

Faculty Senate Meeting

29 September 2023

Senators present: Ashley Carter, Rob Dickes, Susan Ely, Al Holen (alternate for Shannon Pritchard), Guoyuan Huang, Nancy Kovanic, Jiaying Liu, Kyle Mara, Jessica Mason, Erin Reynolds, Nicholas Rhew, Todd Schroer, Shane White, Peter Whiting



Additional attendees: Shelly Blunt, Rebecca Diamond, Jason Hardgrave, Amy Chan Hilton, Sarah Stevens

Held in BEC Boardroom

- Called to order: 2:30 pm
- Minutes from 15 September were circulated and, without corrections, approved.
- Senate Chair report from Kyle:
 - Colleague and fellow senator Brandon Field is still facing a family medical emergency and will continue to be in our thoughts.
 - Faculty Senate will elect a temporary secretary at its next meeting to fill the role until Brandon Field's return.
 - Changes to non-tenure-track faculty promotion policies and processes are moving forward and will be implemented over the Spring 2024 semester.
 - The athletic fee waiver charge has been discussed with and is under consideration by Steve Bridges. Administrative Senate has taken the lead on proposing changes.
 - The lactation spaces charge has been discussed with Sarah Will and Steve Bridges. Sarah Will noted in these discussions that the recently passed federal PUMP Act will inform future changes.
 - The microcredential and stackable credit charges are being discussed by the Provost's Council.
 - With last year's changes to the Promotions Committee, there is a need to explore changing Handbook language around withdrawing an application for promotion and/or tenure.
 - Please consider and provide ideas for professional development sessions during the spring meeting and topics for the spring town hall meeting with President Rochon and vice presidents.
 - Some funding is available from the Provost's travel budget for paying open access fees.
 - Expect a policy from the President's Office about working under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Provost's Report from Shelly:

- Jason Hardgrave and Amy Chan Hilton are working on clearly presenting promotion and tenure policies for each faculty type in the Handbook, following changes recommended last academic year by Faculty Senate and the ad hoc groups devoted to those issues.
- There will be reviews of additional assessment platforms before a final decision is made on purchasing that module from Watermark.
- The microcredentialing policy has spurred great conversation in Provost's Council and the Council of Chairs and will be moving forward.
- USI recently hosted academic leaders from many area community colleges for a transfer day. The day was a success and should lead to updated articulation agreements and more intentional, academics-focused visit days.
- Progress grading is now open. Be sure to submit progress grades, as they are important for helping students.
- Next week is the Fall Festival. Employees are able to take an extended lunch one day during the festival. Busses will be available Monday-Thursday for students.
- This year's enrollment change was positive, and the university is hopeful that the enrollment picture will be positive in the years to follow.
- Rebecca Diamond, Director of Dining Services, joined the meeting to answer questions about food service on campus. Questions focused on options in the Byte Smart Cooler in the HP Link.
- Charge 2023_11_Concurrent Personnel Review:
 - Nick Rhew moved and Rob Dickes seconded to create an ad hoc committee comprising faculty senators from each college and the library, a representative from the Provost's Office, and Amy Chan Hilton to review and provide recommendations related to this charge by January 19, 2024. The motion to create the ad hoc committee passed unanimously.
 - Kyle Mara moved and Rob Dickes seconded to establish the newly passed ad hoc committee with the following representatives: Susan Ely (Pott), Erin Reynolds (CNHP), Al Holen (LA), Peter Whiting (Library), Nick Rhew (RCOB), Jason Hardgrave (Provost's Office), and Amy Chan Hilton. The motion passed unanimously.
- Charge 2023_12_Travel Per Diem:
 - Nick Rhew moved and Rob Dickes seconded to endorse this charge. The motion passed unanimously.
- Next meeting: October 13th.
- Meeting adjourned with no additional business to consider: 3:42pm

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: Kenny Purcell (Optional)

Date of Submission: 09/21/2023

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Kyle Mara
2. Guoyuan Huang
3. Susan Ely

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:

Concurrent Personnel Review Policy

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?

The purpose of this charge is to better regulate committee participation during reviews of application for promotion and/or tenure. Currently, there is no policy to prohibit individuals from simultaneously serving on The Promotions Committee and lower-level (departmental or college/library-level) review committees. The possibility of concurrent service on multiple review committees for the same applicant(s) is a clear and direct conflict of interest. Basically, no one person should be able to evaluate a candidate for tenure and/or promotion multiple times in the process.

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.

I offer the following language (or an adapted version if needed) to be added to Article V (Standing Committees) Section 5 (The Promotions Committee) after the sentence, "Members of the committee must be at associate rank or higher:"

“Individuals serving on this committee may not review applicants for tenure or promotion in any other capacity. Members are prohibited from serving on department or college/library level personnel committees in years where an applicant or applicants are applying for tenure or promotion. Department chairs evaluating faculty from their home department for the purposes of tenure or promotion must recuse themselves from the review of those faculty. Members may serve on other review committees (departmental or college/library-level) when the reviewed faculty are not applying for tenure or promotion.”

4. Potential Resources:

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

Article VI of the by-laws reads "These by-laws can be amended at any regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the total Senate, provided that a written proposal for the amendment has been submitted to the members of the Senate at least one week in advance."

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:

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: Melissa Stacer (Optional)

Date of Submission: 9/8/2023

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Robert Dickes
2. Shannon Pritchard
3. Todd Schroer

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:

Travel Per Diems

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?

Currently, USI has a flat rate per diem of \$26 per day for in-state travel and \$32 per day for out-of-state travel. This is extremely low given some of the major cities many faculty travel to for conferences and on other university business. Other universities in Indiana, such as Purdue University and Indiana State University, calculate per diem utilizing federal per diem rates from the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) CONUS website. The USI per diem rates should be increased to better reflect actual costs of travel.

For example, consider the per diem for travel to Indianapolis. The USI per diem is \$26/day, but the GSA CONUS estimates a M&IE total at \$69, more than double what can be claimed from USI. Travel to Chicago, a popular conference destination, has a USI per diem of \$32/day, but the GSA CONUS estimates a M&IE rate of \$79, nearly double what can be claimed from USI.

This charge is NOT a request for additional travel funding. The purpose is to raise the allowed per diem based upon actual travel destinations so that faculty can better utilize the funds to which they already have access.

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.

I would like to see the Senate explore with appropriate administrators a new per diem calculation based upon specific travel destination. Ideally, this calculation would utilize GSA federal per diem rates.

4. Potential Resources:

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

Below is a link to the U.S. General Services Administration website where one can enter the state and city to see a calculated per diem. This website provides information for specific locations for both lodging and "meals and incidentals" (M&IE). Many other universities already utilize the GSA website for per diem calculations, with Indiana University, Indiana State University, Purdue University, and Ball State University, to name a few.

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

The state of Indiana increased its per diem rates in August 2022, with in-state meal per diem now at \$41/day and out of state meal per diem at \$52/day. <https://www.in.gov/idoa/files/Meal-Per-Diem-08.24.2022-002.pdf>

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