

**Representative Faculty Senate Meeting
Thursday November 12, 2020 – 1:45 pm**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: 47 in virtual attendance

1. Call to Order

The President called the meeting to order at 1:48 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes of October 14, 2020 were not available for review but will be forwarded and reviewed at the next meeting of the RFS.

3. President's Report: Rafael Porrata-Doria

Item 1: The President reported that the new website for the Faculty Senate is now live. The web address is facultysenate.temple.edu. The President commented on the ease of use of the new website and described plans to use the website as a major means of communication. The President also noted that Anna Peak, the Faculty Herald Editor, announced that the next version of the publication would be posted to the front page of the website before Thanksgiving. The President also described efforts by the Editor and the Faculty Herald Advisory Committee to modernize the publication and invited members to email senate2@temple.edu with suggestions, article ideas, comments, etc.

Item 2: The President reported on the Presidential Search and notified the membership that the President and Vice President of the Faculty Senate along with two other faculty are members of the Presidential Search Committee. The Faculty Senate held 3 well attended Town Halls with members of the Presidential Search Committee and the search firm retained for this important work. In addition, a survey was sent to all faculty related to the Presidential Search and faculty opinions regarding the role of the new President. The President opened an invitation to all faculty to contact the Faculty Senate Executive Committee with any questions or comments related to the search and assured the assembly that the information would be shared with the full Presidential Search Committee. The President called for comments, questions or suggestions related to this or other issues.

One member asked for an explanation of the term "failed" in reference to past Presidential Search efforts. The President explained that there is a belief among some members of the university community about two prior searches that resulted in selection of candidates that perhaps were not the most appropriate candidates. Further clarification indicated that there were discussions about the leadership skills and qualities of formerly selected candidates. The reasons for the "failure" of the committee to select a candidate fitting what was needed for the role were also discussed.

A member raised a concern about the independence of any new President given the reputation of the currently configured Board of Trustees. The President mentioned that Chair of the Board of Trustees Morgan has indicated that there may have been some micro-managing of the President in the past and indicated a strong desire to move away from that model.

Item 3: The President shared information about the Spring 2021 semester relative to the COVID response. The current configuration is being called “essentials plus” a term used to describe that courses that have an essential in-person component will continue in the Spring and other courses would be added for in-person or hybrid.

An updated calendar for the Spring 2021 semester reflects changes including a later start date and the elimination of the scheduled Spring break.

A ramped-up testing protocol is needed to support the “essentials plus” plan. Pooled testing will be used for asymptomatic persons. Positive test results will be reported to those individuals by the end of the day via phone. Negative tests will be notified via email. Contact tracing will follow the testing efforts where indicated.

The President called for comments, questions or suggestions related to this or other issues.

Another member noted the possible closing of some local school systems for an additional two weeks after Thanksgiving and the Vice President reminded the group that if you had in the past or were seeking accommodations they may expire at the end of the semester and therefore you should consider completing necessary paperwork if you are in need of additional or renewed accommodations.

The Vice President also mentioned that the community members will be allowed to be tested in the Temple footprint and testing will continue in the original Main Campus location as well as at the Medical School.

A member raised a question as to the location of the testing at Temple Medical School and the Vice President reported testing would be conducted in the pathology department.

It was also noted by the Vice President that a group of students will be allowed to travel to Temple Rome and Japan. This may be subject to change if needs be due to increasing infection rates.

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

Item 1: The Vice President thanked everyone for their willingness to volunteer for committee vacancies. A short list of vacancies provided in the meeting materials was reviewed. The Vice President called for members of the RFS to consider joining additional committees and/or encouraging others to do so.

The Vice President also noted that the new SFFs are now live for the entire university committee and are available to students. The deadline for adding faculty driven questions has passed although will be available again next semester. Unlike in prior years, students will have the ability to change their SFF until it is locked for the semester. There is information available on this new process.

A member noted a concern about the fact that there may be Trustees who are unaware of some of the Faculty Senate Committees. The Vice President and President noted that they will continue to work so that members of the Presidential Search are informed and reminded the group that the Town Halls and surveys continue to be a way for faculty voices to be heard. A member asked whether or not medical students would be involved in the COVID testing. Another member noted that it is very unlikely that students would be involved.

5. Guest: Kevin J. Delaney, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs (2:30 pm)

Delaney followed up on the Vice President's comments related to the SFFs and their use. The Guidance Document being drafted is an excellent document about how to use SFF data for decisions related to renewals, tenure, promotion, etc. Delaney noted that the SFFs can assist faculty in becoming better and more effective teachers. If SFFs are not seen as the tool to really improve teaching, Delaney asked the group to consider what would help with this. Peer Review is one method but again, this process can be done very well and very poorly so to increase the value of Peer Review there is a need to do them better. One of the roles of faculty governance is to consider how we will evaluate our work and seek to improve it. Delaney paused to see if there were additional questions or comments on this topic before moving on to prepared remarks.

Delaney made some remarks about the challenges we are facing in terms of COVID and thanked faculty for their efforts. Delaney noted a concern about the impact of these changes on feelings of isolation among faculty. Some departments are having drop in Zoom hours to connect faculty and there are other efforts underway in the schools and colleges. This may be particularly true for newer faculty.

Delaney called for any questions from the membership.

The Vice President asked if the Spring Awards would continue this year. Delaney answered that for awards that are a part of his portfolio are all continuing as normal. The student awards are outside of Delaney's purview but the Vice Provost hopes this will continue.

A member asked if the Provost's Office would create new guidelines for teaching evaluations beyond the SFFs and Delaney noted that yes, this would be something we would all need to work on.

The Vice President asked if there were any plans to raise up some of the communities that have been developing around issues and interests. Delaney suggested that yes, more and more these types of things are happening. Delaney also suggested that becoming engaged with professional

members and other activities likely helps to decrease isolation.

A member suggested that a Winter's Solstice celebration is happening on reading day. Others are participating in virtual yoga classes, etc. Delaney suggested trying to organize these types of events can be helpful. Delaney also mentioned the new faculty event and its success.

The President asked how the pandemic is affecting the tenure and promotion process. Delaney noted that there was a one-year extension for faculty from last year as well as this year. This has meant a large reduction in faculty in the tenure review process.

This year maybe 50% normal. Those coming up for tenure this year. Those coming up for tenure this year would be those who turned down the one-year extension largely because their portfolio seems strong to them and the Covid disruption did not affect them. These cases will proceed. Promotion to full cases are 90% of typical numbers. The normal T&P process will move forward. The committee is scheduled to begin in January 2021.

Do encourage faculty to submit the candidate statement when putting together their packets.

The Vice President asked for a clarification on the pass/fail option for a single course this semester. Delaney shared that there are mixed feelings about this option. The Provost had extensive discussion with the deans and also heard from students and student government. This current option for students to have the option to select a single course for pass/fail is available this semester. Delaney said he does not believe that this will happen again in Spring 2021.

The Vice President asked about the status of the space in the Charles Library for retired faculty. Delaney noted that this is on hold due to COVID. There is an area on the top floor of the library that might be combined with a faculty lounge rather than a fully dedicated space. This area requires a Temple ID to enter and the space has several large conference tables in an open area and two conference rooms which might be set up with efficiency kitchen items and also has lockers. In addition it is centrally located. Other ideas for retired faculty include developing a guide to faculty expertise and not necessarily academic expertise. There is other programming also being discussed.

The Vice President asked Delaney about the additional labor many faculty are contributing due to the issues related to COVID and a concern that faculty will burn out with the additional work. Delaney mentioned the need to balance teaching and research always and stated that enrollment will likely impact this balance.

6. Old Business
None noted.

7. New Business
None noted.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. A unanimous vote followed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 PM.

Next Meetings:

- University Faculty Senate Meeting, Tuesday, December 8, 2020 – 1:45 pm
- Representative Faculty Senate Meeting, Monday January 25, 2021 – 1:45 pm