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FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 24, 2020

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Old Main-Champ Hall

Present: Timothy Taylor (President), Patrick Belmont (Past-President), Boyd Edwards (President-Elect), President Noelle Cockett (Ex-Officio), Provost Frank Galey (Ex-Officio), Michele Hillard (Exec. Sec.), Benjamin George, Maureen Hearn, John Ferguson, Yoon Lee, Nicholas Roberts, Jessica Lucero, Soren Brothers, Vicki Allan, Britt Fagerheim, Denise Stewardson, Don Busenbark, Jan Thornton, Robert Wagner

Absent: N/A

Guests: Paul Barr, EPC Chair
John Louviere, Empowering Teaching Excellence
Travis Thurston, Empowering Teaching Excellence

Call to Order - Timothy Taylor

Approval of Minutes – [April 13, 2020](#)

Minutes approved as distributed.

University Business - Noelle Cockett, President | Frank Galey, Provost

USU has spent the summer looking at and preparing for the fall semester. The President stated that she will not predict anything beyond tomorrow as things change minute to minute. In June USU football players were brought on campus and were immediately put into quarantine. The women's basketball team came back as well. After about three weeks it was evident that USU would not be participating in fall sports. The reasoning behind this decision is to reduce the risk of infection of COVID 19. It is acknowledged that President Cockett cannot keep everyone safe and everyone involved needs to define their own idea of safe and take precautionary actions. USU has done everything it can do to provide ways for everyone to stay safe, but it really boils down to ownership, responsibility, and accountability. The university is almost flat in enrollment from last fall and this is viewed as good news. Freshman enrollment is up, and it is the highest freshman class ever. The luminary event is still moving forward as planned as part of Connections week. Friday at 8:15 pm the student sections of Connections will come to a preassigned location at campus. There will be 100 student pods all over campus. Students will be able to see each other even though they are socially distanced. There will be countdowns, music, and an address from President Cockett. Organizers are asking faculty to dress in their academic regalia and roam around the campus welcoming the class of 2020. When students are outside, if they are six feet apart, masks are not required - however it is encouraged. Faculty should always wear masks and set a good example for the students. So far, the students have been resilient and seem to be handling this well. COVID testing will take place on campus. This testing will be open to all students and employees. It will be for symptomatic individuals and those who have been exposed. Eventually it will be even more widespread on campus. In about three weeks the saliva test will be ready to go. Closure levels were discussed, and it was stated that level 1 means no one can come on campus. USU is not there and does not anticipate being there. The next level is remote, and the institution is already at remote. If there was a large outbreak USU would shut down certain things, such as face-to-face teaching, dining, activities with more than 100 participants, etc. There is no middle ground with any of this. Each day the university will assess the virus and take appropriate actions. If there is an outbreak in a residence hall those can be managed. Arrangements has been made to have health ambassadors who are trained on how to have a conversation with students who do not wear masks. USU does not expect the faculty to confront students regarding wearing masks. Some students may want to make a statement by not wearing a

mask. The administration does not want this to raise up to a confrontation. At that point we will need to move to another mode to discuss this with the student. A temporary student code covering mask wearing was just finalized. Failure to follow the code could result in temporary suspension depending upon how egregious it is. Videos are being made to help de-escalate the situations. Right now, still figuring out where the extra masks will be. Do not know if they will be at the entrance of the buildings or in the classroom. Mask policy has been pushed out to the students and there is also a syllabus section that faculty can use in their syllabi. In the process of giving each student a package that includes two masks, a thermometer and other things that will help them stay safe. Going to set up a committee that meets everyday COVID-19@usu.edu. to go through any issues, questions, or concerns. Think of it like a hotline.

During the stabilization meeting last Thursday it became apparent that the institution needs to think about how to approach courses next spring. The administration is going to be asking faculty to build out their classes for spring to mimic what they did for fall. The question was asked “what do we do with the spring semester calendar?” The recommendation was to consider adjusting the calendar to start a week later than normal. The students would return to campus after the Martin Luther King holiday. By starting one-week later spring break could be removed and the spread of COVID would be minimized. USU would keep the President’s Day three-day weekend. The Provost would like input so that decisions can be made, and the calendar can be shifted. First day of classes would be Tuesday, January 19, 2021. This should be brought forward to the full Faculty Senate at its next meeting.

Information

EPC Monthly Report – [July 30, 2020](#) - Paul Barr

The EPC and Curriculum Committees held a special session during July to move forward an R401 that would enable USU to receive funding that will help with institutional certificates of proficiency. This proposal piggybacks on the Governor’s initiative to bring this into the high schools. USU has had twice the amount of people request this.

Reports

[Empowering Teaching Excellence Annual Report](#) - Neal Legler | Travis Thurston

The 2020 Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE) Conference had 400 attendees in 2019 and 570 in 2020 (virtual conference) with 55 faculty and staff presenters. During the 2020 Foundations of USU Teaching ETE had 45 new faculty members attend. All events were held virtually and have been a big success. The Center for Innovative Design and Instruction (CIDI) held over 120 workshops during the summer and they were all filled to capacity.

Motion to move the Empowering Teaching Excellence Annual Report to the Faculty Senate agenda made by Patrick Belmont. Seconded by Denise Stewardson. Moved to Faculty Senate agenda.

Old Business

Update on AY 2019-2020 Code Changes - Patrick Belmont

Patrick Belmont, Past President gave a brief overview about the process of moving faculty code forward and shared the tracking spreadsheet with the committee. This academic year the senate will continue to move forward a large number of faculty code. Currently looking at a major rewrite of the faculty code. This rewrite will separate the policies from the procedures. Mica McKinney if the General Counsel office will be hiring someone to help with this rewrite. David Farrelly who was the chair of PRPC has stepped down and Nikki Kendrick will be the chair for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Motion to move the code updated information to the Faculty Senate agenda made by Vicki Allan. Seconded by Boyd Edwards. Moved to Faculty Senate agenda.

New Business

Impact of COVID-19 on Promotion and Tenure and New Faculty Start-Up - Timothy Taylor

Any faculty who feel like they need an extension on their promotion and tenure clock should contact the provost. Provost Galey will be the person approving the requests. The subject of funding new faculty startups was discussed, and the discussion turned to funding. It was stated that the funding comes from the faculty members’ college and/or department. The colleges/departments can make the decision as to how they would like to move forward.

Faculty Code Updates for the 2020-2021 AY - Timothy Taylor

Mica McKinney has some resources to help the senate and PRPC through the policy update process. If an agreement can be reached, the Provost will help with some funding. The General Counsel office has hired a new attorney who has policy experience and should be able to provide help/assistance. It might be a good idea to get a small working group together. This working group should consist of an individual from PRPC, Tim Taylor, Paul Barr and someone from the General Counsel along with a faculty member to help take the lead on faculty code. It was also recommended to put together a process and small writing team. These updates will help align faculty code with the 300 code and will also streamline and clean up the code.

Adjourn: 4:50 pm