

**FACULTY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

29 January 2024

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS: Robert Sprague, *Chair*; Ray Fertig, *Chair Elect*; Renee Laegreid, *Past Chair*, Treva Sprout Ahrenholtz, *Secretary*, Vladimir Alvarado, Gregg Cawley, Rob Godby, and Tiger Robison, *Members-at-Large*.

Guests: Mandy Jane Gifford, *Chief of Staff to the Provost*.

Chair Robert Sprague called the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSE) meeting to order at 12:16 pm.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the agenda; motion made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of January 22; motion made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair asked the committee if they had any thoughts regarding active shooter training for the faculty. The Committee reported that their constituents had approved of the idea and asked if there could be two training sessions for those who could not attend the first. The Chair reported that he would speak to UWPD Chief Holland and see if that was possible.

The Chair reported that Dr. Dan McCoy wanted to present plans to turn the WORTH initiative into an institute under the Office of Research and Economic Development to the Faculty Senate. The Committee discussed and stated that if the program had academic programming, then it couldn't be placed under the purview of the Office of Research and Economic Development. The Committee asked why the plan had been suggested. The Chair responded that he did not know. The Chair asked if Dr. McCoy should be invited to attend the February 19 Senate meeting. The Committee responded that he should verify the plan with Senior Vice Provost Tami Benham-Deal and then speak to the Chair again once the plan was verified as actionable.

The Chair suggested that the Senate invite Associate Vice President for the Wyoming Economic Development Office Curtis Biggs to the February 19th meeting of the Senate. The Committee agreed.

The Chair reported that President Seidel would be hosting a faculty town hall on Wednesday, February 28th at noon in the Union Family Room and via Wyocast. The Committee discussed.

The Chair reported that Professor Brad Rettler would be presenting his Faculty Senate Speaker Series presentation, “Money for the Marginalized” at 4:10 p.m. Tuesday, March 26 in the Union Family Room and via Wyocast.

The Chair reported that Chair Saman Aryana of the Graduate Council had informed him that Graduate Council would meet on February 5th to discuss issues raised by the School of Nursing regarding rolling term faculty being considered graduate faculty. The Chair reported that Chair Ayana would provide an update sometime after 2:00 p.m. on February 5th.

The Chair reported that the Board of Trustees had approved the Fall Student Fee book and that it included a \$299 textbook charge each fall and spring semester to all students as part of a new equitable access textbook program. The Chair reported that he had been informed that the implementation of the equitable access textbook program would have no effect on the ability of faculty to select their own readings for their courses, and that he would be meeting with the Trustees’ Deputy Secretary RoseMarie London on Thursday, February 1, to discuss implementing the program as she had previously worked at an institution that already had the program. The Chair reported that if students or faculty requested textbooks electronically or in print, the University bookstore would be required to provide either option. The Chair reported that students would also be allowed to opt-out of the program. The Chair asked the Committee if he should invite Misty Eaton, Director of University Store, to the February 19th Senate meeting to inform the faculty of how students can opt-out of the program. The Committee discussed the program.

The Chair reported that 15th Street between Bradley and Willet would be closed over the summer to create round-abouts on those streets and the street would be closed over the summer opening of the school.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion of expectations and the direction for the Faculty Academic Standards, Rights & Responsibilities Committee’s Involvement in the University Freedom of Expression Implementation. The Chair reported that the Chair of the Committee, Casey Frome, had reached out to him for guidance regarding if action should be taken following listening sessions on the implementation of the University Freedom of Expression Principles. The Committee asked if this would fit into Faculty Senate’s oversight role. The Chair responded that the recommendations would fit into the Faculty Senate’s oversight role. The Committee asked for clarification if the Faculty Academic Standards, Rights, and Responsibilities Committee would be sending their recommendations to the Senate and the Senate would then approve those recommendations, rather than looking at changing University Regulations for the implementation process. The Committee discussed. The Chair asked the Committee if Faculty Academic Standards, Rights, and Responsibilities Committee should make recommendations or simply keep the Senate apprised of developments regarding the implementation of the Freedom of Expression Principles. The Committee responded that the Faculty Academic Standards, Rights, and Responsibilities Committee should simply keep the Senate apprised of developments.

The Chair returned to the subject of the WORTH Initiative moving into the Office of Research and Economic Development and asked Chief of Staff Gifford if she had any information on the movement. Chief of Staff Gifford responded that she wasn't sure of the reasons.

The Chair opened the floor to discussion of the possible creation of a Faculty Senate Student Evaluations Working Group. The Chair reported that he wanted to create a Faculty Senate working group to identify the issues and concerns on the issue and asked for volunteers to serve on the working group. The Chair suggested that the group consist of one Executive Committee member and one Senator as co-chairs. The Committee asked if the project could fall under the purview of one of the Faculty Senate's Standing Committees. The Committee suggested that the Committee on Committee review and decide if the issue would fall under the purview of a standing committee. The Chair recommended that the Student Interaction Committee be charged with looking at Student Evaluations, and reported that he would contact the Chair of the Committee on Committee, David Bagley.

Chief of Staff Gifford asked the Chair what the Committee would be doing regarding Student Evaluations. The Chair responded that concern had been expressed that women, minorities and faculty who speak English as a second language habitually receive lower ratings regardless of course quality; further the number of respondents had been steadily declining since the evaluations moved online; and that the committee would be looking into improving the structure of student evaluations, increasing student accountability, and soliciting faculty comment on how to make improvements. The Committee added that since the reports were anonymous, there was potential that evaluations could be used to make false statements with no consequences to the students. The Chair reported that Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Zebadiah Hall had expressed interest in being part of the Committee. The Committee discussed.

The Chair reported that he would raise the issue to Faculty Senate again to solicit their comments and ideas.

The Chair reported that the Faculty Senate Agenda for the meeting of February 5th had been distributed to the Committee and that the President had renewed his plan to attend the meeting of the Faculty Senate. Secretary Sprout Ahrenholtz reported that no progress had been made on 2-13 SAPP and asked if the 2-13 SAPP Committee should remain on the agenda. The Chair responded that he would keep the item on the agenda.

The Committee moved to approve the agenda for the February 5th meeting of the Senate, seconded, and carried.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, seconded, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:35 pm.