

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

November 5, 2019
101 Olscamp Hall

CALL TO ORDER: 2:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Quorum present.

CHAIR REMARKS

Chair of Faculty Senate: Jenn Stucker

Welcome senators and guests to the third Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year 2019-2020.

Thank you for taking time out of your day to be here.

We expect to vote today on the +/- Grading Policy, and appreciate all of the work that Matt Lavery, Andy Alt, and Alex Goberman have devoted to preparing this policy, and FAQ, and related documents, and providing opportunities for discussion.

The Agenda was purposely kept light for this meeting to allow time for discussion and voting on The +/- Grading Policy. If this meeting adjourns before 4:30, everyone is encouraged to stay for an open discussion about the Faculty Role in Governance and the Strategic Plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

President: Dr. Rodney Rogers

I have three talking points that I would like to cover today:

1. **Capital Bill** – The Legislature has made funding available for capital requests for the upcoming biennium. BGSU is working to maximize our funding requests as well as requesting Capital Bill Community Projects through several partnerships.
2. **Enrollment** – Fall 2019 15th day enrollment data from the Ohio Department of Education has been released. BGSU is one of only 3 of the public comprehensive universities in the State of Ohio with enrollment increases this fall. BGSU bucks the trend with the largest increase (just under 2%). This speaks to what happens on the campus, and the efforts to increase the yield of students. Enrollment is key for obtaining the University's resources, and longer-term trends indicate a continuing decline in the number of high school students.
3. **Strategic Plan** - Faculty Senate officers have engaged with the Administration in conversations around the Strategic Plan, and I am pleased about the open discussion occurring after this Faculty Senate meeting. Of the 15 strategic initiatives that rose from broad engagement of the university community, 3 imperatives are critical this year.
 1. Imperative 1: We must be intentional about increasing and redefining student success to support students and achieve our retention goal of 80-82%. Enrollment is critical to BGSU's future. We have talked about the importance of attracting new populations of students by offering programs and services that align with the needs of post-traditional students. We need to do this in a focused way. However, 80% of our enrollment is undergraduate students in the 18-22-year-old range. Given the projected future declines in this population, it is imperative for us to differentiate why BGSU undergraduate education is unique, and what value we can add to enhance our students' experiences and their transition to life after BGSU. Provost Whitehead will be adding more information about this critical imperative.
 2. Imperative 2: Enhance culture to support diversity and belonging. The new Division of Diversity and Belonging under the leadership of Jennifer McCary will be leading our efforts campus-wide.
 3. Imperative 3: Achieving excellence and efficiency is the imperative we will all be working towards to make sure we remain a good value to our students and have the

resources to achieve our initiatives.

I look forward to discussions with anyone, and to answering any questions that any of you might have. I encourage robust discussion this afternoon on The +/- Grading Policy and I assure you that your vote will be honored.

Senior Vice President/Provost: Dr. Joe Whitehead

I am still a relative newcomer to BGSU, at least for a short time longer. I have been studying the research focus areas at BGSU by reviewing the 2018 online documents regarding Objective #2 feedback session themes Achieving National Recognition in Five Areas.

1. It appears to me that there are three pillars of research that should be elevated to national prominence. As their prominence helps BGSU overall:
 - a. Photo Sciences
 - b. Social Demography
 - c. Water Quality Research
2. Strategic Hiring to bring graduate and undergraduate students better experiences in research. Undergraduate student research opportunity is a high-impact practice that increases recruitment and retention.
3. Graduate students as mentors to undergraduate students
4. There have been some on-campus meetings with the Vice President for Research and Economic Engagement, and there has apparently been some miscommunication as a result of these meetings. We are working to resolve these issues.

Graduate Student Senate: Robin Hershkowitz, GSS President: The next GSS meeting will include voting on a Professional Development Resolution that will include a wide range of options asking for additional resources for students and faculty. There is an opening for a two-year position on the BGSU Board of Trustees, if anyone knows of a potential nominee and would like to talk with them to determine possible interest in the position.

Undergraduate Student Government: Alex Chiarelott, Chair of the USG Academic Affairs Committee: I am here to represent the student voice on The +/- Grading Policy. The majority of students have opposed the proposed +/- Grading Policy during the past two years. The first survey of students was administered to 1,100 students, and the second survey was administered to a select group of about 50 students. The results of both surveys indicate that 85% of students are opposed to the proposed policy for the following reasons:

1. Each professor will be free to use different grading scales, since the policy will be optional.
2. BGSU is ranked #3 in the country for teaching, and is highly ranked for Student Satisfaction. Other institutions should be more like us, not vice-versa. We succeed without this policy.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chair Stucker: Now it is time to move forward with The +/- Grading Policy. It has been under development and consideration since 2016. We can vote for both the Graduate and Undergraduate Policies on one ballot. A two-thirds majority vote of all members present and voting will be required to approve the motion. Is there a motion on The +/- Grading Policy?

MOTION: Matt Lavery: I move to accept both the Graduate and Undergraduate +/- Grading Policies as Presented. Allen Rogel 2nd.

DISCUSSION:

1. **MOTION to AMEND:** Peter Blass: I move to add "A+" to the Undergraduate Policy paragraph B1, and "A+ = 4.00 points to paragraph 6." Holly Myers 2nd.

Comments in Favor: Allen Rogel spoke in favor of the amendment on behalf of the Physics Department who views this as an opportunity to publicly recognize outstanding student work.

Comments Opposed: None

Question: Fei Weisstein asked Peter Blass why the amendment is only for the Undergraduate Grading Policy

Response: Peter Blass replied that he is only familiar with the Undergraduate Grading Policy, not with the Graduate Policy, so doesn't feel that he should include the Graduate Policy in the amendment.

Voting by Hand: Amendment needs simple majority to pass. Inconclusive, so go to written ballots.

Voting by Ballot Result: 28 in favor; 37 opposed; 4 abstain. Amendment not

approved.

2. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ON THE MAIN MOTION:

Comments Opposed: Carol Heckman spoke with others who feel that some students are already obsessed with grades. In light of the fact that many employers are currently looking for people with certain skill sets rather than degrees, our value added in this case can be to de-emphasize grades.

Comments in Favor: Allen Rogel: Has polled his constituency and they are in favor since grades are a main object in the Physics Department, and the refined grading scale will allow a more accurate description of the ability of the students.

CALL THE QUESTION:

A 2/3rds majority of all voting required. White Ballots. 21 in favor; 47 opposed; 1 abstain. Motion NOT passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Stucker announced that the Faculty Senate Spring Elections for Senate Standing Committees will require elections for 29 expiring seats: 6 SEC, 6 CAA, 6CPA, 4 Adj Fac, 2 FAAC, 2 ComCom, 2 A&B, 1 Vice Chair of Senate.

Chair Stucker expressed her agreement with the statement, "The real work happens on committees," and encouraged everyone to think about their roles in the Senate, to look at the list of Committee members on the Senate website, and to reach out to committee members about their experiences on their committees.

REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES: None

REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY STANDING COMMITTEES: None

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES: None

ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

Allen Rogel/Issue: There is an omission in the Undergraduate Grading Policy about the "ATN" grade affecting students who never attend a class they are enrolled in, or stop attending a class, and receive a mark of "ATN." Where are the "policies and regulations" that cover the ATN, and why is this information not in the Grading Policies policy since this is where the faculty would sensibly look for information on a grade assignment option that appears in People Soft when final grades are assigned. This item is tabled until the December Senate meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Matt Lavery; Fei Weisstein 2nd
Meeting adjourned 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted: