



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Meeting Date:	08/30/2021	Time:	14:45 – 16:30	Location:	Zoom
Next Meeting:	09/13/2021	Scribe:			Ashley Sergiadis
Present:	Beatty, Kate; Blackhart, Ginni; Blackwell, Roger; Byington, Randy; Cherry, Donna; De Oliveira Fiuza, Felipe; Digavalli, Siva; Dowling-McClay, Karilynn, Ellis, Jon; Epps, Susan; Fisher, Stacey; Foley, Virginia; Frye, Stephanie; Funk, Bobby; Garris, Bill; Gentry, Retha; Gomez Sobrino, Isabel; Gray, Jeffrey; Hauldren, Kacie; Hawthorne, Sean; Hemphill, Bill; Hendrix, Stephen; Herrmann, Andrew; Johnson, Michelle; Khan, Shoeb; Kruppa, Michael; Mamudu, Hadii; McGarry, Theresa; Mitchell, Holly; Nivens, Ryan; O'Neil, Kason; Park, Esther; Ramsey, Priscilla; Schroder, Laurie; Sergiadis, Ashley; Stevens, Alan; Tai, Chih-Che; Thigpen, Jim; Thompson, Beth Ann; Trogen, Paul; Waters, Susan; Walden, Rachel				
Absent:	Elangovan, Saravanan; Lyons, Renee				
Excused:	Burns, Bracken; Ecay, Thomas; Evanshen, Pam; Hemphill, Jean; Mackara, Fred				

Agenda Items

Meeting called to order

1. Celebrations

2. Introductions of Guests

3. Announcements

4. Guest Speakers

5. Approval of Minutes

6. Action Items

7. Information Items

8. Old Business

9. New Business

10. Comments from Guests

11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

12. Adjourn

DISCUSSIONS

1. Celebrations

1.1 **Nivens** announced that all 32 out of 32 students showed up to an 8:00 AM class on time.

1.2 **Epps** announced that she brought cookies for students today and they are all gone. It was exciting to have students on the fifth floor in Warf Pickel.

2. Introduction of Guests

- Amy Johnson, Associate Provost for Faculty & Director, Center for Teaching Excellence
- David Linville, Executive Vice Provost for Academics and Health
- Keith Johnson, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

3. Announcements

None.

4. Guest Speakers



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4.1 David Linville – COVID Update

4.1.1 David Linville updated Faculty Senate on ETSU's response to COVID.

- The [Bucs are Back website](#) has information regarding ETSU operations in a pandemic environment. In addition, there was an email to faculty and staff a couple of weeks ago highlighting important points from the website. Students received an email with information specific to them.
- The Health and Safety portion of the Bucs are Back website has a [Testing and Reporting page](#) that will answer questions about what to do if you have been exposed, tested positive, etc.
- If you have been exposed, contact Environmental Health and Safety.
- ETSU hired an additional three contact tracers and one specifically for University Schools.

4.1.2 David Linville answered questions from Faculty Senate.

Walden: At the Medical Library, we have been having a much harder time this Fall getting compliance with using masks. Anecdotally, I am hearing that from other places of gathering as well. One, are you aware of that? Two, what advice do you have for us?

Linville: I am hearing mixed responses regarding how well people are adhering to the mask mandate. We are encouraging people to be graceful in how they approach situations like that. My advice is always try to be kind and considerate in terms of how you approach somebody with wearing masks. You can remind folks the policies on the website. There are protocols to allow individuals to refer students for disciplinary conduct or to refer employees to HR for employment conduct issues.

Cherry: My class was exposed on Thursday, and the office that handles contact tracing has not informed my students yet. Several students planned to start field today.

Linville: Some of the challenges with contact tracing in larger classrooms is the students do not know each other. Encourage students to introduce themselves to those around them, so if they get sick they can say whom they have been around. If you have questions regarding contact tracing, call Environmental Health and Safety.

Digavalli: Now that a vaccine is approved, is there a move to make vaccinations mandatory?

Linville: There will not be because it is a law in the state of Tennessee that prohibits us from mandating them. Unless the General Assembly changes the law, we are stuck where we are. The only exception in the law is for students in health professions programs that have to rotate at a non-ETSU location requiring the vaccine such as the VA.

Funk: Why are masks not required at University events (concerts, athletic events, etc.)?

Linville: They are if they are indoors. We are going by CDC guidelines. We have talked about at what point do we change our mask policy to wear a mask outdoors too, so that is always on the table. I would encourage people to continue to wear a mask outdoors.

Mamudu: I am not asking the vaccination status of individuals, but can I ask my students to vaccinate if they have not done so?

Linville: We encourage you not to ask about someone's vaccination status. Someone could demonstrate that by asking the question, you are going to use that vaccination status in some way and we are not allowed to do that.

Hendrix: Can you encourage your students to vaccinate?

Linville: I am encouraging everybody to get vaccinated that can. Shaming does not work. You can suggest they talk to their health care provider. If they do not have one, suggest they go see someone at University Health. University Health is available for students and employees. Unfortunately, many of our students do not have health care providers.

Funk: Outdoors, when people are face to face or yelling (sporting events) the virus can spread. I understand when alone outdoors, but students are without masks and in each other's faces. It's



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dangerous.

Linville: I agree. I am encouraging people to wear masks if there are in groups outside. I will take all the feedback back to those that are making decisions about COVID.

Ellis: When you say active cases what does that mean? Does that mean students, faculty, and staff?

Linville: It means both. There are currently 49 active cases (36 students and 13 employees).

Ellis: When you said we are following CDC guidelines, does that mean the CDC has abandoned social distancing as something that we should do?

Linville: I do not think they have abandoned it. We are deciding what layers of strategy we can use in the classroom to ensure that we continue to operate. We use a variety of guidelines. I am encouraging people in the classroom to spread out as much as they can. The World Health Organization and American Academy of Pediatrics suggest three feet.

McGarry: I am taking a psychology class, and there is no room in there for us to be more than a couple feet apart.

Ellis: I understand as much as they can. However, that is probably not three feet in a class with several hundred students, so we are not social distancing.

Linville: Well, I do not know that you can always say that we are not. It is not always, yes, and it is not always no. I think we try to do the best we can. Unfortunately, I think that means that there are times when people will be closer to one another, which is why I am constantly saying it is important to get your vaccine and wear your mask.

Ellis: So, we do not have a policy on social distancing?

Linville: We are not mandating that people stay six feet apart.

Walden: We have no social distancing requirement though right? There is no requirement for unvaccinated students or faculty staff to be tested periodically right?

Linville: We have not emphasized staying six feet apart. That is not part of the mask policy. There are no requirements for students/faculty/staff to be tested. There are some testing protocols with athletics in order to follow with NCAA guidelines.

Funk: I have asked students not to sit next to one another in a large intro class and they just refuse to spread out. It would be easier to get them to do so if that was an ETSU policy.

Walden: A policy would help me in the library as well. Right now, I have students in group study rooms and closing the door. They may or may not be taking their masks off. I cannot really tell them that they cannot all be in there together right now.

Hendrix: Do you know if we are doing the sewer testing?

Linville: We started that. I'm not sure what it will show other than it is here. It is another data point.

4.2 Keith Johnson – 3rd Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference Update

4.2.1 Johnson (K.) presented on the Equity and Inclusion Conference.

- The Equity and Inclusion Conference is September 20 – 22. The title is From Discussion to Action, Bold Steps towards Equity and Inclusion. There are two tracks this year: one for faculty, staff, and community on the first and second day and students on the third day.
- Paul Farmer will be the keynote speaker on the first day. He is a leading voice on global health, equity and social. Vernon Wall will be the keynote speaker on the second day. His topic is on creating a campus culture committed to equity and inclusion. In between those two speakers, we have several presentations and sessions, including one session by faculty and staff who participated in inclusive excellence training. They will be sharing how they implemented new teaching strategies and engaging activities that have enhanced the equity and inclusive environment.
- On the third day, we have two keynotes: Wes Moore and D'Lo. Currently, there are between 250-280 registrants. Johnson (K.) encouraged everyone to register and encourage students to register by possibly tying some assignments to it. The deadline is September 15th to register. If you are faculty or staff employed by ETSU, you can complete the employee education assistance form and attend the conference for free. The conference is free to students who register. The first



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- 200 students who register and attend the conference will get a book by Paul Farmer.
- Let Keith Johnson know of potential ideas or speakers. Faculty, staff, and students drive this conference.

4.2.2 Johnson (K.) answered questions from Faculty Senate.

Johnson (A.) provided sample language to encourage students to attend:

On September 22nd, ETSU will be hosting a student-centered Equity & Inclusion Conference. I encourage you to attend. Conference organizers will be confirming student attendance. Confirmed attendance at the conference will be considered an excused absence from class and will not affect attendance or participation grades in this course.

Beatty: Is the student track only in person?

Johnson: None of these is in person. They are all virtual.

Walden: If students register but have a time conflict, they can also watch the sessions after the fact.

Johnson: You have three months after the conference that you can access the sessions. You have to register for the conference to get access to it later.

Mamudu: Did you say that it is free for faculty and staff?

Johnson: If you complete the [employee assistance form](#) on the ETSU Equity and Inclusion website, it will not cost you nothing.

Byington: Could we have OIT add a news item to D2L for the conference?

Johnson: Yes, we can do that.

5. Approval of Minutes

Hendrix questioned whether there was an objection to approving the minutes from the 04/19/2021 meeting.

Sergiadis stated that there were corrections submitted by Senator McGarry. Most were minor except for the following correction: "We have more faculty now than we had in 2012" will be changed to "We have more faculty and staff now than we had in 2012." Sergiadis asked who was elected as the Clinical Health and Rehabilitative Sciences and College of Arts and Sciences representatives on the Elections and Governance Committee for the minutes. Theresa McGarry stated she was the representative for CAS, and Michelle Johnson was elected for College of Clinical Rehabilitative Health Sciences. Those corrections will be made to the final minutes.

No Objection: Minutes Approved.

6. Action Items

7. Information Items

7.1 Handbook Committee Update – Dr. Epps
None.

7.2 Board of Trustees Report – Dr. Foley
Board of Trustees meeting is September 17 in East Tennessee Room. Materials should be posted by September 10.

7.3 Standing Committee Need – Dr. Epps

7.3.1 University Curriculum Committee (2021-2022 Term)

If you are interested in filling this position, email Susan Epps. The Senate does not need to take a vote on this.

7.4 Notes from Exec Meeting with Dr. Noland – Mr. Hendrix

McGarry stated that the notes say that we do not have a full dorm like last year. She asked if the rooms are back down to single occupancy. **Sergiadis** clarified that the statement was referring to dorms



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dedicated to quarantining. We do not have a full dorm like last year dedicated to quarantining. **Foley** stated that we have 75 rooms designated for quarantining.

7.5 Reports from University Committees

7.5.1 Academic Council – Dr. Blackhart, Dr. Epps, and Mr. Hendrix

There were no actions on the meeting last Thursday. There were reports on the upcoming SACS reaccreditation process and enrollment.

7.5.2 Quality, Effectiveness Subcouncil meeting – Byington

The work this fall and probably next spring will be focusing on the next QEP. **Sergiadis** asked if he knew what the next QEP would be. **Byington** responded that there has been discussion around student and community engagement (service learning, internships, etc.). However, nothing is set in stone. It is very early in the process.

8. Old Business

8.1 **Trogen** asked about the report on filtration and ventilation. **Hendrix** reached out to Dr. Greene who referred him to Jeremy Ross. As soon as he receives it, he will send it to Faculty Senate.

9. New Business

None.

10. Comments from Guests

10.1 **Johnson (A.)** thanked the faculty for all that they are doing for ETSU and students.

11. Final Comments/Announcements from Senators

11.1 **Hendrix** encouraged Senators to complete the faculty senate and college goal forms. He reminded them that faculty can submit questions or comments to the Ask an Admin form.

Faculty Senate Goals - <https://forms.office.com/r/U7QxVvA7jJ>

College Goals - <https://forms.office.com/r/YaRayM5LKN>

Ask Admin - <https://forms.office.com/r/5tFeQBUCZN>

11.2 **Hendrix** reported that Faculty Senate held their first office hours on Thursday. Two faculty members visited in addition to a third faculty member who emailed wanting to share information. Please encourage your colleagues to come and meet with Faculty Senate.

7. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Epps

Second: Nivens

Meeting Adjourned

Please notify Senator Ashley Sergiadis (sergiadis@etsu.edu, Faculty Senate Secretary, 2020-2021) of any changes or corrections to the minutes.

Note: Meeting minutes are not a word-for-word transcript. Statements and questions by Senators may be edited and summarized for clarity.

Notes from Meeting with Dr. Noland

08/13/2021

Questions from Senators

- Who is second in command at the University until the Provost gets fully acclimated?
 - We are deep into the acclimation process for Provost McCorkle. During the last month, she has been learning about the major aspects of administration. They have set-up a Teams site with lots of information regarding strategic planning, finances, etc. Once faculty are back on campus, she will begin the process of meeting with all the colleges by the end of the semester. Dr. Noland meets with her every Friday to discuss the meetings and activities he has been involved in that week. If something were to happen to Dr. Noland, it would be the Board of Trustees' decision to decide who would be Interim Present.

- Why is Human Resources planning to use space in the Culp? There is plenty of space available in the dome and we were told that Faculty Senate could not have an office there because everything was dedicated to students and offices who directly serve students.
 - One of the rooms across from the Forum will be an HR training space. It will not be 100% dedicated to HR. The hope is that it will increase participation in the trainings. Administration is actively discussing with Student Affairs and HR about their needs, so there still may be room changes. In the training room, they are planning on supplying attendees with laptops and wireless network, so the room could be used for other purposes. If HR uses the room in the Culp, athletics would be able to use the space HR previously used in the Dome for study hall or meeting with academic counselors. Senator Foley suggested that ATS might be able to share their training room with HR now that most of ATS training is done remotely.

- Is ETSU willing to enact the same policy that the University of North Carolina system recently enacted where students, staff, and faculty have to upload their COVID-19 vaccination card to show that they are fully vaccinated and, if they are not, they have to have weekly COVID-19 tests? I understand that the UNC system is much larger than a stand-alone university like ETSU, but it sends a powerful message to people who refuse to get the vaccine and is the safest way to conduct business this upcoming academic year. The time to act is now and I sincerely hope that ETSU will consider doing this or something very similar to what the UNC system has decided to do. It is not too late if we act now.
 - Dr. Noland has spoken with SGA, campus ministers, student athletes, faculty, deans, chairs, and community leaders. He also plans on having lunch with the Johnson City City Manager. The takeaway is that around 70% of the people he met with firmly desire to have students back on campus in a traditional setting. The bulk of people he spoke with have been vaccinated, but still fear the unknown. They expressed frustration that ETSU has not been aggressive enough (manage vaccine, mandate testing) as well as frustration with elective officials. They have also expressed concern for the mental health of students, particularly campus ministers. (Our largest student groups are faith-based groups).
 - In terms of COVID, we cannot legally mandate vaccines/testing or ask if someone is vaccinated in the state of Tennessee. We are committed to being back on campus. We will not be switching to remote like in Fall 2020.

- Once the FDA approves one of the vaccines, ETSU will take action on an emergency rule to require vaccines and submit it to Nashville for legislative review. Some of the other LGIs plan on doing the same, while others are apprehensive about making vaccines mandated.
- Although we will not be switching to remote like in Fall 2020, faculty still have the flexibility to control the curriculum and delivery method. Classrooms have lecture capture capability and most have video capture. This can be utilized in circumstances when you have students that cannot come to class due to flu, COVID, etc. It would be acceptable for faculty to teach their courses remotely for the first few weeks of classes.
- ETSU will be hiring three staff members to do contact tracing. If an unvaccinated student has been contact traced, they are recommended to quarantine for 10 days. Vaccinated people do not need to quarantine. We have roughly 100 spots in housing for quarantining. For comparison, University of Memphis has 25. We do not have a full dorm like last year.

Other Notes

- To better student mental health, ETSU is working on hiring more counselors. The STRONG Brain Institute will also be available to help. We are also relying on faith-based organizations like BCM to help support students. ETSU focus has been on students. There are gaps when it comes to supporting the mental health of faculty/staff. Senator Sergiadis mentioned the [Employee Assistance Program](#) in which faculty/staff can receive five free therapy sessions.
- Sophomores can participate in Preview and the Second-Year Transitional Experience Program (STEP). This is important because it may be their first time on campus.
- In terms of enrollment, we are down ~400 students. We have ~1,850 incoming freshman, which is close to our pre-COVID goals of 1,900-2,000 students. Enrollment may increase due to the recent notification that students enrolled by September can receive a minimum of \$500 through CARES funding. There should not be a need to make budget changes. Other Tennessee LGIs (excluding UT) are also flat or down due to the sophomore/junior classes being smaller. Our transfer numbers are stable. Our international numbers are up.
- Realistically, the new academic building will be funded. There is also a proposal to renovate Brown Hall through THEC. The academic building will be focused on classroom space, although there will be some offices. It may be possible to convert classrooms to offices in Burleson Hall and Mathes Hall to compensate for the loss of office space in the academic building. When the academic building is being built, faculty will most likely use the spaces that are currently being used by faculty who moved due to the Lamb Hall construction. The Lamb Hall construction is going well.
- For students moving into Carter and Stone, they will need to park and use carts to move their belongings rather than dropping them off at the building.
- Parking will be enforced again next week. SGA wants to discuss converting the lot behind Warf-Pickle to a full use lot and building another parking garage. Dr. Noland will follow-up on whether parking will be enforced all the time, especially for those parking for music lessons.
- Festival of Ideas will be happening this Spring. The theme will be equity, inclusion, and civility. We are in the process of recruiting speakers.
- The Dean of Nursing has been hired. Nursing has received a 10 million gift from Ballard to create a nursing excellence program that will encourage people from rural areas to enter the field.
- The Board of the Trustees will hold their retreat next month. Scott Niswonger is serving on an expired term until someone is appointed to take his place.