

Governance, Communications and Recruitment (GoCore) Committee Meeting of Faculty Senate

March 30, 2021

3:00 PM-5:00PM

Attendees: Maria Collins (Co-Chair), Burak Erdim, Chad Jordan,, Barbara Kirby (Co-Chair), Andrey Kuznetsov, Troy Pinkins, Joan Nicholas-Walker, Joni Lancaster, Jade Berry James

Absent: Meagan Kittle Autry

Action items

1. GoCore should continue to reach out to the Faculty Senate office to frame out ideas for an orientation in the Fall before the Faculty Senate session begins. Maria has agreed to reach out to Joni over the summer.
2. Maria will gather information from the Libraries IT department for a proposal to present to the Executive Committee about upgrading the technology in the Faculty Senate rooms.
3. The GoCore Chairs will continue to work with Joni as needed to help with coordinating the remaining elections.

Discussion

1. Orientation tool kit

The committee met with the incoming Chair of the Faculty, Jade Berry James, to discuss the idea of an orientation next fall.

After previous committee discussion, GoCore recommended that an orientation be developed over the summer in collaboration with the Faculty Senate office, the Chair, and the Associate Chair of the Senate. The scale of the orientation is to be determined.

Jade noted that she hoped the Senate would be a welcoming place where faculty can come together and discuss issues, learn how to navigate shared governance and serve as a model for shared governance. Jade is interested in and has experience with program evaluation and will be using this lens when she takes office.

GoCore can continue to work with the Faculty Senate office on developing an orientation plan, and Jade is willing to consider any plans when she takes office. GoCore should reach out to (consider interviewing) the current chair about lessons learned, tips, and/or advice to share with faculty senators based on the Chair's experience. Questions might include what a senator's job entails and what advice would he provide to a new senator.

Jade would prefer the orientation session to take place before the first Senate meeting rather than during that meeting. It is important for Senators to understand the bylaws. This could be part of the orientation.

2. Phase 2 Technology upgrade for Faculty Senate Rooms at Hill

The Faculty Senate rooms received an upgrade last year including a new projector and screen to facilitate delivery of presentations in the room.

GoCore would like the Executive Committee to consider additional upgrades that would allow for hybrid meetings (virtual and in person) when meetings reconvene in person.

Potential benefits for consideration of this upgrade include the following:

- Continued virtual access to the meeting by guests to comply with open meeting requirements. Webinar access to the meeting this past year has allowed additional engagement with the senate from deans, administrators and interested faculty members. Exposure to the Senate provides an opportunity for recruitment.
- Enabled access to FS meetings for current Senators who are unable to attend in person due to illness or conflicts. Concerns mentioned included faculty needing to social distance when sick, concerns about parking on main campus, conflicts that prevent senators from traveling to Main campus to attend the meeting in person.
- Transitional options for folks that feel uncomfortable with in person meetings in the fall. Given the size of the Faculty Senate rooms, it will be difficult to socially distance 3 feet.

The committee also discussed the possibility of moving the Faculty Senate meeting to other locations such as Centennial Campus or Talley in order to provide more equitable access to the meetings.

Another option might include meeting virtually in the Fall rather than returning to in person meetings.

Once meetings do commence in person, the committee agreed that the preferred method of attendance would be in person. In summary, three issues were identified related to hybrid meetings including not having access to a large enough physical space (problems with social distancing), concerns about accessibility to the meetings for Faculty across campus (guests who would like to attend), and a lack of technology to support an effective hybrid meeting experience. An upgrade to the Faculty Senate room would provide more flexibility in meeting some of these challenges.

Maria has reached out to the Libraries IT department to investigate what would be needed in terms of equipment to continue with efforts to update the room to allow for virtual meetings. This will likely include a computer/podium set up and improved audio especially towards the front of the room. This information will be added to a proposal to be considered by the Executive Committee.

Funding sources for this upgrade could include the Libraries, the Provost's office, and any unspent funds supporting the Faculty Senate.

3. Elections

GoCore provided suggestions to the Faculty Senate office about how we might complete the remaining elections for the Athletics Council, Executive Committee, the Associate Chair, and Faculty Assembly.

We all agreed that the election process is best handled by the Faculty Senate office with support from GoCore if needed. The bylaws should continue to be consulted to ensure that election procedures are in alignment.

4. Committee Assignments

The committee spent the remainder of the time working with Joni on university standing committee assignments.