

## **Polk State College Faculty Senate Minutes**

**Date: August 8, 2024**

**TIME: 3:30 pm**

**Meeting Held via Zoom**

**(Steering Committee Meets Following the Senate Meeting.)**

**\*\*Link to supporting documents/reports without PIE access on last page.**

### **OFFICERS:**

Bill Caldecutt: President

Anthony Cornett: Vice President – Winter Haven Campus

Jess Jones: Vice President – Lakeland Campus

Misty Sparling: Secretary

Greg Harris: Parliamentarian

Chris Bothelo: Senator at Large

Amy Bratten: Administrative Liaison

**Attending Senators:** Dirk Valk, Gwyn Phillips, Johnny Stewart, Anthony Cornett, Greg Harris, Kim Hess, Jess Jones, Misty Sparling, Kara Larson, Heather Childree, John Woodward, John Barbaret, Pal Good, Lorrie Jones, Lee Childree, Andrew Coombs, Chris Bothelo, and Michael Derry

**Faculty Attendees:** Laura Brimer, Jamie Haischer, Susie Moerschbacher, Jacqueline Gray, Niqui Pringle-Brown, Jennifer Shaw, Nerissa Felder, Herbert Nold, Latrice Moore, Melissa Shapiro, Nat King, Pamela Jones, Salma Nawlo, Tristan Davidson, Dawn Drake, Gregory Johnson, Esmirna Santos, Aaron Morgan, Joseph Cook, Beverly Woolery, Bulmuo Maaku, Cary Gardell, Consuela Bonney, and Christopher Johnson

**Presenting Guests and Others:** Angela Falconetti, President of Polk State College; Tamara Sakagawa, Vice President of Communication and Public Affairs; Amy Bratten, Provost and Administrative Liaison for the Senate

### **I. Approval of Minutes:**

The *Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes: May 13, 2024*, were reviewed. The *Senate Objectives* portion had an addition requested by Jess Jones to add “Screening Committee Issues.” Jess Jones made a motion to approve; this was seconded by Anthony Cornett. The Minutes were approved.

### **II. Agenda Approval: *Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda: August 8, 2024***

A motion was made to approve the *Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda: August 8, 2024*. Greg Harris motioned to approve, and Jess Jones seconded. The agenda was accepted.

### **III. Guest Speaker: Dr. Angela Falconetti**

The President welcomed everyone back for the fall semester. She thanked all who attended Convocation and the faculty meeting that followed. She said she was looking forward to learning the Senate’s priorities for this Academic Year. As an extension of Convocation’s faculty meeting, she discussed the contention regarding the presentation of the Financial Aid Audit and the issues with Banner training. She said that Dr. Bratten will provide the Faculty Senate with an update regarding these matters.

#### IV. Faculty Senate Officer and Liaison Reports

- A. **Faculty Senate President's Report:** Bill Caldecutt [*Note: This meeting was recorded.*]  
*In the interest of time, Bill explained that his report would have been mostly covered by recent emails and he will send updated reports before the next meeting.*
- B. **Lakeland Campus Vice President's Report:** Jess Jones (none)
- C. **Winter Haven Campus Vice President's Report:** Anthony Cornett (none)
- D. **Parliamentarian's Report:** Greg Harris (none)
- E. **Administrative Liaison's Report:** Amy Bratten
1. **Faculty Banner Training:** This was supposed to be ready and available for faculty at Convocation but was not. A 2-minute video will be sent for people to get started.
  2. **The Faculty Duties, Quick Guides, and Information Booklet:** This item is to eventually be autoloading into every computer through the network. Faculty members must bring their computers to campus occasionally for automatic updates to this file, per Mary Clark.
  3. **Attendance Reporting:** This impacts federal funding. During the faculty meeting, Cody Moyer used the term, "impersonating," which is an industry-specific term in online learning platform management.
  4. **Rules and Procedures:** There are over 200 College Procedures and DBOT Rules [backlogged from five years of the review process] that need review this year and these must be done quickly. Amy clarified that there is still no plan to accomplish this. She said it will be discussed at the President's Staff meeting.
  5. **Faculty Salary Study:** Amy said the President directed her and Stacy Carey to review the vendor proposals and quotes for the third-party consultant [for the DBOT-requested faculty compensation review] and to make a recommendation and they did [faculty were not involved in this process]. The President accepted those recommendations. The College hired Evergreen Solutions, LLC., which will work with a Resource Team Chaired by Administration (Dean Manning).  
Discussion ensued:
    - ***Q: Was the selection of the third-party consultant done with collaboration from faculty? For example, Bill, did you have anything to do with that selection process?***  
Bill responded that he did not.
    - ***Q: Is there a reason in this "collaborative process" that faculty were not given any input on this, Amy?***
      - Amy responded that her best answer is that she and Stacy were asked for their input [by the President]. She said that there was a quick turnaround expected, and that '*they needed to respect the fact that faculty aren't working during the summer, which she has been reminded about a lot.*'
      - Jess responded that while faculty were not under contract, clearly those who volunteered to be active in the study were hoping to be involved in the process and were mindful about actually being able to work during the summer --even though we are not on a contract. It seems counterintuitive to have a "collaborative process" that is then excluding faculty from the process.
      - Bill explained that he was available and has been working for the College the entire summer, so that should not have been a hold-up.

- Amy expressed that it was only one facet, and that this directive came from the DBOT directly to the President. So, the President outlined this process and asked for Amy's and Stacy's input, but at the DBOT meeting, the President did say that the vendor will work directly with the Resource Team. So, the faculty are not 'excluded' from this process. The faculty involvement will begin once the vendor starts the work.
- ***Q: Wasn't there any way that faculty could have seen the applications from the other third-party vendors beforehand, because what you [Administration] were looking for may not have been what the faculty felt was in their best interest.***

Amy said she would share the documents with faculty by the end of the week. She said the President worked with each of the Board members to make sure the College was headed in the right direction.
- ***Q: Where will the documents be shared?***
  - Amy said they will be sent to Bill and Kim, and sent through the Resource Team, for distribution.
  - Bill added that he has heard from some faculty members that although they weren't involved in the selection process of the third-party vendor, they would still like to see the proposals the College received. He requested these proposals formally last week and was told that the faculty were not going to be able to see those. There has been a bit of contention [regarding collaboration and transparency], and this occurring so early in the study's process is concerning. Also, if the proposals from the vendors are made available after the selection of the vendor, then that is also not positive.
- ***Q: Good money was spent on the Gallagher Report. Faculty did not have access to that report until many months after [pay increases were made]. Why is the College spending additional money on a different report? Gallagher gave their recommendations [which were not used], so why is the College getting a second consultant within two years Is this due to inflation?***
  - Bill said that he could not answer that question. He reported his understanding that a decision to do a study was made by the Board at last month's meeting, based on a recommendation from the President. The decision was the result of individual meetings between the President and each Board member. At the DBOT meeting, the President gave a brief verbal summary of the outcomes of those individual meetings, and the Trustees then voted in favor of bringing in a third-party consultant. The Trustees did give some rationale for this vote, as they indicated that they wanted to have 'everyone on the same page' with regard to how faculty are paid and 'have buy-in from everybody.' They mentioned a desire to have a better understanding of how the faculty pay system works.
  - Aaron expressed that [in his remembrance of the meeting] he believes there was some confusion as to what Steps are and what the requirements for receiving a Step are. Faculty at Polk State College should be aware that some colleges have moved away from the Step Pay System, which is not something Polk State faculty have asked for. According to DBOT 2.24 regarding shared governance, faculty need to be aware that having two salary studies in two years might have more to do with evaluating the

Step Pay System for an alternate. Aaron stated that Bill made a great presentation about the Step Pay System at the Budget Council meeting, and he recommends that anyone interested in learning more about that system should reach out to Bill for this presentation. He indicated that it seemed unclear what the Board members felt about the Step Pay System.

- Jamie expressed that there may be a misunderstanding of how Steps [in a Step Pay System] work within Administration and the Board. Going to another compensation system will not solve a problem of funding.
- Also, Jamie noted that there is no reason for the College to rely on consultants' recommendations and data. There are data on Florida institution salaries on *Factbook*. This is back-dated nearly two years, and this must be kept in mind when applying the data, but there is also a federal database within one year that is very good. The major issue is that Gallagher--and likely Evergreen--will not address the effects of inflation, and data on inflation will be discussed later [**Note:** *Jamie provided a summary of inflationary changes later in the meeting (Section VIII. B)*].
- Jennifer Shaw indicated that she had looked some other institution's "tiered systems" (i.e., as their pay system). For instance, each five years, a person receives an increased increment in pay and title. This system would end up costing a lot more money to this college, particularly because there are so many who have been here for a very long time and have so many years of experience. Proper use of the current Step Pay System would be more financially feasible for the College.
- ***Discussion ensued regarding the Step Pay System and other systems.***
  - With regard to any change to the pay system, Bill explained that during the last DBOT meeting, the Career Employees were removed from a Step Pay System, and there was a replacement of some type, although he did not know the particulars. The idea of moving faculty off the Step Pay System has been suggested by several Administrators at several President's Staff meetings and during other meetings and College conversations. ***Bill said he has been consistent in his support of using the Step Pay System the way it was intended*** [i.e., following the published *Faculty Salary Schedule* with its stated directive that each year is equal to one additional Step, and to apply raises for cost of living equally among all employee groups when there is funding]. He said if there is any appetite for moving off the Step Pay System, that would have to be a universally collaborative effort, and he would prefer such an effort to be faculty-driven, per the concept of shared governance. Personally, he said that *his opinion* is that faculty should use the pay system they want.
  - Bill explained: The Step Pay System functions as an incentivizing program that rewards people for their time [accrued institutional knowledge] and loyalty at the College with a small increase for each year of service [i.e., most Steps earned at Polk State are non-transferrable to other institutions]. The Step System, used properly, is a valuable thing for both the College and faculty. Any move away from that system would be fundamental, and any change to "ranks" in the *Professor* title would change the shape of our round table [**Note:** *Currently, all faculty at Polk*

*State are equal to each other, and all share the same title of “Professor” by DBOT Rule].*

- One of The College’s greatest strengths is all faculty are equal. Bill explained he would be very hesitant to adopt a system that would change that—all faculty would have to agree to such a change. He stated that he has maintained the College should work to fix the Step Pay System and use it as intended.
- He explained that he expects an alternative to brought forth with this study to move faculty off the Step Pay System during the process of addressing the consultant’s recommendations. He has reviewed a few previous Evergreen studies [from other colleges] and they tend to look at colleges with ranks and ranges—things we do not have—and to make recommendations that follow this structure. Bill said he wouldn't be surprised if Evergreen recommends this system. Bill said faculty should be aware of this, as such a change would require all to be collaboratively unanimous in the decision, if that is ultimately what we want our system to look like.
- Currently all faculty in all areas are treated equals-- agreeing to do otherwise would be a fundamental change. *It would change our atmosphere and culture.* It would change the College and faculty as a group. A decision to change from the Step Pay System *would have to come from within the faculty,* instead of outside of it.
- ***Q: Do you think there is an understanding of how Steps work between the faculty and the Administration?***

Bill said, not at this time. Administration has altered the definition of a Step on the published *Faculty Salary Schedule*---several times--but has not collaborated with faculty when doing so. [***Note: The definition is even different for Polk State faculty using various Salary Schedules for various contract days.***].
- ***Q: For true transparency in decision-making, will faculty be allowed to vote on any decisions related to changes to the pay system?***

Bill explained that currently, faculty are still waiting to find out what the third-party salary-review process will be, as there has been no involvement and no faculty or Resource Team meetings to date. What he was told by Amy is that faculty have three responsibilities through the faculty Resource Team:

  - Identify people to be interviewed by the third party.
  - Provide documentation requested by the third party.
  - Provide feedback on the draft of the final third-party report.

At that point, the report moves to the President, then she makes recommendations to the DBOT.

Amy agreed with this summary of the project.
- ***Q: When the final recommendation is made, will the faculty be allowed to have a voice by voting on it?***

Amy responded that she was not sure that we had made it far enough along in the process to determine that.
- ***Q: In light of true transparency, this should not be done like the Gallagher Report where the faculty were not allowed to see the consultant’s report or***

***recommendations until all the decisions were done. How were the members chosen to serve on the Resource Team?***

Amy said she was not here during the Gallagher Study, but the President has said that the vendor will work directly with the faculty.

- ***Discussion ensued on transparency and trust.***

One person commented that faculty were not given information, the *Gallagher Salary Report*, or its recommendations, so it is difficult to trust this current process, as faculty have been left out of the selection process for the vendors.

Another stated that faculty have now been told they cannot have a copy of the vendor proposals, and faculty were not allowed to see copies of the proposals before the company was selected--or be a part of the selection process.

- ***Q: Will the costs associated with each proposal and consulting company be disclosed for transparency?***

Amy said, yes.

6. Further Questions regarding Campus Operations:

- ***Q: At the last Faculty Senate meeting, Collegiate faculty were told they would receive the updated/corrected Collegiate Faculty Handbook for review at the July retreat. We still have not seen it. Can you update us?***

- Amy said she told the principals to pause work on the handbook. The College is now 'okay with not having one, since we are covered by Polk State Rules and Procedures.'

- Misty indicated this was the same conclusion Bill had, as 'is there even a need for the high school to have a separate handbook if the faculty are college faculty?'

- Amy apologized for not mentioning this change of plan at the Collegiate faculty retreat.

- ***Q: Are you [Amy] planning to give faculty more information about the Attendance Audit?*** [per Section IV.E(3)]

- Amy responded that she would speak with Susan Morgan and her team today, and then meet with the deans to provide more information [regarding the upsetting Faculty Meeting discussion]. For now, faculty should not change what they are doing.

- Bill added that he spoke to many after the faculty meeting, and *no one* indicated confusion about the term "impersonating." Instead, faculty were negatively surprised to find out that --rather than just asking a professor, "When was the last day this student attended?"-- faculty found out today that people have been going into their courses to attempt to find out information on their own. That is a bit like finding out that someone had gone into your office at night and went through your filing cabinet. It is not so much the *what* or *why*. It is that we don't treat each other this way, and the way things transpired today is not how faculty should have been informed about this practice. That probably led to the sense of discomfort that permeated the meeting.

- Amy responded that she understood.

- ***Q: A person said, according to the Distance Learning Committee, if the professor withdraws a student from Canvas, then he or she no longer has access to the data.***

Another faculty member corrected this statement: A professor can still get this information by simply adding the student back into Canvas (using the student's email) to find any dates, attendance, grades, or data needed. It is only once a semester is over that this cannot be done anymore.

- ***Q: Another point made that surprised many was that Cody's team are able to get into the instructor's third-party software. A lot of professors use software from MacMillan, Pearson, and Cengage, and Cody said they could access that, which was disconcerting. Can they really do that? Have they done it? Why would they do it?***

- Bill said that people were unsure if Cody said this or not at the meeting. That is something faculty could use some clarity on as well.
- Johnny Stewart added that if the professor's course is linked into Canvas and Cengage [or a third-party application], then Learning Technology can go into these tools and have access to all the instructor's materials. If the application is not linked into Canvas, they can't.
- Bill stated that if the instructor has not linked the applications to Canvas, then there is no point having Cody or Learning Management go into the professor's course to try to find information, as that individual will not be able to see everything needed to accurately report on the student.
- Johnny stated that this was also his first thought as he heard this contentious information during the meeting.
- Bill indicated that accuracy in the audit information seems to circle back to courtesy and just asking for the information from the professor.
- Several senators expressed concern that Cody's team and others were going into courses without reaching out ahead of time. Some stated that odd things had happened where a course [its views or file system] had been altered between uses and that was disconcerting.
- Another senator expressed concerns over how part of a course became inexplicably unlinked, and originally thought it was a "Genesis issue." Now the person is reconsidering that it might have been someone else in the course that caused this disruption.
- Many indicated it would be helpful to have a prior email if a person is planning on going into a faculty member's Canvas course.
- Niqui suggested inviting Cody Moyer back to have a conversation and address some of these concerns.
- Amy and Bill agreed that would be the next step.

**V. Committee Updates: None**

**VI. Old Business: (*Faculty Senate List of Objectives*)**

**VII. New Business: None**

**VIII. Business from the Floor:**

A. Items of Concern:

1. A faculty member expressed continued concerns with lack of shared governance, transparency, and academic integrity at the institution, as there is little shared governance and zero transparency.
2. A faculty member explained that there was a record of 16 straight months where the President did not meet with the President's Staff [for decision making]. After the faculty member met with the President regarding these concerns, the President's secretary inserted four more "meeting minutes" online. This lack of communication and shared governance with faculty is the reason there was concern expressed about the DBOT meeting where trustees were surprised that faculty said were under market pay, which was proven by the *Gallagher Salary Study Report*. The faculty member asked the Faculty Senate to send someone to the DBOT meeting for the purpose of getting on the agenda and communicating what Steps are [in the Faculty Step Pay System] and what the faculty's concerns are so that the DBOT may be better informed about the issues faculty are discussing.
3. Bill clarified that the "minutes" indicated (added documents) were "President Staff Notes," which were phone calls or Zoom sessions for a hurricane, for example. There was no agenda or minutes for those dates, so that must be why they are being referred to as notes. So, while these documents were inserted in between the 16 months, President's Staff did not meet during that period [for business and decision making].
4. Jess brought up an Adjunct faculty member's concern regarding contributions to a 403b account, as the money contributed is not being invested. Instead, the money is being collected and it is sitting there making less than a savings account. HR knows about this issue, and it needs to be corrected.
5. A faculty member asked when there would be a comprehensive outline of what Banner components faculty should have. Without a CIO at the College, faculty are missing out on videos and knowledge about implementation. No one has training or can help. It is making it difficult to be efficient.  
Amy said that she could meet with Susan Morgan to investigate. It is already on Amy's to-do list.

**B. Inflation Presentation and Update (Presenter: Professor of Economics Jamie Haischer)**

Jamie gave an update on inflation via a presentation. The presentation showed faculty salaries versus *Consumer Price Index* with salaries lagging behind. Regarding salary shortfalls, she explained that if the published Step System Schedule had been adjusted for inflation (which was the original intention when this was created), then there would be a linear progression in salaries as inflation increased [for example, over the past 10 years]. Faculty purchasing power has taken a 7% hit from the past year. She explained that people don't work in an institution to earn the same standard of living for their entire working legacy. That is why the College has a Step Pay System, as faculty are not eligible for re-leveling or other incentives. Currently the gap between faculty salaries and market is roughly 25%. Jamie said she sends out inflation updates and information on the *Employment Cost Index*. Anyone wishing to receive this information can email her.

**C. Faculty Senate Representation**

1. Growth and Change in Departments
  - ***Q: How does a department get extra representation? The Education Department falls under Social Sciences, but do we have enough representatives to cover those departments now?***



Bill explained that the number of faculty in a department impacts representation. If a group exceeds 13 members, then that group or discipline gets a second member. The Senate performs a review each year.

- ***Q: Should the Education Department get its own representative?***

Bill said that under the current system Education is under Social Sciences and so the Senate must proceed with the current system. He will confirm the numbers and assess whether a new representative can be awarded. If there are enough members in both Social Sciences and Education, then the Senate can discuss breaking that group into two disciplines with separate representatives.

2. Lee Childree informed the Faculty Senate that he has been selected as the Lakeland Collegiate High School Faculty Senate Representative [replacing Dawn Dyer].

Bill thanked Lee for being willing to rejoin the Senate and explained that Lee was formerly the Senate's Secretary for many years.

3. Bill stated that the Senate still needs a new representative for Letters, as several senators have left the College.

D. Backlogged Review of Rules and Procedures:

Bill reminded the Faculty Senate that there will likely be a large volume of DBOT Rules and College Procedures circulating that will need to be vetted due to the backlog in five-year review cycle within Administration. These must be carefully reviewed by faculty and need input from everyone. Every Senate Representative should make sure to have an updated list of people in his or her area; the Representative is responsible to forward documents from the Faculty Senate President or Vice President and to solicit feedback and provide input at meetings. Every faculty member must be provided with an opportunity to give feedback.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Greg Harris motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:58 pm; Andrew Coombs seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned.

**\*\* Dropbox Link to view Files:**

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/fwb08x4ce9o3fnwaf0sen/ACiRKis\\_3kiaupuvFe42W1A?rlkey=fq8qti0xoskyl2ewbe49z7ig2&st=kw72m6gk&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/fwb08x4ce9o3fnwaf0sen/ACiRKis_3kiaupuvFe42W1A?rlkey=fq8qti0xoskyl2ewbe49z7ig2&st=kw72m6gk&dl=0)