

Austin Peay State University
Faculty Senate Meeting
Meeting of Thursday, January 25, 2024
Morgan University Center, UC 307, 3:00 pm
Minutes

Call to Order: Senate President Soma Banerjee

Recognition of Guests – Dr. Bobette Bouton, President Dr. Mike Licari, Maj. Gen. Walt Lord, Dr. Crystal Henson, Dr. Sherry Lawdermilt, Chief Sammy Williams, Dr. Tucker Brown

Role Call of Senators: Senator Manisha Gupte

Approval of Today’s Agenda: motion made, seconded, and passed to approve the full agenda.

Approval of Minutes from November 30, 2023 Meeting: motion made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes for November 30, 2023.

Remarks:

1. Senate president, soma Banerjee (5 minutes)

Dr. Banerjee made announcements regarding the following upcoming events:

- i. January 27, COAL basketball event in F& M arena
- ii. January 29, Faculty research Spotlight
- iii. February 1, Art Walk in New gallery
- iv. February 3, College of STEM’s Basketball night
- v. February 6, Science on Tap by Dr, Katherine Haase
- vi. February 7, Legends of Business by Lindsey Paolo
- vii. February 14, College of Business- We Love Our First-Generation Students

Following the announcements, he welcomed Dr. Bobette Bouton (15 minutes).

The theme of the faculty senate for this academic year is Interdisciplinary collaborations. In continuation with this theme, Dr. Bobette Bouton from the Eriksson College of Education was the faculty spotlight invited speaker.

Dr. Bobette joined APSU in 2014 after completing her Ph.D. from University of Georgia with focus on Development and Initial Validation of the Teacher Empathy Scale. Her area of research is socio-emotional development, specifically around the domain of empathy which she has studied for the last 15 years. Dr. Bobette talked about her varied career paths. She talked about her experiences from four different universities. Prior to coming to APSU, Dr. Bobette has served as an English teacher in Indiana and South Carolina, served as a Child Care Director in the YMCA of Beaufort, South Carolina, Curriculum Development Director in YMCA of San Diego, and as an admissions Counsellor in Trevecca Nazarene University. She was an adjunct professor at Belmont University (2005-201) while also serving as Special education Research project Coordinator at Vanderbilt University at the same time. Before joining APSU, Dr. Bobette served as an Education and Brain Sciences Research laboratory Project Director at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Bobette feels that these experiences gave her a perspective on both research and the importance of collaborations. Dr. Bobette has co-authored numerous publications and has recently been involved in a STEM literature review focusing on empathy in the STEM field. Here at APSU, Dr. Bobette is a co-PI on an NSF grant with Dr. Vaughn to study empathy in the field of engineering. Dr. Bobette is also involved in outreach programs such as one involving training teacher's empathy for refugee children during their transition to schools here in the US. She has led multiple workshops over zoom for different populations of educators. Here at APSU she teaches, HON1045, HON 2510 (ethnography of work), is involved

in CAFÉ (student and faculty centered workshops), FYF orientation program, in the GoTags program, and serves on the Woodward Library Society board. Since 2020, she also serves on the Imagination Library of Montgomery County which provides free books to any child from Montgomery county from birth until age five at no cost to the family. Dr. Bobette urged everyone to donate to this cause as there is an urgent need for one. In addition to teaching and research, she is interested in music, reading, movie watching, cooking, and crochet. Dr. Bobette's lives on a farm with her musician husband. She has a large family consisting of 17 nieces and nephews.

2. University President, Dr. Mike Licari (10 minutes)

Funding-Tennessee Governor Bill Lee will deliver his State of the State address on February 5. President Licari stated that he will be watching for the Governor's priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. The Governor's budget for four-year universities was lower than what was recommended by Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Last year, 100 million dollars were steered to Tennessee College of Applied Technology. However, the State appropriations funded the Health Sciences Building hence the construction work has begun. The funding formula for four-year universities was not favorable to sustain large projects. Not necessarily a "budget cut" however, there were no increases in the budget for four-year universities as we had anticipated. Hence, if we want to continue to have extra money, we will have to get it ourselves.

Fall Applications – Student applications for fall are encouraging at this point.

However, the president noted that applications does not mean that the students will come to the university. Hence, it is important to visit communities.

President Licari, admission counsellors, and other members of the team will be traveling this spring to Huntsville, Jackson, Memphis (2 days), Nashville (2

days), and Chattanooga to meet with prospective students from various high-schools and their parents during the planned events. The president pointed out that they will be spending extra time in key markets such as Nashville and Memphis.

Additionally, priorities for this academic year include – improve campus vitality, improve community engagement, enrollment, and student success. Improving retention and graduation, rate, the president noted is important. All these goals are important as we get ready to celebrate APSU’s 100th anniversary in 2027.

The president said that enrollment is challenging. Parents and families are questioning the value of going to college. For moral and practical reasons, we need to improve the retention rate. We must do better by our students. He has put a task force together which will meet on February 1 to take a fresh look. Data is gathered regarding the retention rate. The six-year graduation rate bounces up and down, we need to establish a slope to that graph so overall, we are doing better and improving the percentage of students that get to graduation.

Questions:

Q 1. Who in the task force has focus on non-traditional students? Students with VA benefits?

A 1. The president acknowledged that non-traditional students make up a huge percent of our freshmen class. 10-11% of our students are above the age of 25 years.

Q2. Anyone in the faculty experience in the task force?

A2. No faculty, those of us that were faculty. We will get ideas and tap the right folks.

Q 3. How far back does the flatline go?

A3. Indefinitely, last 14-15 years when retention rate was 70% or better. 2-3% bumps here and there for last 10 years.

Q4. Has anything been tried before?

A4. Lots of efforts. Nothing has worked or perhaps has worked to maintain the retention rate without any increase.

Q5. Any correlation between student success and admission standards?

A5. Not that I can say. The GPA of admitted students has improved, number of the conditional admits has gone down, and four-year graduation rate has gone up. No obvious pattern.

Q6. Thoughts on high-school GPA not predictive of successes in college?

A 6. We have not discovered anything yet.

3. Vice President for Military and Veterans Affairs, Major General (Retired) Walt Lord. (10 minutes)

Maj. Gen. Ward share that 25% of APSU students are military affiliated. In fall, it is expected to go to 27%, he does not anticipate that the number will drop. He said we call ourselves gold standards and we are trying to get better. These enrollments guarantee 20 million every year, hence, we have a moral and business responsibility towards our students. A team of 24 individuals are focused on military students. There were some missed opportunities. Ongoing initiatives-La Tara Pearson, Military Affiliated Student Success Professional goes to all conferences, surge in student advising, and hiring additional

individual who will be trained in the admission process are some of the changes that are made to serve the students better. Services to students are delivered from three locations- Ellington Student Service Building, VA upward bound team, and APSU Fort Campbell Center. Maj. Ward thanked the faculty for working with the military students' who must pivot to a different modality depending on their assignments. He gave a shout-out to a faculty from the English department who worked with a military student who had to go to Alaska for his assignment. He welcomed everyone to come to the Newton Military Family Resource Center. Maj. Ward thanked Dr. Licari for the package of incentives that he developed for military students and affiliates which includes in-state tuitions, waiver of all application fees, and graduate degree tuition rate to federal tuition assistance rate. Following events will be conducted in the spring semester for military students- career services, education support activities, veteran service days, lunch and learn seminars, and other social and networking events. He encouraged the faculty members to complete the Green Zone training. He offered to train an entire department if needed. He said this training raises awareness of situations that a military member and their families face during their service.

Questions:

Q1. Are there any plans for Fort Campbell site?

A1. Not at this point.

Response- May I suggest? Yes!

Q2. Who gets the in-state tuition benefits?

A2. Veterans and all military affiliated family members

4. Director, Student Counseling and Health Services, Dr. Crystal Henson (15 minutes)

Dr. Hanson introduced herself as a licensed clinical psychologist, APSU alumni. She has previously worked for school-based services which caters to children that were out of school for various reasons, crisis intervention, and adult inpatient care. Dr. Hansen got her PsyD from Western Kentucky University. She is a director of the ARD which provides counselling, health, and diagnostic services.

She informed the faculty of the 12 free counselling sessions for students in every academic year, help for students in crisis, and informed the faculty of an app, a 24X7 peer support resource that caters to students and is available in 26 languages.

Questions:

Q1. A faculty asked if there are counselling services for faculty members?

A1. No

Q2. If the student comes in crisis, does that session count to the 12 services available in the academic year?

A2. No, the crisis session is not included in the 12 sessions

Q3. If the student uses all the 12 sessions, can the student still get help?

A3. The staff consists of three full-time employees and three interns. If needed, they provide referrals in community. She said that their office does their best to meet the needs of the students.

5. Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer. Dr. Sherry Lawdermilt (15 minutes)

Dr. Lawdermilt gave an update on what's going on in different departments in this semester. Classroom upgrade in Sundquist Science Complex (3 classrooms), McCord (1), Claxton (1), and Fort Campbell Education Center (2) will be upgraded. She mentioned that the podium computers will not be replaced in most classrooms moving forward. This is a phased in approach. The office will communicate when computers are removed. Classroom AV training will be offered by IT. Dr. Lawdermilt said that new projects will be funded using carry-forward funds from the previous year. Project funding will be very limited this year due to lower enrollment and higher software renewal costs which resulted in a negative carry-forward. She talked about software renewals-Changed software renewal process, software can be renewed using the old process for two years. Software proposals will have to be resubmitted through the project proposal process every 3 years (quotes/vendor estimates will need to be provided for 3 years). She talked about the Oracle Implementation at APSU which will take place in phases (estimated 18 months for implementation). Target start date of March 2024. Finance and Budget targeted go-live April 1, 2025. HR and Payroll targeted go-live July 1, 2025. Training will happen shortly in advance of go-live. Updates and information will be provided to campus throughout the implementation. She talked about security measures- replacement of administrative accounts, pushed out to Windows computers early January, will push to Macs after testing is completed, security training for new hires, annual security training will roll out in March, additional training for repeat phishing clickers is being developed. Other important matters discussed were Wi-Fi

upgrade, email tenant merge, campus wide computer inventory, GOVSTECH Knowledge Base, VR labs, and 3-D printers.

6. Chief of Police, Sammy Williams (10 minutes)

Chief Sammy Williams, an APSU alumni thanked the faculty for everything they do for the students. He said that the all of us here at APSU have a common goal which is to help students get their degree. Additionally, the police department is here to help students with additional services such as jumpstart their vehicle, change a flat tire, and talked about the programs offered by the department such as drug awareness program, and self-defense.

New Business

7. Faculty Trustee, Prof. Jane Semler (15 minutes)

Prof. Semler gave the following updates from the board of trustees meeting held on December 8 -Termination of Academic Advisor Certificate Program, enrollment terms to be streamlined starting fall 2024, Letter of Notification to THEC for a new Master of Science in Environmental Science program, increase in fall enrollment by 6.6% over fall 2022. She talked about the updates from the Student Affairs Committee- APSU football is the RePeayt United Athletic Conference champion, and Student Affairs realignment. The October revised budget increased by \$6 million as result of 3% tuition increase and increased enrollment. Both internal and external audit reports were presented. There were no findings significant enough to include in a report, though a few recommended improvements were suggested. She talked about security update-penetration test performed by third party. They could not penetrate One Stop, which was highly unusual. Lastly, she talked about campus spotlight: College

of Arts and Letters- Marching band, Fulbright Scholar, Department of Communication and their connection with ESPN, and 'Book a Professor' program.