

Austin Peay State University
Faculty Senate
Meeting of Thursday, August 29, 2024
Morgan University Center, Room 307 | 3PM
Minutes

Call to Order: Senate President Osvaldo Di Paolo Harrison

Recognition of Guests: Solie Fott, Maria Cronley, Tucker Brown, Kyle Christmas, Leonard Clemons, Lindsey Gilmore, Claudia Alonzo, and Mickey Wadia.

Roll Call of Senators: Senate Secretary Nancy Gibson

Absent Senators: Charles Gonzalez, Kristen Hershey, Alice Lin, David Snyder, and Jennifer Thompson.

Approval of Today's Agenda: Motion made, seconded, and passed by majority vote

Approval of Minutes from May 2, 2024 Meeting: Motion made, seconded, and passed by majority vote

Remarks:

1. **University Provost, Dr. Maria Cronley (10 minutes):** Dr. Cronley provided updates on university matters, including enrollment figures, which have increased by 9.25% from last year and 20.15% over the past two years. She discussed ongoing faculty hiring efforts with 27 fall faculty searches and highlighted the opening of the new cafeteria. Dr. Cronley also addressed faculty workload smoothing processes, emphasizing the need for accurate workload data to meet compliance standards. She elaborated on the historical practice of flexing workloads from 27 to 30 hours and how this created issues with SACSCOC self-reporting. The decision has been made to discontinue this practice to ensure more accurate reporting.

Questions and Responses:

- **Q1:** What will be the process for reporting faculty who fall short of the 30-credit annual workload requirement?
 - **A1:** Dr. Cronley explained that the faculty workload smoothing process will involve a full-year analysis, with department chairs playing a crucial role in ensuring accurate data. The focus will be on identifying those who consistently fall short and implementing measures to address these gaps.
- **Q2:** How will the changes impact the timing of overload pay?
 - **A2:** Overload pay will now be distributed in one lump sum rather than staggered throughout the year. This adjustment aims to streamline the process and ensure timely compensation for faculty.
- **Q3:** How does the workload smoothing relate to the historical teaching load and flexing between undergraduate and graduate hours?

- **A3:** Dr. Cronley acknowledged that the historical practice of flexing hours between undergraduate and graduate courses created challenges, particularly with SACSCOC reporting, leading to a perception of overworking faculty. This practice has been discontinued, and a more accurate method for capturing teaching loads will be implemented.
2. **Senate President Osvaldo Di Paolo Harrison (5 minutes):** Welcomed faculty to the new academic year and highlighted the busy year ahead. He emphasized the importance of faculty participation in the Senate's activities and communication through the Senate's email system. He also announced that emails will now come from "Faculty Senate" and reminded senators to maintain decorum and proper speaking protocols during meetings. Additionally, he encouraged faculty to suggest guests they would like to hear from during the year.
 3. **Honoring Dr. Solie Fott, 1st APSU Faculty Senate President:**
 - **Introduction by President Osvaldo Di Paolo Harrison (5 minutes):** President Osvaldo Di Paolo Harrison introduced Dr. Solie Fott, recalling his contributions to the Senate and the university.
 - **Remarks by Dr. Solie Fott (5 minutes):** Dr. Fott shared anecdotes from his tenure as the first Faculty Senate President, including a story about the creation of the Distinguished Professor Award and humorous recollections of past Senate motions. He also shared a short poem by a Bengali author on the importance of finding joy in work.
 - **Remarks by Dr. Tyler Nolting (5 minutes):** Dr. Nolting reflected on Dr. Fott's legacy and shared a personal story about the influence of educators in his own family. He performed an original song inspired by this influence, playing the guitar as he sang.
 4. **Executive Director of Accreditation & External Compliance, Kyle Christmas (10 minutes):** Mr. Christmas provided an overview of his role and discussed the university's support for program accreditation. He highlighted updates on study abroad programs and dual enrollment initiatives, noting that the university is moving towards a more integrated approach to managing these programs. He emphasized the importance of faculty and staff being well-informed about dual enrollment needs, especially regarding student scheduling conflicts and the importance of making dual enrollment students feel welcomed. Additionally, Mr. Christmas expressed appreciation for the work done with Watermark and noted that chairs need to be aware of specific student needs, including those related to scheduling.

Questions and Responses:

- **Q1:** What specific challenges have been encountered with dual enrollment?
 - **A1:** Mr. Christmas noted that dual enrollment presents challenges such as scheduling conflicts and maintaining student engagement. He emphasized the need for more support from faculty and administrative staff to address these issues. There was also mention of dual enrollment acceptance issues and how some students did not feel welcomed due to delays in admissions.

- **Q2:** How will the new organizational changes impact accreditation efforts?
 - **A2:** The reorganization is expected to streamline accreditation processes, making compliance efforts more efficient and aligned with the university's broader strategic goals.
5. **Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Leonard Clemons (15 minutes):** Dr. Clemons outlined recent shifts within Student Affairs, including new leadership hires and the launch of initiatives aimed at enhancing student engagement and success. He also discussed ongoing and future efforts to align Academic and Student Affairs for optimal outcomes. Dr. Clemons elaborated on the results of an external review of Student Affairs conducted by experts from across the country, which led to a reorganization designed to foster greater synergy between departments. He highlighted the introduction of new initiatives such as the Community Care and Standards office, the rebranding of the food pantry, and efforts to increase residence hall occupancy.

Questions and Responses:

- **Q1:** What are the expected outcomes from the recent external review of Student Affairs?
 - **A1:** The external review identified key areas for improvement, leading to the restructuring of offices and the creation of new initiatives focused on student success. The review also emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration between academic and student affairs.
 - **Q2:** How will the new strategic plan affect faculty-student interactions?
 - **A2:** The strategic plan emphasizes increased collaboration between faculty and student affairs, aiming to foster a stronger sense of community and support for students. Dr. Clemons highlighted that when academic and student affairs are aligned, the overall student experience is significantly improved.
 - **Q3:** What changes have been made to the academic misconduct reporting process?
 - **A3:** Claudia Alonzo explained that the reporting process now includes provisions for AI-related violations, with faculty needing to report any changes to grades due to academic misconduct. There was also discussion about the challenges of using Honor Lock and device issues, as well as the cost of Little Goves, which Dr. Clemons noted has prompted discussions on reprioritizing resources for APSU faculty, staff, and students.
6. **Faculty Trustee, Professor Jane Semler (15 minutes):** Professor Semler discussed the recent tuition increase of 4%, noting that APSU remains the only public institution in Tennessee offering in-state tuition to all military-affiliated students. Updates included the proposed budget, including capital outlay and maintenance for new and continuing projects. The Clarksville airport lease was also discussed, with projections indicating that the project will break even within seven years.

Questions and Responses:

- **Q1:** How will the tuition increase be communicated to students?

- **A1:** Communication about the tuition increase will be coordinated between the administration and student services, ensuring transparency and providing support to those affected.
- **Q2:** What are the plans for the Clarksville airport lease?
 - **A2:** The lease is expected to be financially beneficial, with projections to break even within seven years. The project is seen as a strategic investment that aligns with the university's long-term goals.

7. **Faculty Senate Committees 2024-2025 (5 minutes):**

A brief overview of the Faculty Senate Committees for the 2024-2025 academic year was provided, and their important work was emphasized. It was also noted that the reports are read by a wider audience than just the Senate.

Adjournment: Motion made, seconded, and passed by a majority vote.