Minutes from Faculty Senate Meeting, February 15, 2020

**Attendance**

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| Senators: Cristen Dutcher, Ying Wang, Jennifer Dickey, William Griffiths, Jim Davis, Heather Pincock, Nicholas Ellwanger, Austin Brown, Justin E. Pettigrew, Michael Van Dyke, Irene McClatchey, Mary Beth Maguire, Noah McLaughlin, Paul McDaniel, Jillian Ford, Ann Mills, Randy S Stuart, Chris Sharpe, Snehal Shirke, Kenneth Hoganson, Jim Wright, Michael Perry attending for Joanne Lee, Sara Giordano, Aaron Howell, Abhra Roy, Darina Lepadatu, Mohammad Jonaidi, Estella Chen, Jeff Yunek, Daniel Ferreira, Todd Harper, Andrea Knowlton, Daniel Rogers, Lei Li, Sanjuana Rodriguez, James Gambrell, Steve Collins, Jeff Wagner, Jason Ottley // Proxy for David Buckman , Giovanni Loreto, Peter St Pierre, Diana Gregory, Eric Arneson, Lesley Netter-Snowden, Laurie L Tis, Mohammad Jonaidi, Sathish kumar Gurupatham, Walter Thain, Humayun Zafar, Mohammad Jonaidi, Doug Moodie, Justin E. Pettigrew, hassan pournaghshband, Mohammad Jonaidi, Md Hossain, Mary Beth Maguire |

Guests: Phaedra Corso, Sheb True, Amy Buddie, Ivan Pulinkala, Jason Ottley // Proxy for David Buckman, Sylvia Carey-Butler, Lesley Netter-Snowden, Undra Baldwin, Kevin Gwaltney, Christie Storey, Nwakaego Nkumeh

Meeting began promptly at 12:30. President Humayun Zafar welcomed senators and reminded them to add their names to the sign-in sheet.

**New Business**

1. Approval of Minutes (January 11, 2021 meeting). Minutes Approved.
2. Plus/Minus Grading Proposal—Cristen Dutcher
   1. Senator Dutcher noted that a new policy has not been approved. She is hoping that interest in a new policy will build beyond the near 50 percent where it currently stands. She reminded senators that the President does not want to advocate for a new grading policy to the USG or BOR unless there is overwhelming support since the BOR will not likely approve a policy whose support is evenly split among faculty.
3. Policy Revisions
   1. Non-Discrimination Policy (<https://policy.kennesaw.edu/>)
      1. Donna Reddix, Office of Institutional Equity, presented the Non-Discrimination Policy. She noted that this is the policy that KSU has operated under for a number of years. There have been no revisions. The policy is be presented to make it a formal part of the policy portal.
      2. Senator William Griffiths, Mathematics, asked whether this was an informational item or one that needed to be voted on by the senate. Has the policy been already been approved?
      3. Reddix responded that this was largely an informational item and that the Senate had voted on it in the past.
      4. President Zafar noted that this is to be treated as an informational item.
   2. Policy on University Policies – Kevin Gwaltney
      1. Kevin Gwaltney, Director of Policy. This is an update of existing. It basically describes policy process. A policy first comes to the policy counsel and then is distributed to the various governance bodies. It is also posted on the policy portal for recommendations. He also noted that the President can make policy and has been given that authority by the USG.
      2. Senator M. Todd Harper, English, whether the policy made by the President would still need to go through various governance bodies.
      3. Gwaltney noted that the President can make policy without the input of shared governance bodies per USG policy. However, the normal procedure would be for that policy to be shared with governance bodies. Moreover, he could not think of any policies since he has had his position that have not gone onto the policy portal for review and comment. That said, he also noted that faculty, students, and staff often confuse procedures, which do not have to go through the policy portal, with policy. This is a misnomer resulting from people using the word policy incorrectly.
      4. Senator Griffiths seconded motion.
      5. Senator Steve Collins, School of Government and International Affairs, wondered if the protocol for sharing policy through shared governance bodies is part of this policy revision.
      6. Gwaltney pulled up the policy and noted how this protocol is captured in the language of the policy revision.
      7. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.
4. Covid-19 Teaching Motion – Darina Lepadatu
   1. Senator Darina Lepadatu, Sociology, presented the Covid-10 Teaching Policy, which stated that once the State of Georgia enters Phase 1B of the Covid-release that faculty who are teaching F2F or on study abroad programs be given priority since they are in contact with students on a weekly and even daily basis. The motion would also extend the vaccines to family. She added that she had spoken with Karen McDonnell who stated that priority would first have to be given to faculty, staff, and students before the vaccines could be extended to family, importantly, if the state allowed that extension as part of the 1B vaccine pod.
   2. The motion was seconded by Senator Jeff Yunek, Music.
   3. Senator Randy Stuart, Marketing and Professional Sales, asked precisely when dependents would be vaccinated. She expressed concern that this part of the resolution was already off the table since Karen McDonnell had indicated that only KSU employees would receive the vaccination.
   4. Senator Lepadatu responded after all faculty and staff had had a chance to be vaccinated.
   5. Senator Laurie Tis, Exercise Science and Sports Management, along with other senators noted that the motion discriminates against those who have asked for medical accommodations and who are arguably more vulnerable.
   6. Senator Lepadatu noted that those who had requested accommodations had already been given those accommodations and that those teaching F2F needed themselves to be protected from students who generally have a higher rate of infection than the regular population.
   7. Senator Sara Giordano, ISD, highlighted several concerns she had received from members of her department. She added that she, too, has concerns with the potential ethical conflicts of the motion. Instead, she thought it might be beneficial to create a committee who would consider this issue. Senator Heather Pincock, Conflict Management, added that forming a committee would be a good idea if the current motion was not approved. Finally, Senator Giordano wondered if KSU having been designated as an essential center for distributing vaccinations could distribute to those outside the KSU community.
   8. Karen McDonnell, Assistant VP of Human Resources, noted that existing state language limited KSU vaccinations to KSU employees. Based on current state guidelines, dependents could not be covered, though the state could decide to change this. (President Zafar noted that Floyd HealthCare had recently found themselves in trouble for providing vaccinations to dependents who were considered outside the 1A pod.)
   9. Senator Griffiths motioned that the existing motion be amended by being split in two motions, one that discussed priority, and one that extended to dependents.
   10. Motion failed with 15 in support and 23 against.
   11. Senator Griffiths argued that with the existing motion, KSU could advocate to the state for those outside of the pod.
   12. Senator Jennifer Dickey, History and Philosophy, stated that the existing language which states “dependents” should be changed to “family members living in the same household.”
   13. Senator Giordano, ISD, asked to remove “family.”
   14. Amendments to the motion to change language approve changed language passed.
   15. Overall motion approved. 28 Ayes; 16 Nays.
5. ARD Resolution – Sara Giordano.
   1. Senator Sara Giordano, ISD, noted that the resolution ensures that faculty will be evaluated based on standards rather than a curve. (Even though the administration has sent out language stating that faculty cannot be evaluated in relation to one another, several faculty feel that some chairs are still doing this.) The resolution also asks that an “exceeding expectations” be given to all faculty who have taught during the pandemic because of the extraordinary circumstances.
   2. Senator Pincock seconded.
   3. Motion passed on a vote of 30-5.
6. Jobs Resolution – Senator Heather Pincock
   1. Sentator Heather Pincock, Conflict Management, stated that this motion was to protect faculty and staff jobs in light of higher than expected revenues at the university along with the need to protect talented faculty and staff.
   2. Senator Michael Perry (proxy for Joanne Lee), Part-Time Liaison, asked that part-time faculty be included in the resolution.
   3. Senator Perry made a motion was made to change two lines within the resolution to read “We resolve there must be no more permanent or temporary reductions in force (aka layoffs) and those affected staff, as well as non-renewed part-time faculty, who have already been impacted by such in FY 21 shall be returned to full employment”
   4. Motion to add language approved
   5. Jobs Resolution motion approved 35-2

**Provost’s Report – Provost Kat Schwaig**

1. The search to hire an AVP for Faculty Affairs to replace Ron Matson, who has retired, was failed. In the interim, Ron Matson has agreed to continue working on a part-time basis while a new search is conducted.
2. Provost Schwaig has asked deans to begin having conversations with their faculty about workload in order to be proactive as the university grows in size and stature. Her request includes looking at peer institutions. She hopes that this will be a continued conversation with results that have been well-thought out, as opposed to those made at the last minute because colleges are hurrying to make changes before a deadline.
3. Provost Schwaig reminded senators that she is chairing the USG Committee on Post-Tenure review. The committee is currently working, and she is hoping to soon have a follow-up on its progress.
4. She also noted that the University has created “Double Owl Pathways,” which allows undergraduates to begin pursuing graduate study while they are still undergraduates. She encourages faculty to take a look at these pathways.
5. Provost Schwaig noted the passing of Dr. Sean Long, Dean of RCHSS. In the short time that he was here, he had a lasting impact. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Feb. 16, at 4:00 p.m.

**President’s Report – President Pamela Whitten**

1. Dr. Whitten noted that the university was in its sixth week of the semester. She has been teaching a graduate class and has felt the experience to be uplifting and insightful.
2. She thanked everyone for their Covid precautions and reminded them that to continue. Currently, there is ample testing on campus.
3. She noted that there seems to be an end in sight for the pandemic with vaccines in play. She thanked the KSU Covid Team, which has been very efficient and noted that those KSU employees within the 1a category should have received emails about the vaccination. She also appreciates the discussion that the senate has had about the vaccination rollout. It is a very difficulty issue, indeed.
4. She noted that the General Assembly has approved the amended budget for this year, which does not restore the 10.8 % in budget cuts to USG institutions. Currently, the University is able to replace current staff who are retiring, but because of the budget, the University has to maintain the majority of its cuts. That said, there is currently no news in terms of what of the fiscal 22 budget; however, KSU has benefited from its increased enrollment (8% over last year with an 18% increase in graduate students). While the increases have not meant that we are flush with cash, it has provided us with some revenue. She is hoping that the one-time federal funding will also help to cover some of the loses.
5. The University is expecting to return to normal in the fall.
6. University employees will receive a one-time bonus payment. The state will apply the same guidelines that are applied to other workers.
7. Dr. Whitten noted that the University is ambitiously attempting to address issues of race. The initial report of the President’s Taskforce on Race has been released, and currently, there are four teams that are being formed and will be working to help implement recommendation.
8. The University is initiating a Wellbeing program at KSU to help students with mental health issues, especially those encountered during the pandemic. The are partnering with Christie Campus Health and the JED Campus program. Teresa Johnston is leading this effort to ensure student access to mental health services.
9. There is also been an expansion of mental health training and programming for KSU students and employees.
10. The University broke ground on a new advising center. The President also noted the upcoming football season, musical performances, and other events that will be taking place or are taking place on campus.
11. KSU is also seeing gains in terms of Development. She noted the 9 million dollar gift by Norm and Lindy Raydow. She also noted endowments to the nursing program as well as to a new Bobby Bailey School of Music.

**Appendixes**

**Motion on COVID19 Vaccination at KSU**

Given that a significant number of KSU faculty were required to return to face-to-face teaching during the highest peak of the COVID19 pandemic, we would like to propose the following:

1. Face-to-face faculty should have priority in receiving the COVID19 vaccine. While the exclusively online faculty have received accommodations to work from home during this time, face-to-face faculty are at a considerable higher risk from exposure to COVID19.
2. We would also like to propose that the onsite vaccination efforts be expanded to include members under the same household of our faculty who are also at higher risk due to the faculty’s return to f2f teaching.

This measure would alleviate the face-to-face faculty concerns related to their safety in the workplace in Spring 2021. Faculty could present a print-out of their class schedule to show that they are f2f faculty at the vaccination site.

**ARD Resolution**

 Whereas, the KSU administration has repeatedly asserted that no chairs will be asked to perform annual evaluations “on a curve;” and

Whereas, “grading on a curve” refers to an assessment in which one is compared to others in their cohort rather than being evaluated based on stable criteria; and

Whereas, “grading on a curve” or being assessed in comparison to an average distribution, always results in some being below and above average instead of the possibility of everyone being evaluated as successful (or not); and

Whereas, the KSU administration has asked chairs, faculty, and supervisors to take into consideration the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic throughout 2020; and

Whereas, the year 2020 has indeed been an extraordinarily difficult year which included KSU workers moving to fully remote instruction with 2 days to prepare, layoffs and a lack of contract renewals resulting in higher workloads for those remaining staff and faculty, last minute changes to instruction delivery, and increased responsibilities for staff and faculty due to the need to maintain a safe work environment during the pandemic, on top of increased and widespread health uncertainties, family and friends dying in higher numbers than other years, and living in a world grappling with economic devastation, and political stressors; and

Whereas, annual evaluations can have a serious impact on employment, promotions, and raises, as well as, a worker’s feeling of worth and appreciation for working hard; therefore be it

Resolved, that the administration should work to establish non-competitive/non-comparative criteria for annual reviews; be it further

Resolved, that considering the extraordinary circumstances of the year 2020, all chairs and supervisors should be directed to evaluate all faculty and staff as going above and beyond the regular call of their work duty by ranking faculty as “exceeding expectations” and giving the highest performance ratings for staff, with any deviations from this policy requiring justification.

**JOBS Resolution**

“Whereas, KSU revenues this year are higher than expected and Governor Kemp has already promised no additional state cuts in the coming year; and

Whereas, we are all part of the KSU community and need each other to provide quality education and experience to our students; and

Whereas, we need to retain our talented staff through the pandemic; and

Whereas, any worker working outside of their home during the pandemic is taking on additional risk to their own health and that of their families;

We resolve there must be no more permanent or temporary reductions in force (aka layoffs) and those affected staff, as well as non-renewed part-time faculty, who have already been impacted by such in FY 21 shall be returned to full employment;

We further resolve any staff or faculty who must continue to do their job on campus shall receive additional compensation.”

**Faculty Senate Liaison Report  
Chairs and Directors Assembly (CDA) – March 17, 2021**

* ▪  The meeting was largely devoted to Provost Schwaig presenting on the financial fundamentals of the University. The presentation mirrored the virtual ones that Provost Schwaig and Michael Rothlisberger have been giving to members of the campus community in recent weeks. Questions focused on the following issues:

- Therearechallengesforchairs,deans,anddirectorsofprogramswithmultipleareas(e.g.,GenEd, undergrad degrees, graduate degrees) to understanding complexities in where generated money (e.g., via a contract) goes among the various KSU entities.

* + -  Chairsareunsurehowtocommunicatewithfacultywhenwe’vebeentoldKSUwillreturnto normal in F21 but budget requests cannot return to travel expenses used in prior years.
  + -  Timingofthenextbudgetsweepisunclear.
  + -  Whethersweptmoneythatresultsinone-timefundscanbeusedfortemporarypersonnelissues

(e.g., supporting graduate students for the summer).

* ▪  Advisory input was sought regrading a proposal to amend the minor policy in the undergraduate

catalog to require minor requirements to be completed during or before the semester of bachelor’s

degree completion.

* ▪  Advisory input was sought regarding a proposal to amend the USG legislative requirements in the

undergraduate catalog to explain and clarify those requirements.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Daniel Rogers, Faculty Senate Liaison to CDA