

**Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting
November 13, 2020
Submitted by Danny Collum, Secretary**

1. Call to Order

Meeting began 9:01 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda [5 minute time limit]

Agenda approved as offered.

3.

Senator Gyawali reported that APC has been working on the issues of faculty evaluations and a pass/fail grading policy in the current pandemic situation. As a result of that work he put forward these APC-approved action items.

a. APC_20-21_03 (Optional Faculty Evaluations for Fall 2020)

This action item calls for faculty evaluations to be conducted this semester for the purposes of giving faculty feedback on their teaching and collecting data for the university; however, those evaluations will not be required for tenure and/or promotion applications or for annual evaluations.

Much of the discussion revolved around the need for faculty to have feedback on their teaching, especially when we are having to try new things in an unfamiliar mode. APC members replied that faculty would still get that feedback; it would simply become optional, instead of required, for tenure, promotion and evaluation processes. An objection was also raised that colleagues in the tenure/promotion process could be trusted to allow for the unusual circumstances of this semester in reviewing course evaluations from this year. APC members responded that faculty may find themselves being reviewed for tenure/promotion some years from now when there would probably be administrators reviewing the application who weren't even at KSU in 2020.

After this discussion, the item was put to a vote and passed unanimously.

b. Pass/Fail option discussion

Senator Gyawali reported that APC had gathered information on midterm grades for the current semester with midterm grades of previous semesters and found that the percentage of students failing at midterm was significantly higher than in previous semesters. The committee also met with the provost, registrar and SGA president to gather their views on the pass/fail option for this semester. After this process the Academic Policy Committee passed an action item calling for the institution, only for the Fall 2020 semester, of a pass/fail grading option for any course where it is not prohibited by accreditation standards or other conditions. In the action item passed by the committee, the "Pass" would be for a grade of "D" or higher for undergraduate courses and "C" or higher for graduate courses, and the deadline for a student to choose the pass/fail option would be December 1, 2020. When this item was presented to the Senate, guest Dr. Ken Andries objected that "C" could never be accepted as a passing grade for a graduate course. A number of senators agreed to that objection and also questioned the wisdom of accepting "D" as a pass for any undergraduate course. This would mean students would be able to pass courses in their major with "D"-level performance and get credit for prerequisite courses that usually require a "C." Senators objected that this could start us down a slippery slope to lessened academic rigor. Another senator noted the high failure rate at midterm and noted that if we don't accommodate students in this unusual time, we may not have enough students enrolling for the institution to survive.

One senator pointed out that at some institutions students may receive "Pass," "Pass-D" or "Fail." Registrar Yolanda Benson said that this would be impossible in our online grades system. The system only allows us to use standard grades ("A," "B," "C," "D," "F") or P/F.

President Keeler put out a poll on the issue of grade level for a "Pass" which showed that senators participating unanimously favored "B" as the "Pass" grade for graduate courses. "C" for an undergraduate "Pass" was also favored by a margin of 19 to 2.

The APC action item was amended to reflect this preference of the faculty, and was then passed with a vote of 17 in favor, four opposed and two abstentions.

8. Curriculum Committee report [15 minute time limit]

a. Curriculum changes for Physical Education (Exercise and Sports Studies) Program

Senator Wang presented an action item to add

Thompson said representatives from Gray & Associates will

james #2
Joe Moffett
John Sedlacek
Frederick A. Williams Jr., Ph.D.
David Shabazz
Deanna McGaughey- Summers

Debbra Tate
Ban
Mirta Rimolo
Keturah Nix
Whitni Milton