

Faculty Senate Meeting

11 November 2023

Senators present: Peter Whiting, Erin Reynolds, Ashley Carter, Jessica Mason, Nick Rhew, Alisa Holen, Chad Tew (Alternate for Brandon Fields), Chase Smith, Jiaying Liu, Kyle Mara, Susan Ely, Shane White

Additional attendees: Dr. Shelly Blunt, Dr. Amy Chan Hilton, Gloria Butz

Held in BEC Boardroom



- Called to order: 2:32pm
- Minutes from 13 October were amended to correct the end time to 3:05pm rather than 4:05pm.
- Senate Chair Report from Kyle:
 - HR changes via email need to be reviewed. Kyle made the reminder that all employees need to go through open enrollment and choose their health care within the deadline (11/17/23).
 - Board of Trustees update from November 2, 2023 mtg -
 - BFA of Art was approved for Fall 2024
 - Wellness Center construction is back on track for Spring 2024
 - VP Steve Bridges and Sarah Will are planning on attend the December 1st Faculty Senate meeting to discuss drug testing policy and implementation.
 - Dr. Brian Cross will attend the Faculty Senate meeting on December 1st to receive input about online learning tools.
 - Provost Council Meeting Update –
 - The Graduate Council is proposing a new inclement weather policy impacting online or hybrid courses. The proposal includes a provision for online classes to meet if campus closed for inclement weather. Additional discussion is required before the final proposal moves forward to the Provost.
 - SLATE and Watermark on target for implementation
 - The Office of the President has been asked to set a Town Hall date. It will be between the beginning of the Spring 2024 semester and spring break of 2024. There will be a process for soliciting questions and selected questions will be given to President and the VPs in advance of the Town Hall.
- Provost Report from Shelly:
 - Dr. Blunt clarified that at the Board of Trustees meeting the BFA was approved and the proposal will now go to the Higher Learning Commission for approval before implementation. Additionally, two new humanities minors were shared with the board.
 - USI is searching for Executive Director for Analytics, replacing the Chief Data Officer position and hoping to have someone in place in the Spring.

- A grant was submitted to Indiana Commission of Higher Education for College Success Coach. It was recommended that two positions be requested, which were approved and now ads are being placed to hire two Success Coaches that will support first generation students. It is hoped that these positions will be filled by the end of the year.
- The Quality Initiative for the Higher Learning Commission was completed and is ready to be submitted with a focus is career planning and placement, including areas such as graduate data collection, micro credentials, digital badging and others.
- The Provost asked Senators to encourage their colleges to emphasize the USI survey to all our graduates, in addition to any surveys the individual departments may have.
- Articulation agreements with Community Colleges are often out of date. Provost is encouraging all departments to evaluate all articulation agreements with Community College partners and follow-up with any out-of-date agreements.
- A demonstration of SLATE was conducted at the Provost Council. SLATE can be used by all faculty advisors for advising, notes, and there will be training in the Spring. Formal application for graduation will be a workflow within SLATE. As many forms as possible within the Registrars office will move into SLATE over time for better traceability and workflow.
- Jason Hardgrave gave a demo of Watermark. Faculty annual report and tenure and promotion will move to Watermark over time. Jason and Amy Chan Hilton will be testing these features out and forming a pilot group in the Spring.
- New Business:
- Charge 2023_15_USI_Benefits_Discussion:
 - Questions and concerns about the change in benefits was brought forward by constituents. The action requested by the charge was that the Faculty Senate discuss it. It was noted that the Faculty Senate has a standing committee on Employee Benefits which was not included in this process prior to implementation.
 - A motion to change the Economic Benefits committee was made and seconded. After some discussion, the motion was postponed indefinitely.
 - A motion to formalize an annual meeting between HR and the Faculty Senate to inquiry into future or soon to be pending changes that impact faculty. It was seconded and discussed. It was passed unanimously.
 - Charge 2023_15 was moved to be closed. It was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Brainstorming for Spring Meeting training sessions
 - Travel Refresher
 - SOAR
 - SLATE?
 - Watermark?
 - Retirement planning session

- Zotero for research
 - ChatGPT – Practical Tips for Classrooms
- Next Meeting: December 1, 2023
- Meeting adjourned with no additional business to consider: 4:04pm

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: _____ (Optional)

Date of Submission: 11/02/2023

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Erin Reynolds
2. Jessica Mason
3. Ashley Carter

Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

1. Charge Title:

USI Benefits

2. Background:

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

Announcement that USI insurance is changing to UHC. Did faculty have any input into the announced insurance/benefits change for 2024? Faculty should have had some input into the proposed change before just being informed that it was happening. Why wasn't a survey done to ask faculty and staff if they perhaps preferred the option of a rate increase with the Anthem insurance still an option? This is a major change and the majority of employees should be entitled to input and/or more information prior to just an announcement that impacts both employees and family members.

3. Action Requested and Desired Result:

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

Would like Faculty Senate to discuss whether faculty should have input into benefit changes that impact employees and their families. Pursue as appropriate.

4. Potential Resources:

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:

5. Senate Comments:

6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:

7. Action Taken by the Administration: