



Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes July 15, 2022

Mr. America called the meeting to order.

Present: Jim America, Timothy Thornton, Cynthia Lovelace, Felicia Mucci, Catherine Wehlburg, Donna Estill, Rita Wallace

Guest speaker – Shannon Pittman

Absent: Macke Maudling, Missy Ming Smith, Jimmy Baker, Ronnie Chronister, Pamela Keller, Laken Smith, Ira Lacy

Last meetings minutes were reviewed.

Motion to approve: Cynthia Lovelace

Second: Timothy Thornton.

Motion carried.

Academic Affairs Update

- We do not have any programs coming before the board for this meeting but have several in the works for next time.
- Fall is right around the corner and our enrollment numbers up over last summer. We are looking forward to getting back to normal and are moving to have more activities back on campus.
- Our first full day will be on August 12 and we start with a town hall for entire campus. We will hear updates from all of the cabinet members plus a preview of what's coming up. This will be followed by lunch for everyone in the gym. After that, faculty senate will convene with Jameha Gardner as the new presiding officer. We thank Debra Vaughn for her great service. The faculty senate meeting will then be followed by college meetings.
- We have 14 new faculty coming in this year. Many will be tenure track and we have a few instructors as well. Ronnie Merritt will be leading the new faculty mentoring program for them as they get oriented to their new position.
- Academic Affairs focus this year is to create an academic master plan at the program level and build up from there. Our chairs and program leads will have info on financials for their program and departments and what these programs are costing. We will evaluate where this program is headed in the next 5 years – what's changing, what areas do we want to grow, where our focus might be. Will develop 3-year plan looking at 5-year goal. Then we in Academic Affairs will put together our timelines for new programs and determine who we need to hire, etc. and how to support these programs. Hope to have done by the end of spring 2023. This will help us be more intentional and more efficient with resources.



Mr. America stated that this sounds like a lot like strategic planning. Where you can look at programs to see if they are as successful as we had hoped. He asked who is gathering data? Jeff Guenther financial piece. We will also look at jobs analyses and employment opportunities for our graduates. Faculty in the programs will also help guide in disciplinary areas. We are also using Skillaby. Students can use for their resumes because Skillaby pulls out the skills they are learning in their classes and they can add those skills to their resumes.

Dean Search

- We are in process of searching for the next dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and are bringing in two candidates next week. We are excited because we had a very strong candidate pool. Info will be sent out today for Monday's candidate and on Monday for Tuesday's candidate. Thanks to Joe Delap for leading this effort.
- Will be starting search very soon for the Dean of the College of Business. Thanks to Gary Valcana and Lionel Wright for serving as Interim Co-Deans.

College of Arts and Sciences Update – we are highlighting the ASSIST program with Shannon Pittman.

Joe Delap introduced the program. He stated he has enjoyed working with Rachel O'Sullivan for the grant. Dr. Pittman reported that ASSIST was a grant we received from the National Science Foundation in March, 2021. The grant was to focus on improving the success of low income, high achieving students in stem field. Grant gives a lot of scholarship money and is specifically for Athens State scholars in the STEM fields. They must have a 2.7 GPA and be Pell grant eligible. We are able to give scholarship – up to \$10,000 per year and they can stack this with other scholarships. Our goal is to improve student success. The other part of the goal is to determine what kind of support programs we can start. We have a research money fund, and can apply for workplace learning funds. We also give them funds to attend professional conferences and to bring in different speakers. The grant also gives them access to tutorme.com that will give them extra help when they need it. Additionally, they are given loaner laptops and they have peer support activities and group activities and get paired with a community mentor. We have had one full year and had 14 students and got results back from their first-year survey. They enjoyed the STEM seminar series the most and the online tutoring was important to them, even if they didn't need it. Faculty mentorship was important and helpful. We have 14 more for the next year, but have another round of interviews and are hoping for 18-20 students.



Here at Athens, many Pell-eligible students receive a permanent computer and they can check out a hot spot if they need it.

We also have created a fund to help students in emergency situation through the foundation for those types of situations- help in paying bills, gas cards and things like that. August 2 is our first annual giving day and one of the options is to the emergency fund.

Possibilities for getting the word out – we could add a link on the portal for students to access or put flyers on bathroom doors. And we need to let everyone know the parameters around receiving the assistance.

Motion to adjourn: Donna Estill

Second: Cynthia Lovelace

Meeting adjourned.