

**Kansas State University Faculty Senate
Faculty Affairs Committee
Minutes
March 7, 2017**

3:45 p.m. – Business Building 2138 (inside 2121)

Attendance: Charlie Barden, Kristan Corwin, Gayle Doll, Troy Harding, Stephen Kucera, David Lehman, Jason Maseberg-Tomlinson, Jackie Spears, Jeff Stevenson, Laura Littrell (for Char Simser), Brian Niehoff (Provost Liaison), Meredith Clark (Student TEVAL Rep), Mick Charney (AA Liaison).

February 21, 2017 minutes were approved.

❖ **Old Business**

- **Current status of Handbook Section B and C:** Brian Niehoff shared that the provost's office has announced the changes for Sections B and C. They will go into effect next year because evaluations are currently in process and now would not be the time to disrupt that process. An announcement should be in K-State Today soon.
- Two issues were brought to the group by Stephen Kucera:
 - ◆ **Proposed additional TEVAL question related to the Diversity 2025 committee discussions.** The Diversity 2025 Committee has been developing a list of topics that students think are important including the multi-cultural center, needs-based scholarships, cultural K-State 8, etc. Student government and diversity leaders have discussed a required or optional question for TEVALS: Did the instructor create a respectful and inclusive learning environment? We wondered if it is possible to make this a required question. Would this be better on the senior survey which goes to VPs and websites? The student climate survey likely would have included similar issues but that might not help individual faculty and it isn't offered often. Senator Spears felt certain that the question could be added but it just wouldn't be normed as had the other, earlier TEVAL questions. We think it could be made as a 1-5 response similar to the rest of the instrument. The committee felt that the proposal to add the question should go to Jana Fallin of the Teaching and Learning center. Stephen Kucera made a motion that we explore adding a question to senior survey and TEVAL. The motion passed.
 - ◆ **Educating students on the procedure for resolving conflicts with instructors:** Stephen presented at a prior meeting, problem narratives that several students had experienced in classes. We checked the student handbook to see if there was a policy for what students should do in such a case. The grievance policy listed seems to be specific to grades. The handbook is accessible through The Office of Student Life. There are specific instructions about disagreements about grades but no language about feeling uncomfortable with a faculty member. Some felt that the students should be educated to go to the department head for complaint issues. Should SGA provide education about this? Could instructions regarding grievances be a mandatory requirement on the syllabus? We thought that students might be able to search for grievance instructions if the word were changed to complaint. Students do not have an ombudsman. Many times they go to SGA representatives. The same Student Life website says to contact Heather Reed about grievances. Could there be more information provided to first year students during Cat Communities? Meredith Clark thinks faculty could add a sentence at the bottom of the syllabus—"if you have a complaint about this class contact Heather Reed at the office of Student Life" but some senators feared that "complaint" might conjure up some pretty minor issues. Another place for education about grievances might be orientation courses. Student advisors could also be used—putting it into an advising syllabus. Stephen Kucera moved to explore ways to make student complaint processes more visible. The motion died for lack of a second but the committee plans to continue exploring this issue.

➤ **Develop plan for addressing Student Evaluation of Instruction Issues.**

The committee considered how to get some action items from the outline that Brian Niehoff developed. Students remain firm in requesting that all courses are evaluated every semester. The committee discussed the second request--that all TEVALS should go to department heads. This has already been voted down by Faculty Senate. Education or presentations regarding TEVALS to GSA should be for incoming student senators rather than those ending their terms. Stephen suggested that the request to send TEVALS go to department heads be presented separately to the Senate so it can be debated. We felt strongly that we need general counsel to approve this first. David will send a message to Cheryl Strecker with the following questions: Does the TEVAL belong to the faculty member? Can we send TEVALS directly to supervisors or can we require faculty to give them with comments to their supervisors? In addition we wondered if faculty can opt out of one course that may be an anomaly?

Niehoff reported on the adherence rates for TEVALS. When he pulled out all of the classes that only had 2-3 students, internships, practicum, a couple of programs that use their own evaluations, and some departments that do not evaluate labs because the lecture is evaluated and discovered 85% compliance. Going up to classes with 4-5 students would give a compliance rate of about 90%. Should SGA make an amendment that small course size would allow them to opt out? These statistics prove that there doesn't appear to be a problem but we may also want the deans to lean on department heads. Education for students to make sure that they complete the TEVALS is still needed. Meredith reports that if the faculty member says that they will read the TEVALS the students are less likely to be overly negative.

We're not yet ready to report progress.

❖ **New Business:** none

❖ Meeting was adjourned.

❖ Next Meeting: April 4, 2017 (Business Building 2138).