational and inspirational.
* Chancellor Martin would like for Provost McEwen to share the final indicators before approval so faculty understand how they are going to be used.

Dr. Martin ended his remarks by saying that he looks forward to future conversation and is open to being invited to contribute to other agendas.

*Faculty feedback about the presentation*

There was discussion indicating frustration at what the Senate feels was an attempt to avoid meaningful dialogue about shared governance, and seemingly a blatant disregard of faculty requests. Dr. Foresman said that administration were supposed to be holding Q&A with faculty in an open format rather than a presentation as given.

Several senators posed questions about what administration had seen and what, specifically, had they been invited to the meeting to do today?

* Dr. Jackson asked if administration had been given a list of items to include in this talk?
* Dr. Morgan asked if the list of topics (shared governance) was shared in advance?
* Dr. Wood asked if the Chancellor had seen the minutes from the January meeting?

Dr. Harp said that faculty concerns were shared during his and Dr. Foresman’s meeting with administration. However, the Chair’s hiring in the Department of Liberal Studies was brushed aside as an issue in which faculty were unhappy they did not get what they wanted. He also reinforced the fact that administrators can make hiring choices for other administrators.

* Once the agenda items were received from the Chancellor’s Office, Dr. Harp requested that it be modified to allow more time for conversation, but is unsure if the request was read.

Dr. Jackson asked Dr. Foresman to clarify his statement from the Executive Committee meeting about the Chancellor not believing that shared governance is an issue.

* Dr. Foresman said that while the Chancellor considers shared governance important, he may not have the full picture of what is happening on campus. When things do happen, it is pushed along to various departments that keeps it hidden in silos instead of out in the open.

There was discussion about how to proceed to make our concerns known and to prompt real dialogue with administration.

* Dr. Harp said we can follow up with additional invitations and establish some strategy. Regardless of what was presented today, we do have the ability to have our questions answered. He plans to reach back out to the Provost and Vice Chancellor of HR for upcoming meetings. We will set the agenda and have it agreed upon prior to presentation.
* Dr. Bollinger believes we should submit 3-5 questions, in writing, to administration and request a formal response.
* Dr. Foresman proposed that we invite someone from the Board of Trustees to a meeting.
  + Dr. Randle suggested that we invite the Board Chairman.

**Faculty Welfare Committee Dr. Bill Randle**

* Dr. Randle share that the committee has been focusing on two areas: NTTF concerns and administrative emails. They will soon work on a resolution focused on shared governance, which could be one way to formally request administrative response.
* The committee has drafted a resolution to address the specific NTTF concern of compensation and reward with promotion. He shared the proposed resolution and opened the floor to discussion.
  + Dr. Harp asked if adjunct faculty are included in the language? Dr. Randle said that NTTF is the umbrella term for all positions that are not tenure track. Dr. Harp believes this should be specified to include adjunct.
* While in discussion, we lost a quorum and no longer had the option of voting on this resolution.
* There was some discussion of having an electronic vote on this issue, but Dr. Randle is concerned that this could eliminate conversation that might reform the resolution wording. He would prefer to table it for the time being.

**Faculty Assembly Report**

Dr. Randle shared some details about a resolution Dr. Dobbins is working on to address the findings and implementation of the recommendations from the UNC System Racial Equity Task Force. This resolution is important, time sensitive and requires review.

Dr. Randle asked if there are any guidelines for calling emergency meetings? Dr. Harp believes that we can call a special meeting but is unsure about the attendance. After some discussion, those in attendance recommended that we poll Senators to determine their availability for a special called meeting on Tuesday March 2. Dr. Newcomb will create a poll to gauge availability for next week and distribute via Nina Ingram.

***\*\*The following committees did not report due to the meeting length\*\****

**Academic Calendar Committee Dr. Galen Foresman**

No report

**Educational Policy Committee Dr. Zachary Denton**

No report

**Nominating Committee Dr. Shon Smith**

No report

**Handbook Committee Dr. Evelyn Hoover**

No report.

**Constitution Committee Dr. Scott Harrison**

No report

**Statement from Chair Dr. Julius Harp**

Dr. Harp is hopeful for the future and he will work toward greater voice.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00PM.

Dr. Elizabeth Newcomb Hopfer

Secretary