



OKLAHOMA  
PANHANDLE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**Approved Minutes for Faculty Senate Meeting**  
Friday, September 20, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. in SAB 202

**Members:**

**COASN:** Dr. Curtis Bensch, Shawna Tucker, Tonnie Scott (proxy for Dr. Kristy Calloway)

**COAE:** Stacy Nordquist, Dr. Jarrett Kaufman, Dr. Marjory Hall

**COBT:** Steve Martin, Tracy Curtis

All Senators present.

**Call to Order:** 12:00 p.m. by Dr. Curtis Bensch

**Reading / Approval of Minutes:**

- September 6, 2024: With the exception of two spelling errors to be corrected, the minutes were accepted as read.

**New Business:**

- Election of 2024 -2025 Faculty Senate Secretary

Dr. Marjory Hall volunteered to serve. A motion to approve her service was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- Dr. Curtis Bensch apprised the Senate of personal matters that might affect his presence on campus. He provided his personal contact information to avoid any communication difficulties in the future.
- Dr. Bensch updated the Senate regarding preparations for the upcoming campus visit by a Shared Governance consultant. From each of the three candidate lists provided by the Senate, Dr. Dinger will choose one individual to meet with the consultant. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the consultation process will be held on October 17, 2024.

**Unfinished Business:**

- Faculty Credentialing update:

This past Spring, all OPSU colleges were asked to submit rubrics for alternative credentialing of faculty. COASN and COBT are in the process of producing their rubrics. COAE has declined a rubric, preferring to maintain the requirement of at least 18 graduate credit hours in the appropriate discipline for courses being taught.

As part of the old Faculty Credentialing committee, Dr. Marjory Hall reported that there are no reviews currently underway. Whatever arrangements were reached in Spring, 2024 are being carried out. If there were any questions outstanding regarding any faculty's

credentials, she does not have knowledge of them or of current action on them. It is anticipated that faculty credentialing will be one of the issues addressed in the Shared Governance discussion.

Steve Martin informed the Senate that COBT Interim Dean Vicki Pasque is working in Watermark to generate user-friendly, readily available reports of information on faculty credentials.

— Faculty Time on Campus:

Steve Martin mentioned a document offered to Faculty Senate in the September 6, 2024 meeting by COBT Interim Dean Vicki Pasque. Not everyone present was familiar with the document, but its gist was that flexibility should be of first consideration when establishing policy for faculty time on campus.

Steve Martin and Dr. Hall, both on last year's Faculty Handbook Committee, offered to go into their records for those meetings on this topic and provide any relevant information for the Senate's consideration.

It is the opinion of some members of the Faculty Senate that faculty should not be required to be on campus for the traditional 8:00 am – 4:00 pm work day. It was suggested that faculty would not abuse the privilege of flexible working hours, and that if they did, the problem should be addressed by the appropriate Dean. The question of whether OPSU is a research institution or not was raised, with regard to the question of our faculty being free to conduct research. It is believed that we are not although former VPASA Theresa Billiot seemed to be working toward that designation. The necessity of students being able to meet with faculty during the day was briefly discussed.

It was informally agreed that, along with flexibility, any faculty attendance policy should be uniform across all colleges and departments and should be universally applied.

Dr. Jarrett Kaufman questioned whether Faculty Senate's opinion on this topic would hold any weight beyond the meeting room. It was believed that our recommendations would not be binding on the administration, but simply advisory. The history of this debate, beginning with a so-called ghost employee in Oklahoma some years ago, was discussed, and the question was raised of the Faculty Handbook Committee's role in the matter.

It was agreed that, although the Handbook Committee is in a position to make recommendations on policy, its primary function is to collate and present existing OPSU policy, rendering it accessible to all who need it.

There was only discussion; no vote was taken on this matter, so there is no record of any dissenting opinions.

**Other Business:**

- Steve Martin updated the Senate on his request for a Faculty Senate channel on Teams. At the time of our meeting, there had been no results, but he would make sure that we are all informed when the channel is available.

Dr. Hall asked and Dr. Bensch confirmed that this channel would be a logical place for approved Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes to be posted so that members would have time to read proposed minutes at their leisure prior to meetings.

- Dr. Bensch informed the Senate of communication between himself and the Department of Communications regarding the correct use of faculty titles in official publications. The discussion was prompted by reference to an Assistant Professor as “Professor \_\_\_\_\_” in a recent press release. Dr. Bensch has noticed similar errors in the past.

Dr. Bensch explained the problem in an email to the Department of Communications, copying that message up the levels of Administration. Natasha Eidson, Director of Communications replied via email that she regretted the error and that her department would be more diligent in the future regarding the use of faculty designations.

There was discussion of the common practice among students to refer to all their instructors as professors. Although this informal tradition is technically incorrect, it is not a problem as is an official OPSU publication erroneously identifying faculty members.

- Dr. Bensch suggested that Senators keep the first Friday of each month free between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 pm free for Faculty Senate meetings. There was no formal vote, but no disagreement was brought forward.

The Faculty Senate’s next meeting will be held on Friday, October 4, 2024.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Dr. Bensch adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.