

# Faculty Senate Minutes

**October 2, 2015**

**Lynn Library, Room 207**

<b>Members Present</b>	Jodi Lindseth, Nancy Forrest, Nichol Dolby, Emily Gilbert, Bob Gustin, Alan Kee, Reem Witherspoon, Craig Clifton, Tara Meraz, Scott Rankin, Donna Cleere, Brian Jacob, Marcia Julian, Deborah Harding, Kerrie Young
<b>Members Absent</b>	LaVon Barrett, Derek Weathersbee, Courtney Milleson, Brian Farmer, Shawna Lopez
<b>Guests</b>	Dr. Deborah Vess, Sarah Milford , Mandi Wheeler, Larry Adams

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Discussion/Information</b>	<b>Actions/Decisions Recommendations/Timelines</b>
<b>Call to Order</b>	President Reem Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.	
<b>Approval of Minutes</b>	September 4 minutes were approved by consensus via email.	
<b>Special Guest Report</b>	<p>Dr. Vess joined us as a special guest.</p> <p>On the topic of Pay For Performance:</p> <p>Amarillo College is 28th in the State in pay for employees and the Board is concerned about our Pay Scale. They stated that it was unacceptable to not provide a raise this year, going to great lengths to approve the small cost-of-living raise we were given this year. With current funding how it is, raises aren't likely to happen very often in the future.</p> <p>Our current system is more of a unionized system – flat raises are given to everyone at the College, which causes serious budgetary issues. It is a step scale system where everyone is rated the same, meaning a raise is applied to</p>	<p>Emily contact David White on behalf of Senate re: broken links on websites, specifically the Handbook. Also to get access of Senate website. (DW contacted 10/5)</p>

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everyone when the Board approves a raise - whether one is deserved or not. With this system, we can't hire those we need because we are keeping those we don't. Particularly, we can't keep Engineering and Nursing teachers because their pay is not competitive enough. They can make 3x as much elsewhere.

College-wide, there is also, at present, no incentive to go above and beyond because everyone receives the same raise regardless of effort. Merit pay systems can be a huge boon for invention, creativity, and effort. It is likely to help with retention of talent and might even draw some people from the private sector. It's nice to know what you are doing matters and is wanted, and money is a motivator.

Speaking of money as a motivator, summer pay is not likely to be lost in the new system. According to Dr. Vess, this is one way to combat the low salaries we have and she wants to keep it. Also, Rank pay for extra education would stay. Adjuncts will not be included in Merit Pay, although we do need to develop some kind of evaluation of them and a way to get them more pay if possible.

Dr. Vess says Amarillo College has some of the best faculty she's ever worked with – stating that we all seem to go above and beyond our required duties every day. She believes it is crazy to think we could do more, but Merit Pay would encourage even more involvement.

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**There is not yet an exact process for how this system would work.** Merit pay systems rely heavily on evaluations and right now our evaluations are not equal throughout the College. A clear instrument needs to be outlined for evaluation, as well as clear goals and behaviors on which someone would be rated. Right now, faculty do not receive guidance about what needs to go into evaluation. For example, a faculty member might set goals, but those goals do not correlate to their program or assessment data. Or, someone might have their entire evaluation dependent on student evaluations. (Speaking of, student evaluation responses have been very poor. Dr. Vess wants to work on it so that students need to fill out the survey in order to see grades.) In a merit pay system, you would have the liberty to decide how much emphasis you put on student evaluations or goals.

Dr. Vess and the Pay for Performance (hereafter referred to as the P4PC) Committee realize that there is a need for transparency as well as specificity in terms of how things are will be put into practice. Additionally, any final process needs to protect the Chair and faculty because the current process is too vague and leaves room for problems to occur - the Chair can do anything they wish to an evaluation. For the new evaluation, an objective form is the goal, but there is always some amount of subjectivity.

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The P4PC is looking at defining 5 behaviors per each value (WOW, INNOVATIVE, FAMILY, FUN, YES) to be part of the evaluation. There is no current decision on whose responsibility it would be to evaluate each faculty member on. Senate expressed concern regarding time if it falls all on the Chair. Chairs of big departments would have quite a role in creating and evaluating if each person's evaluation is built individually.

Dr. Vess explained her stance on merit pay:

In systems she has seen work well, it has advantages. A certain percentage of everyone's salary put into the merit pay bucket and then it's allocated to certain individuals based on performance. **Some might get more than the 5% they put in**, some less. Percentage into the pot is allocated based on salaries, NOT coming from salaries, so no one's pay will be lowered. It has to come from elsewhere; it is an upfront expense system.

Senate expressed financial concern at this. Specifically where the money for P4P would come from and how it would be allotted - recommending a system that accounted for those faculty members who are evaluated "late" to not miss out because the "bucket is empty".

Dr. Vess answered that it would need to come from the Board.

As for the evaluation process, faculty would set their

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own percentages for the different pieces of your evaluation. Everyone would have the same set of metrics, but each faculty member would identify their own degree of emphasis. So someone might weigh teaching 80% and another person weigh teaching only 50%. In addition to teaching, one might have percentages set for professional development, community service, College service, etc. Each person would work with their Chair to define their percentages, and then create goals. Goals would be set for exactly what the faculty member plans to be doing. (i.e. data has shown that on this project males don't do as well as females so the faculty member has a goal to work on that). For technical programs, industry credentials would be included in evaluation under professional development umbrella.

#### Budget Crisis:

Dr. Vess discussed the budgetary situation of Amarillo College. There is a need to cut programs that have very few students - students that aren't graduating - but those are faculty lines. Those lines are needed elsewhere; despite an enrollment dip there were NO seats available in some of the CORE areas.

#### Faculty Commitments:

Commitments are tangible examples of each of the values.

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Faculty will be asked to sign in January. While concerns are well placed, the commitment shouldn't conflict with tenure. There are very clear statements in Board policy regarding tenure and these don't change that. Tenure is the most important because it's Board policy and in the faculty handbook, which are legally binding. However, Dr. Lowery-Hart wants them to be binding, so would most likely see them show up in evaluation/merit pay process. For example, the commitments might be used as an example of teaching excellence on one's evaluation.

Cabinet were presented with, and already signed their commitments.

Tenure:

The Handbook links online are currently broken. The Handbook Committee is the only way to get changes made to the Handbook. No changes were made to tenure last year. The Deans should have knowledge of what is required to get tenure and give guidance. Also, Dr. Vess would like to have a website for Academic Affairs where she can put information for all faculty members.

STEM Dean:

There is a small pool of candidates to choose from, but

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there probably will not be a Dean before Spring. There is intention for someone to be over STEM and not have it all resting on Dr. Ferguson's shoulders.

Classes Change:

Spring 2016 will see more 8 week classes. Students are expected to get a set of blocked classes. Our entire system won't change to a blocked system until we see whether or not it will work. However, it was piloted with Dev. Ed. in the form of a "Learning Community" system. Right now, a student who is NOT in the Learning Community can be put in a class that is part of one, but that may change. Also, students aren't forced to stick within their blocks, BUT Advising has been advised of the blocked system plans, so the idea is that the student would be encouraged to join/stick with a blocked system.

Nursing and technical classes have blocked classes right now and works GREAT. Programs could mix their blocks to fill out class load – for example: the technical programs mix advanced and beginners so the advanced students can teach the beginners. Criminal Justice is going to start having blocks soon.

Students currently in the Learning Communities seem to have more comfort with a blocked system because they know each other, can form study groups, etc, but the administration doesn't think it will work with everyone.

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	<p>For our students with outside duties, the current blocked system is scheduled to be done by 1230 in case they have afternoon needs.</p> <p>Also piloting in Spring 2015, there will be day camps available for childcare. Not daycare, but day camp.</p> <p>Looking at AC data, there is a huge number of students that are in General Studies. We have now organized GS degrees to line up with the 4 main areas that local High Schools use. Students would come from high school where they pursued electives in that area and take a set of blocked classes at AC working toward that same area.</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>The new withdrawal policy has severely decreased drops. As it turns out a lot of students didn't understand some of the faculty's policies (i.e. max 20 points for assignment, but student would think 20 is failing).</p> <p>Amarillo College received a \$2.6 million dollar Title V grant. It will focus on moving students out of Developmental Education.</p>	
<b>President's Report</b>	Pinning: this is not a ceremony anymore, it's a celebration. It will be less formal and occur once a year.	



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	<p>Chairs will not be required to talk about their employees anymore: the person will be pinned, their picture and some facts about them will be up on the screen. There will also be music, light refreshments, and fun activities. First one will occur the last Thursday of October (29th) from 1-3 in CFC. Because some Faculty won't be able to attend due to classes, the timeframe of 3-5 is considered for the next one. It will consist of employees who hit their pins the previous year (before the last Thursday in October).</p> <p>Campus Carry: Ellen Green is drafting a survey. Results will be discussed October 15th.</p> <p>No Excuses 20/20: We heard info at General Assembly.</p> <p>Board of Regents: Dr. Lowery-Hart's contract was extended for another year.</p>	
<b>Secretary's Report</b>	Emily still needs permission for Senate website and Distribution List.	Received permission for DL from Chris Brown 10/5. Waiting to hear from David White about the Senate website.
	<b>Committee Reports</b>	
<b>Courtesy</b>	Going to send a note to Dr. Lowery-Hart for his contract extension, as well as awards given out at General	

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	Assembly. Dr. Harding is going to take over sending out the cards.	
<b>Elections</b>	Piper Professor email sent out yesterday. Deadline to receive nominations is on 10/16. Once someone is elected, the person will have a month to fill out the form. Form is due at the end of November.	
<b>Legislative</b>	none	
<b>Mead Award</b>	none	
<b>Professor Emeritus Award</b>	none	
<b>Questions</b>	<p>How much time is proper for a faculty member to give notice? Or if it is a program director, chair, or dean? Board Policy says a minimum of 2 weeks, but is there a policy for how long? There isn't a clear answer; there is a lot up to interpretation.</p> <p>There is the fear that early notice will cause them to be fired or cut loose early.</p>	Forward this question onto HR.
<b>Salary</b>	none	
<b>Technology</b>	none	
<b>Faculty Survey</b>	There will be a survey this year. We did not do one last year. With the new 5 points (WOW, FUN, INNOVATION, FAMILY, YES), do we need to change the survey?	Committee will meet and bring something back for us to review.
<b>Hospitality</b>	Delicious treats :).	
<b>Faculty Development</b>	none	
<b>Instructional Technology</b>	none	
<b>Pinning</b>	none	
<b>Faculty Committee Appointments</b>	Committees were sent out this week. Restructuring the	Next meeting Craig will bring a list of what Senate

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	Wellness Committee and it is moved under Lyndy.	recommended and what the actual list is now.
<b>New Business</b>	<p>Minutes approval process.</p> <p>Confusion regarding who to go to for help between IT/CTL.</p> <p>Faculty has never been alerted that Google Chrome is no longer working with Blackboard. Links that used to work now don't. HUGE impact on retention rates. How can we help the students if we can't do our jobs? We can't spend time with students if we are always trying to fix our Blackboard/web issues.</p> <p>Computers aren't being replaced.</p> <p>Ellucian goes down every day.</p> <p>Energy problem - classrooms too hot; students sweating. Also, lights turning off during classes. Windows are screwed shut in ENGR.</p>	<p>Add a line about redaction.</p> <p>Let Heather know directly if you are having problems.</p> <p>Contact Pam Madden with energy issues because she is tracking this for Dr. Vess.</p>
<b>Updates and Announcements</b>	meeting adjourned 5:00 PM	

**Recorder: Emily Gilbert, Senate Secretary – Instructor, Library**