

Volume XVIII, Number 4
Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting
January 25, 2024

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Dr. KC Dolan at 2:00 PM. Roll was called by Secretary Paul Runnion. Those whose names are grayed out below were absent.

Lana Alagha, Venkat Allada, Stuart Baur, Matthew Burmeister, Devin Burns, Jeff Cawlfeld, Amitava Choudhury, Venkat Allada (for Steve Corns), Kathryn C. Dolan, William Fahrenholtz, Darin Finke, Daniel Fisher, Mark Fitch, Mary Gillis, Michael Gosnell, Mike Hilgers, Kelly Homan, Wenqing Hu, Ali Hurson, Umit Koylu, K. Krishnamurthy, Alanna Krolikowski, Bih-Ru Lea, Kelly Liu, Eun Soo Park, Jorge Porcel, Melissa Ringhausen, Paul Runnion, Chaman Sabharwal, Rachel Schneider, William Schonberg, Sahra Sedigh Sarvestani, Pourya Shamsi, Jeff Smith, Lia Sotiriou-Leventis, Shoaib Usman, Jee Ching Wang, David Westenberg, Derek Williamson, Alexey Yamilov, Maciej Zawodniok

During roll call, a moment of silence was held in memory of Dr. Ashok Midha.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 16, 2023 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes.

Motion passes.

III. President's Report

Faculty Senate President Dr. KC Dolan reported on the Intercampus Faculty Cabinet (IFC) meetings held via Zoom on December 4, 2023 and January 22, 2024. She highlighted discussions regarding funding projections and bills which are in various stages of planning/review in the state legislature. IFC also discussed IT issues, including information regarding software purchasing and the TikTok prohibition policy involving federally funded projects. She also mentioned that a white paper has been developed regarding shared governance which will be distributed to faculty and administration soon. The next IFC meeting will be March 4 in Columbia.

President Dolan discussed the ongoing campus strategic planning process and encouraged faculty to get involved as the process continues.

President Dolan discussed a recent Missouri Independent article regarding S&T's proposed involvement in the MOScholars program via the Kummer Institute Foundation. President Dolan requested that Provost Potts provide a brief update regarding this issue.

Provost Potts provided a brief summary of the MOScholars program, which is funded through a state tax credit program. He indicated that, when presented with initial information, campus administrators viewed this program as a potential opportunity which would be in alignment with S&T's goals of promoting STEM education among K-12 students. Provost Potts also indicated that the overhead in running this program now appears to be somewhat significant and acknowledged the existence of opposition to this program and issues with the way the program was started over the first year. The administration is continuing to explore this program and no decision has been made regarding whether to proceed with the program.

President Dolan announced that there will be a faculty lounge established in Toomey Hall in the current location of the Student Success Center once the SSC moves to its new location (hopefully by the end of February).

President Dolan also announced that the Chancellor has approved the new status of librarians, granting them NTT faculty status.

IV. Campus Reports

A. Staff Council

Staff Council President Jackie Sansone presented a brief report, announcing that Staff Day on May 30, 2024 will have a "Back to the 90s" theme.

B. Student Council

Jordan Ropp presented on behalf of Student Council. Student Council is looking for a new advisor since their current advisor is leaving S&T in June. Please reach out to Student Council President Sammi Young if you are interested in possibly being their new advisor.

C. Council of Graduate Students

No report

V. Special Topic – ADVANCE Grant Update

Dr. Jessica Cundiff, PI and Director of S&T's ADVANCE Program, presented an update about activities and opportunities surrounding the ADVANCE grant. The overall goal of the project is to increase representation, retention, and advancement of women faculty by making S&T a destination of choice where all faculty can thrive. Dr. Cundiff highlighted updates to the required search committee training, distinguished lecturers who have been or will be brought to campus, targeted support being provided to departments, and the Faculty Fellows program. She also encouraged everyone to visit <https://advance.mst.edu/> to learn more.

VI. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Campus Curricula (CC)

Dr. Petra DeWitt presented for the CC. The CC met on December 5, 2023 and reviewed 33 Course Change forms (CC forms), 8 Program Change forms (PC forms), and 5 Experimental Course forms (EC forms).

The CC moves that Faculty Senate approve the 33 CC forms and 8 PC forms.

Motion passes.

B. Public Occasions

The Public Occasions committee indicated that their anticipated motions were no longer needed at this time and, thus, they had no report.

C. Budgetary Affairs

Dr. Mark Fitch presented a “brief” report on behalf of Budgetary Affairs. He indicated that there had still been no changes to the FY24 budget and that it was still too early to report on the FY25 budget. Current referrals to the committee include questions regarding Advancing STEM funding, teaching lab funds, personnel and budget in upper administrative offices over the years, the impact of the departmental name change from GGPE to ESE, and the impacts of plateau tuition on drop/WD rates and grades. Dr. Fitch presented information on all of these and indicated that the committee planned to present a five-year look at the budget at the next meeting.

D. Academic Freedom and Standards

Dr. KC Dolan presented the following motion on behalf of the Academic Freedom and Standards committee:

Move that (1) Missouri S&T continue test-optional policy for the 2025-2026 academic year, and (2) the University administration review and consider the latest findings regarding (a) test scores as indicators of likely student success, and (b) possible equity issues if test scores are not required before it makes a final decision regarding this matter.

Information was provided regarding the existing test-optional policy and the policies of other institutions in Missouri and selected peer institutions nationwide. Data was presented regarding the cohorts which have been admitted to S&T under the current test-optional policy.

Concern was expressed that the data being presented was not forwarded with the motion prior to the meeting. It was noted that we must move quickly on this issue since

the Board of Curators has requested our feedback prior to their February meeting.

Another concern was expressed that the committee forwarded this motion to Faculty Senate without having familiarized themselves with recent articles (including in the New York Times) about potential negative ramifications of test optional policies.

Motion passes.

E. Administrative Review

Dr. Kelvin Erickson and Dr. Bih-Ru Lea presented on behalf of the Administrative Review committee. The proposed questionnaire design for this year's administrative review surveys was presented. Based on feedback, some questions will likely be split into multiple separate questions.

VII. Unfinished Business

None

VIII. New Business

None

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul N. Runnion, Secretary