

Minutes
Kansas State University Faculty Senate
Faculty Affairs Committee
Nov 7th, 2023 (3:30pm) meeting
Zoom <https://ksu.zoom.us/j/837797836>

- **Call to Order - Faculty Affairs** – Brad Cunningham and Tareque Nasser (co-chairs) called the meeting to order. Others in attendance included Cliff Hight, Ashley Noll, Chris Bowman (guest), Jenneen LeMay (guest), Roger Adams, Merta Scott-Hall, Paige Adams, Brian Lindshield (guest), Andrew Wefald, Charlotte Self, Amir Bahadori, KC Olson, Eve McCulloch, Tanya Gonzalez, LaBarbara Wigfall, and Justin Kastner (secretary).
- **Guest presentation** – Chris Bowman (director of the Morison Family Center for Student Well-being) is a social worker and former “master resiliency trainer” who has worked for the Army and in Pennsylvania. He highlighted his background in positive psychology, and familiarity with an Australian tool, called the PERMAH (**P**ositive emotion, **E**ngagement **R**elationships, **M**eaning, **A**ccomplishment, and **H**ealth) wellbeing survey, that helps people get a sense of where they are at in terms of comprehensive wellbeing. It takes 7-11 minutes to complete. It is an evidence-based tool that students can use to find out where they are at in certain categories. The Australian company is customizing the PERMAH tool for higher education, and they are looking for participants to “pilot” the survey tool. Chris is looking for 10-15 different people to run the pilot program next semester. Chris and the Morrison Family Center for Student Well-being are also asking for time in classrooms (7-11 minutes) to showcase it and give students time to complete the survey.

Chris and Jenneen (Health Educator from Lafene Student Health Center) can also come in and do a debrief with participants/classes. In any case, resources/strategies will be shared to help students to grow in the various areas from their PERMAH score. Their focus is initially on the Manhattan campus, for the pilot. The goal is to have it ready for all campuses by Fall 2024. The survey does require a “two-week” picture of students’ recent experiences, so the likely administration of the pilot would be after at least 2, possibly, 3 weeks.

The outcomes/results of PERMAH will be used to help students be holistically connected to not only mental health, but also financial wellbeing, food security, and academic resources. Every student who participates will have the opportunity to develop a wellbeing plan.

A QR code was provided to help facilitate faculty (course) participation/sign up:



- **Approval of the October 17, 2023, Minutes** – The minutes were approved without objection.

- **Committee Reports**

- **Salaries and Fringe Benefits Committee (SFBC):** Justin Kastner noted the recent report work on non-tenure-track salary/compensation issues of the SFBC, and Brad alluded to our guest today, Brian Lindshield, slated to speak later in this meeting about how to move the report forward.
- **University Handbook and Policy Committee (HBC):** Cliff Hight reported that the committee has been making progress on many fronts. He referenced “Section E” and the need to balance the Handbook’s content, which is created on the basis of shared governance, and other policy documents (e.g., the PPM) that are not created via shared governance. Cliff asked if members of the committee agreed with the general goal of keeping Handbook and PPM content separate. Ashley Noll said that such approach would reduce the likelihood of discrepancies/confusion, and Cliff said that is precisely why the HBC is keen to reduce the volume of information-only prose (and avoid the need to continually update information-only content). It was generally agreed that the HBC should proceed with this direction. Cliff also asked for feedback/input on those areas that need to be retained in the Handbook. There was further discussion about how best to strike this balance. For example, the Handbook might generically reference “holiday leave,” while not specifying the full range and detail of holidays, which can simply be spelled out elsewhere (e.g., in the PPM).

- **New and Continuing Business**

- **Thematic Hire (a.k.a. constellation hire) process** – Dr. Tanya Gonzalez announced a new moniker for this initiative: “Multidisciplinary Hiring Initiatives,” and the first will be in bio-manufacturing. Tanya explained that these initiatives will be centrally funded and centrally organized, but the search committees will be drawn from experts across the relevant theme(s). These university-wide experts would serve with a provost office-designated chair of the search committee. Further details were provided by Tanya and are copied here:

Goal:

Develop a process that establishes support and encourages excitement from departments and faculty for thematic multidisciplinary hires.

Process:

1. The search committee will develop the definition and description (job announcement) for the thematic hire.
2. Application material request will include a request for applicants to identify a primary and potential secondary K-State academic department(s) or interdisciplinary program home(s).
3. Search committee will review applications and select faculty for the initial interview process based on the job announcement.
4. Once finalists are selected, the potential home departments or interdisciplinary programs will be contacted to review the candidate materials and indicate their willingness for consideration as a home department or program for the candidate. The Deans of the colleges in which the potential home units exist will be informed of candidate interest in the department or program as well.

5. After departments and colleges inform the search committee of their willingness to serve as a home department, the candidates will be invited to a campus visit.
6. The search committee will create, with the support of HR, a campus visit itinerary that will include, among other things, 1) a campus talk that will be recorded with an opportunity for feedback, 2) time with department(s) and college(s) leadership teams, and 3) visit with the VPR and Provost.
7. The search committee will review campus feedback, confirm departmental or program interest in the candidate, and send recommendations to Provost and VPR for the final hiring decision. (Tanya emphasized that a lack of interest and support from a K-State home department will terminate the candidacy of that prospective faculty hire.)
8. The Provost and Vice President for Research will confirm hiring opportunities with College Deans and Department Heads who will create the offer letters and proceed with the usual appointment process as described in University Handbook C20 and C21.

Department Review Process Expectations:

1. Review the candidate's application materials, including start up needs, and confirm a willingness to be considered as a home department.
2. Participate directly in campus visits that include opportunities to meet faculty in potential home departments, and attend (or view) the open forum.
3. In accordance with the University Handbook C20 and C24 policies and guidance, faculty in the potential home department will provide feedback on the candidates to their department head, which will be shared with the search committee.
4. Again, a lack of support from the home department and/or college leadership will terminate the candidacy of the prospective faculty hire.

Tanya then emphasized that the President is hoping to raise more state funds to support more Multidisciplinary Hiring Initiatives. Tanya explained that the "central financial commitment" for this first initiative (in bio-manufacturing) comes from the State of Kansas and covers 12 faculty positions as well as 50% coverage of start-up funds up to \$600,000; that will all be covered through the newly raised state funds. What would not be covered by this central commitment are the merit raises over time, and any promotion raises; however, the base for the positions would be from the newly raised funds. What Tanya just outlined is for the bio-manufacturing Multidisciplinary Hiring Initiative (MHI), but other future MHIs may have different funding structures, depending on what is raised.

Tareque asked how this would fit into the RCM, and Tanya explained that there is a refresh of the RCM right now. The only cost to the department would be the remaining 50% of the start-up funding. However, all of the productivity of the faculty members would be connected to their home department.

Roger expressed concern about the amount of time and money investment into a process that, ultimately, a department could suspend/stop. He asked what would stop central administration from simply hiring these new faculty as consultants. Tanya explained that she did not see a lot of wasted time and initiative. Roger then asked why there is a process for feedback from the campus community, and Tanya explained that it was because there will be a campus-wide bio-manufacturing cohort. Transparency and input from the broader campus community is being valued. While departments can take a leadership role, Tanya explained that there needs to be a campus-wide process.

- Report and Recommendations on promoted non-tenure track faculty compensation – Brian Lindshield spoke to the committee about the Salaries and Fringe Benefits Committee’s report and recommendations. Brad invited Brian to make remarks. Brian explained that he, Justin, and the rest of the group have spent a couple of years on the work. Brian provided background/context on the challenge, including the reality of “title changes” happening without a guarantee of a compensation increase for non-tenure track faculty. Brian said the committee investigated this further, and he referenced Justin’s specific work on using Emergent Method survey data to identify specific “qualitative” (and often negative) impacts of this practice. Brian then pointed to Chris Urban’s “quantitative” analysis on how many title changes occurred without a salary increase. Brian then said that the overall recommendations include addressing this practice, and in particular the following: (a) that all non-tenure-track promotions should receive a salary increase of at least 7.5% of the salary of all faculty at K-State, and (b) that if this recommendation is not enacted that faculty, staff and administration identify a solution to standardize the promotion compensation for non-tenure track faculty. Brian continued to showcase the various parts of the report, including the tabular and graphical data that Chris Urban kindly provided.

Amir asked about which units would be responsible for funding such non-tenure track promotions. Brian said that it would likely come down to the college level, but this would be a university standard which the colleges would have to follow. A question was then posed about whether or not such a cost analysis has been performed, and if increased budget allocations would be needed. Brian intimated that the funding needed for this, while not negligible, would be comparatively small in the wider context.

Brad thanked Brian for his presentation, and Brad said that it would be good to consider forwarding this on to the entirety of Faculty Senate, but that decision won’t be made today.

Paige Adams asked if there was any data on the retention of non-tenure track faculty. Brian indicated that Power BI might have something on that, but he was not sure. Paige thought that such data would enhance justification for this policy change. Ashley wondered if HR ever conducts an exit survey for non-tenure track employees, and she suggests that might be a good opportunity for such data collection. Tanya noted that there has been a recent revision (by KSU’s DAIR unit) of the exit survey process; those are submitted and reported to HR on a monthly basis. However, it is recent data as the exit survey system has only been recently resumed in its new Qualtrics form.

Tareque asked Tanya where the FAC might go from here with the SFBC report and recommendations. Tanya said the report should be shared with Faculty Senate’s leadership committee. In terms of action items for Faculty Senate, Tanya said it was important to move forward to Faculty Senate leadership. It was agreed that the FAC was, today, formally receiving the report, and it was agreed that we could formally share it with others. Brian suggested that it might be appropriate for FAC to “endorse” the report and recommendations. Brad said he wanted to give the FAC members a bit more time to “digest” the report.

Amir said he supports the report and recommendations in principle, but the “devil is in the details” in terms of “who is going to pay for it.” He cautioned that a discussion needs to

happen sooner than later about who would pay for it. Brian said he hopes such a discussion could happen soon, and Brian warned against having “unfunded mandates” on colleges. Tareque wondered if the report and recommendations should be sent to VP Erickson, and Brian said that the SFBC will be meeting with VP Erickson and Shanna Legleiter, too. After Brian left, additional FAC discussion ensued, and it was agreed that the “ask” of the SFBC report and recommendations would be to have central administration make such a commitment.

- KBOR Workload Policy – Brad noted that the Faculty Senate leadership did agree to place it on the agenda for the next Faculty Senate meeting. Brad referenced the Engineering Caucus’ and Senator Keen’s feedback. Brad said that everyone in faculty senate leadership agreed with Senator Keen’s point that the creation of new/ad hoc committees should be formed/drawn from existing elected representatives (i.e., senators) and not just any faculty members that the administration might want to appoint. Brad said that the entire process has fostered some helpful conversations at the faculty senate executive level.

Brad said that, going forward, the Workload Policy would be presented at Faculty Senate (on 14 November) as a first reading, with amendments provided in advance. Brad complimented her for this effort to provide a proposed amendment ahead of time. Then, after any amendments are added by Faculty Senate, then the FAC committee would work on re-writing/adding-in the amendment(s) and then get that back to Faculty Senate exec. Brad said that he conferred with Dan Ireton, and if necessary it was okay/appropriate to vote electronically on a subsequently amended workload policy draft.

Brad then polled the group about whether or not the FAC should meet on 21 November, and it was agreed to not meet then.

Tareque asked if there was any sense on a timeline of a potential electronic vote, and Brad said it would all depend on what happens next week in Faculty Senate.

- Handbook Proposal(s) Review - Brad recapped that the committee had approved changes to sections C1-C6, and those were approved by Faculty Senate exec and would therefore be before Faculty Senate on 14 November.

The FAC discussed the potential changes to C159 (administrative assignments and five-year comprehensive reviews), and Brad invited any comments or concerns about the edits proposed by the HBC. Ashley asked about the global pronoun changes to the Handbook. Amir suggested that the Handbook could perhaps be written without any pronouns whatsoever. Tareque suggested that would require the use of passive voice instead of active voice. Cliff then said that such changes to the *entire* handbook could take more time. Tanya noted that the recent pronoun change recommendations were from a 2021-22 task force. Tanya said that it was perhaps most prudent, as Cliff had suggested, to go ahead and adopt the currently proposed pronoun-related edits to C159 so that these changes can be changed. Amir wondered if it might be possible to simply, right now, make an edit to C159 to remove the pronouns. The committee agreed to approve the C159 changes with an additional single edit of removing the pronouns. Brad called for a vote on this, and it passed.

The FAC then discussed the Handbook changes to D40 and 41 related to consulting, conflict of interest, conflict of time, etc. Brad asked if there were any concerns about the proposed changes. Tanya said this was part of the COI/COT workgroup/task force, and that there is a related Appendix S with various definitions related to COI and COT. Tanya said that the “substance” of COI/COT is not being changed, but more clarification/definition is being provided. Tanya noted that CAYUSE would be the platform for managing COI/COT going forward. Amir asked a question about how future changes in COI/COT made by the Board of Regents would be met through these new changes. Tanya noted that any Board of Regents policy changes would be communicated immediately. Tanya noted that KSU is taking very seriously its ongoing compliance with KBOR policy adjustments. The D40 and D41 changes were then voted on and approved to go forward to Faculty Senate exec.

- **From Committee Members**

- SGA resolution R23-24-37 – Brad said that this relates to firmer guidelines for last-minute changes to assignments and exams, and that these should be reflected in syllabi. No action is necessary.

- **Adjourn:** The committee then adjourned at approximately 5pm.

- **Next meeting: (likely) December 5, 2023, 3:30 pm**

- ◆ Zoom available: <https://ksu.zoom.us/j/837797836>