

April 17th, 2026

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

April 17, 2026

Reynolds 222

Attendees: Amanda Mohler, Kacie Altom, Richard Segall, Karen Graham, Rob Williams, Rashele Wade, Eric Dry, Suzanne Melescue, Alexandr Sokolov, Michael Cooper, Julie King, Kristen Sumler, Kim Vickrey, Hao Yang Teng, Jason Causey, John Hershberger, Scott Mangan, Rollin Tusalem, Veronika Scudamore, Stephanie Hoeckley, Toccara Carter, Anne McGee, Mark Lewis, Dwayne Powell, Guolei Zhou, Ibrahim Duyar, Savannah Cormier, Jamie Passmore

Proxy Attendees: John Howard for Jeremy Weeks, Kacie Altom for Audrey Folsom, Julie King for Eric West, Joy Goode for Robert Bradley, Angelo Brown for Banafsheh Aghayeeabianeh

Guests: Kevin Hennings (parliamentarian), Calvin White, Alyssa Wells, John Hollander

Absentees: Marceline Thompson-Hayes, Pradeep Mishra, DayDay Robinson, Gary Edwards, Bert Greenwalt

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm by Amanda Mohler.

Order of the day: Motion to approve the order of the day by Rashele, seconded by Kim; all are in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The motion to approve the April 3, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Richard Segall and seconded by Karen Graham; all in favor, the motion carried.

New Business

Proposal: Academic Standing Requirement for Accelerated Master's Program Students

-Question raised as to why a decision on this would be required by the Faculty Senate, not left in the hands of the individual program.

-Point made that when sitting on shared governance committees, we are representing our constituents, not just ourselves. Therefore, committee work should be communicated with constituents and a call made for feedback to ensure all have input. When votes are made, the member should vote based on the opinions of their constituents

rather than their personal opinions. It was discussed that there are other proposals being made as well that have not been communicated to the faculty they affect. There is no complaint against the policy, just that it wasn't shared. The role of shared gov committees is to make sure the process works, and that didn't happen in this instance.

-Questions about the proposal:

Is there a probationary period or would removal be immediate?

Are there early warning systems or supports in place?

How will this be explained to students before they enroll in the accelerated master's program?

-Is there anything that can be done to make sure that proposals are sent in a more timely manner to give faculty a better chance to review them?

-Is there accountability for committee members to ensure they are doing their part?

-Alexander S. motioned to support the proposal as written. The motion was seconded by Eric Dry. No additional discussion. Motion carries.

Provost Updates and Q&A

-Accountability—states he is pressuring deans and department chairs to hold people accountable in evaluations. This is in response to the question about accountability in committee work.

-When committees are formed, we need to make sure that there are some senior-level professors on committees as well.

-Good year, enrollment is up, graduation rate is up, retention is up, key performance indicators are up. Research is up (from 5th to 3rd) in state for research expenditures only behind UofA and UAMS.

-We have a better footing financially than last year or two years ago.

- We are looking at another record enrollment for freshmen next year as well

-New arts and engineering center

-New building on the farm

-Indoor baseball facilities have been started as well

-Equity policy feedback is still welcome. Over the summer, the provost will work with department heads and finalize the policy. It was stated that this is a "College-driven policy" and a grievance policy will go along with this to provide an outlet if you believe your salary was not fairly considered. It was unclear if the policy presented at the previous meeting was the same policy the provost was referring to, in that he mentioned PRT committee involvement in the process, but the policy presented at Faculty Senate did not include PRT committees. There were 9 faculty requests for equity review this year.

-The provost indicates that faculty salaries were in his top two biggest requests for the upcoming budget. He asked for a 2% raise for all faculty and recognizes that this does not close the gap in regard to pay as much as he would like to be able to, but indicates the money to do more simply isn't available. He has asked the CFO to find 2.5% next year.

-Some changes are being made in an attempt to save money. For instance, if only one faculty is using office space on a floor, that faculty member may be asked to move to a different space so the lights and thermostat can be shut off on the other floor and money can be saved.

-Fees will increase a bit to fund budget requests. Parking will go up \$20. Did not know about contract spaces at this time.

-Vet school will admit 120 students in the fall. Applications opened 2 weeks ago: 714 completed applications; 70 offers made; 67 accepted; 800 applications in process

Q&A

As written, there's no self-nomination for equity, so how can grievance be a thing? As written, the PRT committee wasn't the one doing the review; it was chairs, etc. We were told the policy as written wasn't changing, but the provost indicates that he has not finalized the policy and it is still open for feedback.

How long do we have to give feedback? There is no deadline set at this time.

If we do not increase the pay of current faculty, but hire in new, less experienced faculty at higher salaries, don't we risk losing seasoned faculty? Are we ok with that? We cannot solve salary compression by compressing others. There's a market rate. The people we can hire at the rates we hired in at we don't want. "Ma'am, there is nothing I can do about that. I don't like it, but it is the way it works."

Is the 2% for everyone? Provost stated that was his request

How can vet school make offers without seeing all apps? If someone meets rigorous standards, they are being admitted. 120 is a hard cap number due to space, pedagogy, faculty, etc. Building should be done in June and will be holding classes in the building in August.

Is there another vet school going in in Cabot? Lyon College is attempting to establish a vet school, but they are having issues getting started. They are suing their accreditor at the moment.

Michelle Summers—International Sponsorships

3 things impacting hiring

\$100K fee; if in states and in status, we would be excused from the fee. Only applies if the applicant is living out of the country. There is a SPSIC processing pause for 139 countries. If interested in which countries are involved, you may contact Michelle.

Last month, a prevailing wage increase was proposed; will increase minimum requirements; comments go until end of next month

Stay in touch if hiring an international candidate

What is the new minimum? Duties are sent in and then ranked, and the minimum is determined based on position, level, and duties

New expectations for deans about sponsorships from provost

We don't want to fund temp or one-year assignments for VISA. Needs to be long-term or tenure track...3-5 years is considered "long-term" (H1BU)

OPT is different (paid for by the person)

It's not fair to the person if we bring them in, work them hard, and then not commit to them for long enough; 1 year is not helping them move toward permanent resident status

If a department has a visiting assistant and likes them after the first year and wishes to hire them into an open line, that position can go ahead and be offered. You don't have to wait until the end of the 3 years.

Updates

Use link for feedback on equity proposal

John will be taking over in August in the new academic year, and senate will meet in Lab Science West (LSW) 334 in Fall; will send map out

Committee Updates or reports?

None

Meeting adjourned by Amanda Mohler

Minutes Recorded by Kacie Altom

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