
Collin College Faculty Council

18 November 2022 1:00, Zoom and CHEC Meeting Room |

Meeting called to order by Roger Ward at 1:00 pm.

Roll Call and Approval of Minutes

Roll Call by Secretary Kimberly Harris.

Absent: Hannah Adams, Larry Stern

Motion to approve October minutes in January made by Rebecca O. and seconded by Stephanie T. Motion carried. 25 Yay, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report:

Total remaining: \$5694.11

Vice-President's Report: Lorena Rodriguez – read a statement: “Our friend and colleague, Dr. Suzanne Jones, recently won an important legal victory for Collin College faculty, for freedom of association (including the right to join a union and encourage others to do so), for freedom of speech, and for the right of faculty at public institutions of higher education to speak out on matters of public concern.

Suzanne will be rejoining the Collin College faculty.

As many of you know, Dr. Jones was fired for three reasons. First, she signed an open letter published by the Dallas Morning News calling for the removal of Confederate statutes in Dallas and her signature included her Collin College affiliation. That is standard practice for academics discussing matters of public concern.

Not a single professor at any other DFW area college or university who signed the letter, including faculty from SMU, TCU, UT Arlington, UNT, UTD, and Dallas College were disciplined for signing the letter.

Secondly, Suzanne was listed as a contact person for the Texas Faculty Association on the TFA state website, a site she didn't control.

Third, she signed an open letter circulated and signed by over 100 faculty asking Dr. Matkin to reconsider his Covid reopening plans.

Collin College fired Suzanne, and then she filed a suit against the college and President Matkin and former VP Toni Jenkins. She was represented first by lawyers from the Texas Faculty Association and then by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression.

The college asked for the case to be dismissed and for Matkin and Jenkins to be granted qualified immunity, which shields government officials from lawsuits unless they clearly violate the Constitution. Federal Judge Amos Mazzant ruled that the college's arguments in these motions were, in his words, "dead on arrival."

Shortly thereafter these two legal defeats, the college entered into negotiations with Suzanne and her attorneys at FIRE.

Recently, the administration posted a statement on the college website that is misleading and concludes with an implied threat to all faculty that the college might fire professors who speak out.

Collin College has agreed to a two-year teaching contract worth \$230,000. The college will also pay \$145,000 in legal fees to FIRE. If the legal fees of the college's attorneys were comparable to FIRE's the college has spent more than half-million of the taxpayers' money on this case.

Contrary to the administration's statement, her yearly income was not comparable to what she was paid when she was illegally fired. Her base salary when she left was about \$65,000 a year. She made more only because of overloads and stipends, but even with those added in she never made \$115,000 a year. It is hard to believe that the administration so flagrantly distorted the facts by accident.

She will be teaching through the iCollin campus. Contrary to what the administration implied, iCollin faculty are a valuable and talented part of the college community. You are not "only" an iCollin professor.

Suzanne gets \$230,000 in full even if she quits the first day of her contract period. She did not sign a non-disclosure agreement and, with certain agreed-upon restrictions, she can speak about her experiences (and I encourage everyone of you to ask her about them!). In the statement issued by the college and FIRE, the college conceded that Suzanne is "a great teacher and during her time at the college demonstrated good performance through high evaluations and was respected by her students and many of her colleagues."

No settlement is perfect and I think it is appropriate to ask the following.

Why did the administration in the court settlement demand that Suzanne not be allowed to run for Faculty Council and not even be permitted to attend Faculty Council meetings in person? What does this say about the right of faculty to choose our own representatives and hear from all our constituents' concerns?

Why is Suzanne only allowed to teach online as if she were in quarantine? What does this say about this administration's fears that faculty will learn of, and feel empowered by, her assertion of her constitutional rights?

And finally, why did the college spend more than a half-million dollars in an attempt to fire a person they call a great, well-respected teacher?

I hope we get answers soon."

President's Report: Roger Ward

Board Meeting

National Student Clearinghouse completion report from Jay Corwin: completion rates at Collin over a 6-year period have steadily risen in every cohort.

Approval of a Professor Emerita – Dr. Zweig

AGS

Creation of Diversity and Inclusion Council – Mix of faculty administration and staff-in its preliminary stages. The council has not met. Brings together different stakeholders from throughout the college.

Moving towards implementation of Faculty Marshall Program-was discussed several years ago; however, due to the language of the bill, it was not feasible for college professors. Details forthcoming. Implementation may now begin since the language has changed. Marshalls must have background checks, 80 hours of training through the state and additional training at the college.

One-time stipend for part-time faculty: logistics were too difficult; however, they have continued to raise the adjunct faculty pay including the 5% GPI which puts Collin's Adjunct Faculty as the highest paid adjuncts in the area.

November 16th meeting discussions – Meeting regarding graduation. Expect an email from Allison Venuto regarding music at graduation. New expectations since we have two graduations. Going forward - the Outstanding Professor will carry the Mace and give the Welcome at the December graduation and the Faculty Council President will carry the Mace and give the Welcome at the May graduation. Faculty Marshals for December will be the CoE Chair and Faculty Council President (or designees). Faculty Marshals for May will be the incoming Faculty Council President and incoming CoE Chair or designees.

Thanksgiving Week – If we close for an entire week, those two days cannot be added at the end of the semester because of Wintermester. If there is a way to do it without making a logistic nightmare for contact hours, Administration is willing to consider it.

FC Executive Council Meeting with Drs. Johnson and King

Faculty role in faculty development – Faculty do have a role. The Faculty Development Advisory Committee is to have a faculty Co–Chair. The body will discuss, deliberate, and then share ideas with the director of the CTL.

Faculty load/overload – continued to discuss being able to get the two overloads to make up for the loss of summer pay. Dr. Johnson stated that classes are scheduled in the following manner:

FT for their load
Up to two overloads
Then adjuncts

For fall staffing, it should follow this model. Working on a way to see courses on all campuses.

Summer office hours – 1 hour a week regardless of the contact or credit hour.

Standing Faculty

Academic Freedom – Diana Gingo

No report

Adjunct Faculty – Stephanie Tyson

No report

Common Good – Vijaya Velamakanni and Seema Endley

working with HR to get a list of retirees for the May reception

Policy Committee – Carol Lavender

No report – continuing to work through Board policies

Procedures and Nominations – Rhonda Green

No report – Dan sent the new policy manual to Ed Bock and it is on the web site

Teaching and Learning – Les Stanaland.

No Report – Get proposals in for the Spring Faculty Development Conference “Bridge The Gap.” The FCT&L will be conducting a workshop on assignment alignment.

Technology – Mervat Karout and Sunita Rangarajan

The Technology committee was approached and asked to look at two demo portals as possible replacements for CougarWeb.

OEP -- Clayton Cummings

No report – canceled meeting

Resource and Remuneration Committee

Lab pay

District Committee Liaison Reports

CoE – Rebecca Orr

No report

CAB –

"At the 10/21 CAB meeting, CAB approved an update to the Sport and Recreation Management AAS. It allows the program to switch from a BMGT Co-op to a Health and Physical Ed Co-op. The update also opens up class choices from Elementary Stat and Econ 1301 to broader Math and Social Science options. The program currently has 170 Students and one FT faculty member."

COAT –

Artifacts due by Dec. 9th. Make sure that you submit everything.

SOBI- Millie Black

Consistent uptake since August. . . .up to now we have had as many referrals as the whole of Spring 2022.

New Business

CTFA letter – Tony A. moved to dismiss the letter. Stephen W. seconded. The motion carried.

December Meeting – Tony H. moved to cancel the December meeting. Tony A. seconded. The motion carried.

Tony H. moved to adjourn the meeting. Les S. seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:20. PM.