

March 20th, 2026

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

March 20, 2026

Reynolds 222

Attendees: Amanda Mohler, Audrey Folsom, Banafsheh Aghayeeabianeh, Richard Segall, Karen Graham, Gary Edwards, Suzanne Melescue, Alexandr Sokolov, Michael Cooper, Savannah Cormier, Dwayne Powell, Kim Vickrey, Hao Yang Teng, Jason Causey, John Hershberger, Scott Mangan, Stephanie Hoeckley, Toccara Carter, Kacie Altom, Anne McGee, Eric West, Bert Greenwalt, Jamie Passmore, Mark Lewis.

Proxy Attendees: John Howard for Jeremy Weeks, Cheryl Knight for Rashele Wade, Karen Graham for Robert Williams, Karen Graham for Ibrahim Duyar, Joy Goode for Robert Bradley, Kevin Berry for Kristen Sumler, Robert Robinette for Eric Dry,

Guests: Kevin Hennings (parliamentarian), Jim Washam, Annette Hux, Jeff Bailey, Jennifer Bouldin, Cherisse Jones-Branch, Stacy Walz, Mickey Latour, Nikesha Nesbitt, Steve Beaupre, Alyssa Wells, Will McLean, Tiffany Keb

Absentees: Marceline Thompson-Hayes, Pradeep Mishra, Rollin Tusalem, Julie King, Veronika Scudamore, Guolei Zhou, DayDay Robinson.

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

Order of the Day: Motion to approve the order of the day by Kacie Altom, seconded by Alexander Sokolov; all are in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The motion to approve the March 6th, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Richard Segall and seconded by Karen Graham; all in favor, the motion carried.

Provost Q&A by Will McLean

1. **Last spring, there was a discussion regarding the possibility of reduced parking fees for adjunct instructors. Has the administration taken any steps toward addressing this issue?** They are in budget building and haven't gotten to the parking fees section yet. We will look at it. TBD. It has to get board approval. Parking will get worse as enrollment increases and the veterinary school opens, but you can ride the trolley for free across campus .
1. **As the university shifts toward a more research intensive model, faculty are being encouraged to increase their research activity. Those who are not research- focused- may see their teaching loads adjusted accordingly. Could you clarify what level of annual research output is considered sufficient to meet the expectations of a 'research faculty' member?** It depends, it varies from college to college in the same way as the PRT document requirement varies. It is a the departmental and college-level decision.
2. **Are Department Chairs and Program Directors held to the same expectations to conduct research as faculty are?** No, they have a different set of responsibilities. They can be research-active as they can get to it (usually in the summer). Often, they are already tenured and aren't trying to meet the same requirements as pre-tenured faculty.

New Business:

Dean's Faculty Equity Proposal - Steve Beaupre, Dean of the Graduate School

The deans met weekly from July through October 2025. They developed working principles for Faculty Equity.

- *Internal college process (provost review and approval).*
- *Applies to all full-time faculty (excludes Adjuncts and Temps).*
- *SIMPLE objective process - easy to apply, easy to understand.*
- *Time-in-rank is informative, but not sufficient (performance matters).*
- *Representative process: chair (unit leader) > dean (team) > provost.*
- *Tied to annual review cycle, with no waiting.*
- *Fair process, addressing the most serious equity issues first.*
- *High performance required for eligibility.*

They evaluated the Faculty Senate policy proposal vs the Dean's proposal. The Dean's policy proposal was then modified. There were many similarities between the two proposals and a few differences. Some of the key differences were that the faculty senate proposal requested a) an *automatic, statistical, institution-wide annual review*, whereas the dean's proposal has a *nomination-based, objective, performance-driven process, initiated by unit leaders*; b) faculty senate requested that it apply to *all faculty except during tenure/promotion year*, whereas the dean's proposal applies to *full-time faculty with sustained excellence; adjuncts and temps are excluded*; c) procedural steps of the deans' proposal such as it being a *multi-step nomination and review process tied to annual review*, evaluations based on *internal unit comparison + performance evaluation*, *self-nominations are not allowed*, *performance required for eligibility*, *the dean recommends; provost approves/denies*

A question was asked about a situation where the chair is ignoring a faculty equity issue. If a chair is not being proactive about equity reviews, and there is a problem in the chain of command, the faculty can approach the dean directly.

Review of the Proposal from the Deans

Purpose: *Disparities in faculty salary can arise in a variety of normal and justifiable ways, including baseline percent merit or cost of living adjustments over time, differences in assigned responsibilities, retention packages, performance or merit, salary compression, promotion, and return of administrators to faculty ranks, among others. Faculty within a given rank, with a similar time-in-rank, similar credentials, similar productivity over time, and qualifications, should be paid similarly and according to factors relevant to their academic position. The purpose of this policy is to ensure fair and equitable compensation for faculty by identifying and correcting salary disparities that are not attributable to normal factors such as those listed above. The intention of this policy is to support faculty retention, morale, and institutional excellence.*

Guiding Principles:

- *Equity adjustments are based on unjustified internal disparities, not routine salary variation.*
- *The process is performance-driven and does not impose limits for eligibility. That is, meritorious individuals can be considered for equity adjustments at any time, including in consecutive years.*
- *Unit leaders (direct reports such as directors, department chairs, associate deans, or deans, as appropriate) initiate nominations; college-level committees review and recommend.*
- *Final decisions rest with the dean, with concurrence of the provost based on merit and available funds.*

Point of clarification: the unit leader is who you hand your annual review in to

Eligibility:

- *All full-time faculty on 9- or 12-month contracts, including tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty. This includes librarians and archivists, who are classified as faculty.*
- *Faculty must demonstrate sustained excellence in performance of teaching, research, and/or service duties.*
- *Adjuncts, temporary faculty, and those with recent and/or multiple unsatisfactory performance evaluations will be excluded.*

Nomination Process - Unit Review

- *Initiated by unit leadership: self-nominations will not be considered.*
- *“Unit” is defined by the college dean in consultation with unit leaders (as defined above) as a group of faculty that share similarity by discipline, by department, by salary FOAP, or by other criteria.*
- *At the beginning of each salary cycle, central administration will provide data including rank and years in service for all eligible faculty as described above.*
 - *To identify salary disparities, salaries will be compared within units.*
 - *Salary disparities will be examined for evidence of inequity (why is any given salary low relative to the comparison group?).*
- *Nomination must include evidence of high performance and rationale for perceived inequity.*
 - *Step 1: Internal comparison of salary and time in position within unit to identify salaries that fall below expectation (is there a numerical disparity?).*
 - *Step 2: A review of annual performance evaluations (is equity adjustment justifiable based on performance or other factors?).*
 - *Step 3: Justified nominations are communicated from unit leader to the dean.*

Added comment by dean Beaupre: Units vary in size and it may be difficult to evaluate small units. A skeleton plan is in the works to address this issue.

Nomination Process - College-level review by the college leadership team to produce a short list

- *The dean and dean's leadership team will review nominations and supporting materials to produce a short list of the highest priority justified nominations for the college.*
 - *At this step, deans may use a variety of information to set priorities, including and not limited to discipline-specific information, CUPA, and other sources.*

- *Each dean will produce a ranked list of their highest priority equity needs, along with a recommended adjustment in each case.*
- *The results of the College-Level Review will be communicated by the dean to the provost as a recommendation.*
- *After receipt of the College-Level Review, the provost will approve the equity adjustments, deny them, or approve them with revisions.*

Funding and Implementation:

- *The degree to which deans can address salary inequity will depend on the annual availability of equity adjustment funds at the provost level.*
- *Equity adjustments will be budgeted as **hard-funded** expenses (not one-time bonuses or one-time extra pay).*
- *Large inequities may be corrected over multiple years, at the discretion of the dean, with concurrence of the provost.*
- *Equity adjustments will be independent of merit raises, tenure and promotion increases, cost of living adjustments, or external market forces.*

Protected Classification:

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to preclude or preempt a faculty member from initiating a complaint or grievance alleging that a salary disparity has arisen due to discrimination based on a protected classification, such as sex, race, religion, or disability.

Discussion:

Faculty salary issues can be best addressed by taking a hard look at the hard budget and how funds are allocated. Class sizes are another issue that other institutions deal with differently. We have a lot of small classes, therefore high educational costs.

Are chairs required to put equity issues up? No, they may not have equity issues. The dean's leadership team is a check and balance on this process and on the chairs. The deans evaluate all the salaries from their college and can identify issues.

Could there be issues of favoritism within units? The dean's leadership team is a check and balance on this process and on the chairs.

How does this address faculty retention if we don't address CUPA issues? Retention offers can be made before a faculty walks out the door. This is separate pool of money from the equity pool. However, the offer for a job at a different institution must be in writing and for a comparable position at a comparable institution.

How are we proposing to make classes bigger? It is a separate process from this.

What about faculty CIP code classification, as it affects CUPA? Can we petition to change that? It is set at hire based on your transcript. A faculty member would have to speak to their dean about that.

Protected classification question - can a person affected bring it up? This is a Title VII or Title IX issue first. Don't assume it can't be resolved at that level, report the issue.

Could we lose our high-level productive faculty if they don't see a chance to get an increase in salary? That is not per se an equity issue. If they threaten to leave, and have an offer from elsewhere (a written offer from an aspirant institution for a similar position), then it can be submitted as a retention offer. The chair or dean can match the other offer, but there is a process.

Will faculty be informed if they were nominated for an equity adjustment and what the outcome was? We would wait until the provost makes his decision before we notify faculty.

We are trying to find the best solution to a sticky problem.

This is the policy going forward.

Old Business

Updates - Dominique White will come and talk about Access and Accommodations

A request was made to report to faculty senate what is being discussed at SGOC.

Committee Reports and Updates

None.

4:05 pm adjourned by Amanda Mohler

Minutes recorded by Audrey Folsom

Revision #1

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