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Fort Hays State University Faculty Senate Minutes, September 7, 1982

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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

September 7, 1982

The meeting was called to order by John Watson, Faculty Senate President at 3:30 p.m. in the Pioneer Lounge of the Memorial Union.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mr. Frank Nichols, Dr. Frank Potter, Mr. Elton Schroder, Dr. John Watson, Mr. Larry Grimsley, Ms. Sharon Barton, Dr. Larry Nicholson, Dr. Stephen Shapiro, Dr. Marcia Bannister, Dr. John Ratzlaff, Dr. Dan Kauffman, Dr. Billy Daley, Dr. William Robinson, Dr. Allan Miller, Dr. Richard Leeson, Dr. Michael Meade, Mr. Gary Arbogast, Dr. Mark Giese, Dr. Robert Luehrs, Ms. Rosa Jones, Mr. Don Barton, Mr. Jerry Wilson, Dr. Jeffrey Barnett, Dr. Elton Beougher, Dr. Lewis Miller, Mr. Robert Brown, Ms. Rose Brungardt, Ms. Marilyn Scheuerman, Dr. Stephen Tramel, Dr. William Welch, Mr. Richard Heil, Dr. Cameron Camp, Dr. Nevell Razak.

The following members were absent: Dr. Garry Brower, Ms. Martha Eining, Dr. Benito Carballo.

Also present were Dr. James Murphy, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Chick Howland, Hays Daily News.

The minutes of the July 13, 1982, Senate meeting were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

An ad hoc committee on salaries has been appointed. It will be chaired by Dr. Ratzlaff. Members are Dr. Allan Miller, Dr. Dan Rupp, and Mr. Dick Heil.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Dick Heil, immediate past president of the Senate, reported in reference to the July motion that he consult with President Tomanek regarding the document Procedures for Unclassified Personnel Reduction, Part II. The Senate wished Mr. Heil to voice their concern that the document signed by President Tomanek represented a significant digression from the document approved by the Senate on April 5. Mr. Heil explained that after the Senate minutes had been distributed allowing him additional feedback from faculty, he spoke with the President September 3. He shared concerns of the Senate, in reference to (1) elimination of the suggested criteria (2) deletion of the AAUP guidelines, and (3) the reduced role of the Unclassified Personnel Planning Committee. He reported that President Tomanek listened to the concerns and took notes but made no commitment. Dr. Tomanek emphasized

that the responsibility for unclassified personnel planning essentially belonged to Vice President for Academic Affairs James Murphy. Mr. Heil had not had the opportunity to visit with Dr. Murphy but made certain that he had a copy of the July minutes. Mr. Heil emphasized that further clarification regarding the issue would need to be achieved. Dr. Watson added that he had received numerous telephone calls regarding the issue and planned to discuss the disposition of the matter with his executive committee.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominees for the position of Vice President and President-Elect presented to the membership by the Nominations Committee were Dr. Dan Kauffman and Dr. William Welch. There were no nominations from the floor. Dr. William Welch was elected by secret ballot. Dr. Marcia Bannister and Dr. Jeffrey Barnett were the nominees for Secretary. No nominations were made from the floor. Dr. Bannister was elected.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Shapiro inquired of the Senate on behalf of one of his constituents the reason that Wichita State University faculty can take courses with a sixty per cent fee waiver. Both Dr. Watson and Dr. Murphy reported that they were unaware of such an arrangement but would check into the matter with their respective counterparts from the other Regents universities.

Dr. Watson announced that he would like to take a straw poll regarding a faculty salary issue. He anticipated needing to report the sentiment of the FHSU faculty at the September 21 meeting of Senate Presidents. The essence of the question presented to that body was essentially if economic conditions should dictate one or the other, do faculty members prefer an increase in salary or an increase in fringe benefits. The primary fringe benefits are the TIAA-CREF retirement plans and health insurance. He said he realized that it was difficult to determine which way a person would come out ahead. Increase in the base salary and the tax exempt status of benefits are considerations. Dr. Watson assured Senators that the goal was to obtain both. The information which he was requesting was to be used in the event of an "either-or" situation.

Dr. Tramel requested clarification regarding the possible situation of the State increasing retirement benefits one per cent. He asked if the State would be increasing their portion from the current five per cent or if the faculty member would pay only four per cent rather than the current five. Dr. Watson responded that the intent was to increase the total contribution reporting that a proposal had been submitted for the State to eventually contribute ten per cent for the individual with seven or more years of service while that faculty member continued to pay five per cent.

Dr. Tramel further inquired if the possibility of the State picking up the family portion of the health insurance policy was being examined. He mentioned that when previously considered, there had been concern that this

would be unfair to the single faculty member. Dr. Watson acknowledged that this was a concern of some people, and that change in health insurance benefits was simply one of the options being studied. He added that there had been discussion of allowing people to choose how their fringe benefit dollars would be used. Mr. Heil added that a dental rider had been one of the choices mentioned. He also pointed out that changes in the health insurance plan would need to apply to all State employees.

Dr. L. Miller asked if there had been any discussion of making the sabbatical a reward for service, i.e. not obligating the person for two more years of service or repayment of salary.

Mr. Heil commented that it appeared that the proposed increase in TIAA-CREF benefits was the most realistic way to increase fringes.

Dr. Beougher pointed out that an increase in the base salary might have relatively greater influence than additional benefits in recruiting new faculty.

After further discussion regarding the merits of increasing the base versus increasing benefits in the context of individual situations in the current stagnant economy, a straw vote was taken. Twenty-five Senators voted in favor of salary increases versus fringe benefit increases in an "either-or" situation. Seven favored increasing fringe benefits.

The school calendar is currently under discussion statewide. Dr. Watson announced that the basic question was whether costs can be trimmed in the Regents system by altering the school calendar while maintaining the quality of education.

Dr. Tramel asked for clarification regarding whether there were proposals to cut the number of days or only to move school days. Dr. Watson responded that his understanding is that people are primarily interested in whether we might be able to take advantage of more energy free days.

It was pointed out by Dr. L. Miller that the former calendar extended into the third week of January. Dr. Watson emphasized that the student should be considered in any decision.

Mr. Barton pointed out the possible advantage of a student being able to work at a summer job until Labor Day rather than having unscheduled time in January. Dr. Potter suggested that an early start on summer jobs was an advantage.

Dr. Robinson commented that it might be possible to further compress the school calendar by utilizing all of January for classes. Caution in altering the traditional nine-month standard academic calendar was called for by Dr. Watson, who suggested that there were sound reasons it has been maintained and that we must not short-change the student.

Dr. Kauffman said that the energy model of the North might be applicable, i.e. extending the Christmas vacation for students and faculty and eliminating Spring break.

Dr. Watson asked how many feel that the present calendar does about as well as we can expect a calendar to do. Twenty-six indicated satisfaction. Six preferred an altered calendar. The issue was then referred to the University Affairs Committee for further study. Dr. Bannister asked if student input would be sought in order to better consider all economics of the matter. According to Dr. Murphy that input has already been requested.

Mr. Wilson announced that although the library staff was pleased with the many class tours of the library this fall, there had been traffic problems. He and Dr. Gatschet are requesting that anyone wanting to take a group library tour call him at 4338.

Dr. Watson announced that the Faculty Senate Presidents would be suggesting that the Interim Committee on Ways and Means consider a plan for voluntary early retirement (VER). He stated that Fort Hays Faculty Senate had produced a good document a few years ago. He added that legislators seem to have difficulty believing that the plan would save State monies even though the Touche-Ross study attested to that.

Dr. Leuhrs inquired whether there were plans for future meetings of the Senate to discuss the document on unclassified personnel reduction. He further commented that he had never gotten so much strong reaction from his constituents on a single issue. Dr. Watson added that he also was getting too much feedback to simply ignore the issue. He said that he understands the intent of the administration is to make for better planning for the institution, while the faculty feels displeased over reduced input. Faculty are particularly unhappy about deletion of the AAUP guidelines which have been the standard for more than thirty-five years.

Dr. A. Miller questioned whether there is actually reduced faculty input. He reported that a current reduction decision is being made with considerably more input than were some reductions about ten years ago.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Bannister
Faculty Senate Secretary

ldp