**SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY**

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 20, 2019 – 3:10 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Hughes-Trigg Ballroom West**

**Present:** Adriana Aceves; Dick Barr; Sreekumar Bhaskaran; Rhonda Blair; \*Michael Braun; Marcus Butts; Jing Cao; Michael Connolly; Frank Coyle; Carlos Davila; Dennis Foster; Amar Gande; Kevin Hanlon; Francesca Jones; \*Paul Krueger; \*James Lee; Tamara Lewis; Steven Lindquist; Cheryl Mendenhall; \*Brian Molanphy; Beth Newman; \*Dayna Oscherwitz, presiding; Saltuk Ozerturk; John Potter; Abby Pruitt; Meredith Richards; \*Tim Rosendale; Elizabeth Russ; Susana Solera Adoboe; Herve Tchumkam; Aurelie Thiele; Candance Walkington; Kathleen Wellman; \*Matthew Wilson; John Wise; Yunkai Zhou

**Ex Officio:**

**Visitors:** Doug Reinelt; Jim Quick; Steve Currall; Sheri Kunovich; Daniel Eady; Whitney Henry; Students of the Simmons class

1. The meeting was called to order by President Dayna Oscherwitz at 3:10 PM.
2. The agenda was approved.
3. The minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting on February 6, 2019 were approved.
4. SMU Provost Steven Currall opened his address by introducing Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success Sheri Kunovich who proceeded to present her vision on student academic success, updates and plans.
5. Associate Provost Kunovich shared data on attrition. The current third semester retention rate is 91%, with 9% of students not returning, 3% have a GPA higher than a 3.5, and 1/3 have a GPA lower than 2.4. One of the objectives for the next academic year is to collect more qualitative data. The retention rate goal is 95%. The programs that have been implemented to achieve this goal are: new student academic support programs, making sure students do not miss their registration window and extending academic support to undecided students before they are on academic probation.

Associate Provost Kunovich updated the Senate about how she is addressing gaps in support:

* 1. by providing the DASS office with more staff, additional space, a new accommodation software system, and training faculty to enable them as a support system. All these measures will speed up the intake process, and provide assistance to the mental health challenges SMU faces.
  2. by implementing new tutoring programs, that will encourage high achieving students to tutor peers, she requested the academic units consider raising the salary for students workers, currently low compared to other institutions, and she said she is working with Human Resources to create a comprehensive policy, that will allow for a more efficient coordination with departments.
  3. by supporting faculty advisor capacity and making faculty advisors job easier.
  4. by facilitating conversations, and collaboration among departments and

University offices to improve the Honors and Hilltop Programs to establish a synergy and a more coherent strategy for high achieving students.

Professor Abby Pruitt, on behalf of the Faculty Senate, thanked Associate Provost Kunovich for her work and contributions, and congratulated her for all her accomplishments in such a short period of time.

1. SMU Provost Steven Currall joined the Faculty Senate in congratulating Associate Provost Kunovich and highlighted the importance of having an office focusing on academic success.

He updated the Senate on the status of the Common Curriculum, that pending approval from the Board of Trustees, will be implemented Fall 2021.

Provost Currall presented his vision for SMU, and how he sees the University’s role and responsibility as an engine for innovation, not only in higher education, but also in the city of Dallas, and as a catalyst for upward economical mobility, opportunity, social accountability and societal improvement. He also brought attention to the momentous time at SMU, given the fact that this vision is shared by President Turner, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and the faculty, as showcased in the last Spring Faculty Meeting. Provost Currall talked about how this vision is being implemented with the following initiatives:

* 1. East Campus Project will advance SMU academic mission and profit and non-for-profit entrepreneurship for faculty and students.
  2. Innovation Seed Fund that emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches, progress accountability, through objective metrics and long term impact.
  3. Graduate School

1. Associate Vice President for Research Jim Quick updated the Faculty Senate on the status of the Graduate School, and its implementation. Several members of the Faculty Senate asked questions and expressed concern about MFA programs not being included.
2. Provost Currall shared information about the status of the Data Science Institute, and provided some more updates of new initiatives and resources for the upcoming year.
3. Professor Abby Pruitt asked Provost Currall about the status of the faculty request for a better software for the Faculty Activity Reports (FAR). Faculty had asked for a more user friendly, less time-consuming FAR software, that will also better represent the contribution of Non-Tenure track faculty to the university.
4. Provost Currall closed his address to the Faculty Senate by emphasizing the importance of shared governance, and the value of formal and informal conversations between the administration and the Faculty, as a way to enhance and improve SMU.
5. The Faculty Senate meeting was adjourned at 5:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susana Solera Adoboe