

Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Amy C. Bradshaw

September 12 – October 9, 2020

During the **September 14 meeting of the Faculty Senate**, following the HR proposed changes to benefits presentation and discussion, the Senate unanimously passed a [Healthcare Benefits Equity Resolution](#) objecting to the proposed change from 6 tiers to 1 by 2021, and empowering the Executive Committee to make minor word changes for clarity. FSEC and Parliamentarian Rick Tepker subsequently met to discuss how best to move the resolution forward, and it was **posted to the Faculty Senate website on September 15**.

Our request for distribution of a PDF of the slides from the HR Benefits Presentation to the broader faculty was declined, so on **September 16** I began working on **closed captioning of the HR Presentation and Discussion** portion of the Faculty Senate meeting so the presentation and discussion could be made available to the OU community to be impacted by the proposed changes. (*That recording available [here](#)*).

On **September 14**, the Provosts office requested **4 names for consideration for appointment to the Search Committee for the next Provost**. The FSEC felt the importance of the Provost position warranted a broad call for nominees to this search committee so we solicited nominations from the full faculty. FSEC received nominations for 37 individuals and, after careful consideration, advanced 4 names on September 23. Of those, Kalenda Eaton and Doug Gaffin were selected by the President for appointment to the search committee.

September 14-16, Interim Provost Jill Irvine and I (and by extension, members of the FSEC) **discussed ideas for obtaining faculty input** regarding possibly starting spring '21 semester a week late and skipping spring break. FSEC also worked toward planning and facilitation of the upcoming State of the University Event.

On **September 16**, I **connected with the FS Chair of the Health Sciences Center** to discuss proposed changes to health care benefits. In the following days our communication expanded to include leaderships of other OU staff and faculty senates. Also, on **September 16**, FSEC hosted the **State of the University Address by President Harroz followed by Questions and Answers** that FSEC had solicited from the OU community. After obtaining access to the video recording on September 17, FS At-large member Ralph Beliveau worked the many hours necessary to get the closed captioning of the State of the University Event into shape so that we could make the video recording available to the public.

On **September 18**, I **directed that we modify the Faculty Senate website** to include a space for "Latest News" and in that space we subsequently provided links to the unofficial recap of the 9-14-20 FS meeting, the closed-captioned video recording of the state of the university event, the closed-captioned video recording of the HR proposed changes to benefits presentation and discussion, and the Summer Chair's Report. The same day, I **forwarded 4 names from FSEC for consideration for appointment to the Search Committee for the next Law Dean**. Of these, Mary Sue Backus and Christina Miller were selected by President Harroz as FS appointments to the Law Dean search committee.

On **September 21**, the **FS Large Executive Committee met**. We received updates from various committees and, most notably, discussed efforts underway to revitalize the University Budget Council.

On the evening of **September 22**, I **spoke with Interim Provost Irvine** regarding a shift in the proposed benefits changes that would pause the reduction in tiers until staff salaries in the lowest two current tiers were brought to market levels. I **convened an impromptu meeting of FSEC later that night**.

The morning of September 23, I **spoke with Staff Senate Chair**, Crystal Ary. Later that morning, I **provided FSEC feedback to Interim Provost Jill Irvine** on the shift in the proposed changes to healthcare benefits. I indicated

we were pleased that the administration was hearing and responding to the widespread concerns across all OU campuses and was committing to addressing the salary inequities of those who would be most harmed by the proposed changes. I also noted that other serious equity concerns remain, including (but not limited to) salary inversion and compression. I also requested that the administration encourage current administrative team members to align with the existing structures of shared governance in the forms of FS committees and other university-wide committees, councils, and boards, noting that doing so could reduce the need for formal statements in response to administrative decisions. The same day, **I forwarded FSEC nominees for appointment to the DEI Course Director Search Committee.** Of these, Catherine John was selected as the FS representatives.

On **September 24**, I met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for the **weekly FS Officers meeting**. Later that night I informed Lori Granec that **FS DEI Committee Chair Heather Shotton would represent the Faculty Senate on the Zoom interviews of the Institutional Equity and Title IX Officer search.**

On **October 1**, I met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for the **weekly FS Officers meeting**.

On **October 2**, I **attended** in person the public session of the **OU Board of Regents meeting**.

On **October 5**, I **met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine**. We discussed issues related to academic integrity and Provost Irvine indicated that, following the much higher than normal amount of academic integrity cases filed after the campus closure in spring related to COVID-19, support for that office has been increased to ensure they are not similarly overwhelmed with cases in fall. Later the same day, **FSEC held our monthly meeting**, where we discussed issues related to the office of academic integrity, APR committee nominations, and developing a written transition plan for all FS committees, including timelines and onboarding needs. **We were joined by Interim Dean of Libraries, Karen Rupp Serrano to discuss journal subscriptions.** Following that discussion, **Crispin South and his SGA associates joined the meeting to discuss their request that OU allow Pass/Fail grading options** this semester. Later, **Interim Provost Jill Irvine joined the meeting** and we discussed several issues, including faculty hiring and possible changes to proportions of RRT faculty, an issue initially explored in previous years.

On **October 7**, I **attended the Deans Council meeting**. Later the same day, **FSEC met with President Harroz**. We discussed shifts in Fall '20 and Spring '21 semesters related to COVID-19, and also discussed COVID testing of students and of wastewater, and potential responses to the results. We then discussed retention of marginalized and faculty of color, including appropriate measures, data collection, and analysis. We also discussed ways to facilitate and improve cooperation between administration team members and the many FS and university-wide committees comprised mostly of faculty. President Harroz was very supportive and suggested ways to help move these efforts forward. We briefly discussed *market standards*, with all present acknowledging the need to more deeply explore and discuss this construct. The same day, **FSEC confirmed the Committee on Committee's selection of Professor Aimee Franklin** to membership on that committee.

On **October 8**, I met with Keri Kornelson and Dave Hambright for the **weekly FS Officers meeting**. Later, I **spoke with Chief of Staff Sean Burrage** about the Faculty Senate's roles and responsibilities as the official representative of faculty on the Norman campus.

On Friday, **October 9**, I **spoke with Interim Provost Jill Irvine** to discuss benchmarking support for units to assist them in unit-level strategic planning. Later the same day I **provided FSEC feedback to Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Lori Snyder** related to Academic Program Review Committee.