

In Case You Missed It: Unofficial Recap of the Faculty Senate Meeting

These “ICYMI - meeting update” notes do not replace the formal Journal of the Faculty Senate that will be distributed later, and that will be approved at the next monthly meeting. Rather, these are notes and highlights from the perspective of FS Secretary Dave Hambright, with input from Stacey Bedgood (Administrative Coordinator), Chair-Elect Keri Kornelson, and Chair Amy Bradshaw.

May 10, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair Bradshaw. The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular meeting of April 12, 2021 was approved without revisions.

Announcements:

Chair Bradshaw:

- Recognized and welcomed new OU Regent Rick Nagel who joined the meeting as a guest.
- Announced that the regular meetings of the Faculty Senate for Fall 2021 will be held at 3:30 p.m. on the following Mondays: September 13, October 11, November 8, and December 13.
- Acknowledged and thanked the 2020-21 faculty retirees for their dedication and contributions to the OU community.
- Announced that the Center for Faculty Excellence is now accepting applications for Faculty Peer Mentoring Fellows. Details can be found at: <https://ou.edu/cfe/leadership/PeerMentoring>.

Chair Bradshaw turned to the recently distributed monthly Chair’s Report and asked for any questions or comments. There were none.

Chair Bradshaw then introduced Chair-elect Keri Kornelson and Associate Provost for Academic Technology Aaron Biggs from the Teaching Evaluation Working Group (TEWG) (<https://www.ou.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/evaluation/teaching-evaluation-working-group>). Chair-elect Kornelson provided a brief update on the working group’s activities during the past two years. She overviewed the pilot Student Experience Survey (SES) which will eventually replace the current Student Teacher Evaluation (STE) system, which has not been evaluated or revised in more the two decades. The SES was piloted in Spring 2021 in 19 units across eight colleges and encompassing 998 course sections. TEWG’s next steps will include gathering and assessing feedback on SES. More information on SES can be found at: <https://www.ou.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/evaluation/student-experience-survey>. Additionally, Chair-elect Kornelson asked for Senators to contact her directly by email () if there were any questions. Chair Bradshaw thanked Chair-elect Kornelson and other members of TEWG for speaking to the Senate.

Chair Bradshaw then turned the Senate’s focus to the recently signed-into-law HB1775, and introduced John Woods, OU’s Executive Director of Government Relations and Interim Provost Jill Irvine to lead the Senate in discussion of HB1775. Mr. Woods said there are two issues behind legislation such as that in HB 1775: anti-transgender and anti-Critical Race Theory (CRT) ideologies. Mr. Woods pointed out that in the current legislative session, there were initially about ten bills that were related to diversity, equity,

and inclusion issues, most of which are still in committee and likely to be heard next year. Mr. Woods stated that the HB 1775's author told him that the bill was not aimed at restricting course content in college courses, but was more targeted towards mandatory student training. Nevertheless, as Provost Irvine pointed out, HB1775 will affect the mandatory Gateway to Belonging course that is scheduled to begin in Fall 2021. To avoid the mandatory nature of the Gateway course, two additional courses are being planned to provide a suite of freshman first-year experience courses. Senators engaged Mr. Woods and Provost Irvine in an extensive discussion of issues ranging from the legislature's inaccurate understanding of CRT to issues regarding enforcement and legality of the law to related legislation (e.g., SB 2, SJR 15) to academic freedom and the defense of junior and other non-tenured faculty. Chair Bradshaw thanked Mr. Woods and Provost Irvine for speaking to the Senate. She noted that Mr. Woods had shared his email in the chat (jwoods@ou.edu) and that he welcomes communication from senators. Chair Bradshaw assured the Senate that the FSEC will continue to monitor this issue throughout the summer.

Chair Bradshaw introduced Sen. Anthony Natale, Chair of the Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee (FCBC). Sen. Natale said that the FCBC recently met with a faculty retiree group and Human Resources and that many of the retiree's concerns were successfully addressed. Sen. Natale expressed openness to communication from senators about issues of concern and provided his email address anatale@ou.edu. There was no further discussion.

Chair Bradshaw then turned to the election of two new FSEC At-large Members to replace the two At-large members who are rotating off of the committee. Prof. Jie Zhang (Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics) was elected to replace Prof. Mary Sue Backus. Prof. Lori Jervis (Anthropology) was elected to replace Prof. Kalenda Eaton.

Chair Bradshaw presented a list of nominations from the Committee on Committees for end-of-the-year vacancies on university and campus councils, committees, and boards, as well as Faculty Senate standing committees and requested Senate approval. Additionally, Chair-elect Kornelson, as Chair of the Committee on Committees, nominated Prof. Julia Abramson to fill the seat of retiring faculty member Prof. Marcia Haag on the Research Council. The full list of nominees was approved.

Chair Bradshaw recognized Prof. Heather Shotton, Chair of the Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (FDEIC), to provide some context for the FDEIC-proposed Land Acknowledgement Resolution. After brief discussion, the resolution was passed and adopted by the Senate.

Chair Bradshaw then recognized Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) Chair Sarah Robbins to speak about a proposed resolution from the FWC on Recognition and Rewarding of Faculty Service. There was no discussion and the Senate approved and adopted the resolution.

Chair Bradshaw thanked outgoing senators Profs. Katie Allen, Eric Anderson, Elizabeth Butler, Andrew Cuccia, Anne Dunn, Luz Eugenia Fuenzalida, Bruce Hoagland, Roxanne Lyst, and Jody Worley for their service and contributions.

Finally, Chair Bradshaw congratulated Incoming Chair Kornelson on her transition to Chair of the Faculty Senate for 2021-22.

As her first official duty, Chair Kornelson introduced a resolution of appreciation for Prof. Bradshaw for her service as chair for the past year. The resolution was passed and adopted by the Senate.

Chair Kornelson then called for New Business. Sen. Teodoriu said that he was requested by his colleagues to ask about in-person instruction in Fall 2021, and how OU might deal with masks and vaccinations. Chair Kornelson assured the Senate that the FSEC will track developments pertaining to these issues over the summer in their meetings with President Harroz and incoming Provost Wright. There was no other new business.

A motion was made, and seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

The official Faculty Senate Journal will be made available in draft form prior to the next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting (September 13, 2021) for approval during that meeting.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Hambright", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dave Hambright
Faculty Senate Secretary