

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday September 8, 2020 – 1:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Present: Rafael Porrata-Doria (Pres., Law), Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon (V. Pres., TFMA), Lisa Ferretti (Secy, SSW), Quaiser Abdullah (KMC), Shohreh Amini (CST), Teresa Gill Cirillo (FSB), Maia Cucchiara (COE), Sue Dickey (CPH), Rob Fauber (CLA), Jason Gallagher (Pharm), Sharyn O'Mara (ART & ARCH), Anna Peak (CLA, Faculty Herald) Vallorie Peridier (Engr), Mark Rahdert (Law), Rick Ridall (STHM), Jeffrey Solow (BCMD), Cheryl Mack (Coord.)

Absent: Carmen Sapienza (LKSM), TBN (KSoD)

1. Call to Order

The President called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.

2. The Chair of the Faculty Herald Advisory Committee introduced the new Editor of the Faculty Herald, Anna Peak who will attend all future meetings of the FSSC as a non-voting member. Anna provided a brief introduction and comments on her qualifications for the role. Anna also invited feedback from members of the FSSC. Members of the FSSC provided brief introductions as well.

3. Guest: Provost JoAnne Epps

Provost Epps provided a series of updates related to academic planning for the remainder of the academic year 2020-2021. Provost Epps expressed the tumultuous nature of the prior academic year and administration decisions related to this academic year due to COVID-19. The provost congratulated everyone on rising to the challenge of the situation and the support of one another and our students.

The provost provided information amount the admirable behavior of our students in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

Comments and Questions from those assembled included the following:

The President commented on a special meeting of the University Faculty Senate attended by President Englert and Provost Epps. Responses to more than 80 questions were posted to the University Faculty Senate listserv. The President of the FS thanked the Administration for supporting this effort and responding to all questions. The President of the FS invited additional forums open to all faculty members.

The President asked the provost to comment on Administration plans for the Spring 2021 semester. The provost has contacted the Deans to facilitate a meeting to discuss plans for Spring 2021. Many options are being proposed and these decisions need to come soon.

The provost further commented on the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases on campus and the concerns related to growth of those numbers over the first weeks of the semester. Provost Epps provided additional information on the decision process and the data considered to move the majority of classes online for Fall 2020 and encouraging students to leave campus. In addition, Epps described the supports in place for students and faculty.

A member asked about the contact tracing efforts as well as the type of test being used at the Temple test sites. The provost was unable to answer these specific questions.

Another member asked about how Temple might help to support the local community and also asked for a comment on compensation for adjuncts in different Schools/Colleges rather than a university wide policy. Provost Epps commented on the question related to adjunct salaries and would pass along the question noting that the question is not simple to answer given the RCM Budgeting system and its impact on these salaries. Epps also stated that these conversations are taking place appropriately in the Union – the bargaining unit for adjunct faculty. Regarding the testing and care of community members, Epps stated that Administration is working very closely with the community to identify what needs to be done.

Another member commented on current arguments related to the spread of the virus and expects contact tracing efforts will continue to evolve over time. The member commented on tests becoming less expensive and more accurate over time and that the Spring environment may be very different in coming months. Provost Epps thanked the member for their comment and then added the University will be in a better position to advance testing in the near future. That said, decisions about on-campus classes for Spring 2021 will be made by November 15th and these advances may not be available in time for this deadline.

A member commented on supporting adjuncts with other benefits rather than additional compensation. Provost Epps declined to answer the question as this question will need to be taken up through the bargaining unit. The member further commented that some students are at risk of exposing people in the community to the virus. Epps commented that they tested all of those recommended but there is a question about how often people should be tested or re-tested.

Another member added that the frequency of testing and the type of testing will matter. Provost Epps asked for a clarification.

Another member asked a question related to parking services. The member related that they had not officially re-started their parking permit payroll reeducations and were recently unable to park in the lot because of this.

A member raised issues related to the College of Education and Human Development and a series of rumors related to the Dean, programs closing and other issues. Provost Epps noted a willingness to report on what is known but because of a lack of preparation related to these issues was unable to comment further at this time.

Another member asked a question related to whether the University lost students due to COVID. Provost Epps reported what is known today but noted that these numbers change frequently. Numerical questions related to overall enrollment which was expected to decline from the prior year. What was not known is whether students would request a gap year or other accommodation based on COVID. The deadline for these decisions is midnight tonight. More will be known in the coming days and Epps reported that to date the numbers are not down substantially. In addition, the Sunday deadline for students living on-campus is seeing some students are leaving campus but not necessarily from Temple to other Universities. As a follow-up the member asked if there is a large decline in enrollment would we see more furloughs in the Spring. Provost Epps commented that these decisions would be made in the context.

Another member commented on email messages related to some specific items of concern in the College of Education. Provost Epps expressed an inability to comment on these issues. The member commented that relating this information to the provost in this forum was to ensure that these items are known to the provost and being addressed in the appropriate forum.

Provost Epps commented on the President's invitation to host additional meetings of the full faculty. Provost Epps wanting to be responsive to this request suggested that it would be helpful to think about how this might work in the future.

Provost Epps thanked the group again for the ongoing support of the FSSC.

4. Approval of Minutes: April 21 and August 25, 2020

Meeting minutes from the August 25, 2020 meeting were not available for review. The President called for any changes or additions to the minutes from the April 21, 2020 meeting. There being none a motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. A unanimous vote followed.

5. President's Report: Rafael Porrata-Doria

Item 1: The President noted that along with the Vice President they have been working to express the position of the faculty to the COVID Cabinet. The COVID Cabinet will continue, and the President asked that members send this information to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and it will be passed along.

Item 2: The new Faculty Senate website will be live in the near future.

Item 3: The President asked for further comment on the FSSC statement related to Black Lives Matter. The President stated that any statement should include support for changes to the structure issues related to racism. The proposed statement is a first step in a change process, but the statement must be followed by action. The President asked for comments. Several members made comments and suggestions. The President will re-draft the statement and redistribute to the members.

The President also suggested that a statement in support of the faculty in the College of Education and Human Development and the lack of functionality of its Collegial Assembly will also be drafted and disseminated to the group. Members raised this issue as it pertains to other Collegial Assemblies and their functionality. The President stated that there is a specific issue of concern in the case of the College of Education and Human Development that the FSSC should consider addressing.

A member further commented that while this specific circumstance might be addressed as described that there is still a need for a more general and stronger approach to the large context and issues related to the functionality of collegial assemblies. An additional member commented that the collegial assemblies do not work because of the power of each Dean. Several other members commented on the provost's response to this issue during the meeting.

The President commented on the great work of the FSSC and thanked the group for their support.

Item 4: The President reported that after a review of the by-laws and constitution that the FSSC recognizes that TUJ is recognized as a separate school/college and therefore can send a member to the Faculty Senate and add a member to the FSSC.

6. Vice President's Report: Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon

Item 1: The Vice President asked for member comments on the proposed committee candidates. There being none, motions were made and seconded followed by unanimous votes in each case.

The following candidates were approved:

- Raymond Coughlin (CST) to GEEC
- James Earl Davis (CEHD) to Honors Cmte.
- Meixia ding (CEHD) to International Programs Cmte. (3rd term)
- Jeffrey Boles (FSB) to Honors Cmte (2nd term)
- Tonia Hsieh (CST) to Honors Cmte.

Item 2: The Vice President noted the vacancies and asked members to assist in recruiting new members.

Item 3: The Vice President reported that there was a request for an administrator to be added to the Honors Committee. The Committee Chair and the Vice President concluded that an administrator representative can assist the committee but only as a non-voting member.

Item 4: The Vice President reported that all members of all committees were sent a letter describing their role, the role of their committee and its charge.

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded. A unanimous vote followed, and the motion was carried. The President adjourned the meeting at 3:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa A Ferretti, Secretary, Faculty Senate

Next Meetings: Representative Faculty Senate, Monday September 14, 2020 – 1:45 pm

FSSC meeting, Tuesday, September 22, 2020 – 1:00 pm