

Minutes

The Faculty Senate met for a special session on March 11, 2021, via Zoom, due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

Note: This Senate meeting included an executive session, which is not public and therefore is not part of the recording or the minutes.

Attendance/Quorum

President Don McDonnell called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. All Senators were present except for Tracey Coon, Addie Clark, and Andria Fultz, who were represented by alternates Maureen Sevigny, HuiYun Li, and Kari Lundgren respectively.

Special Session Agenda

Report of the Executive Committee Regarding Meetings with Dr. Naganathan Concerning Senate Resolution of 3/2/2021

- Don began the report by stating “what this meeting is not, and what it is.”
 - The meeting is intended to get input from Senators on how Senate should proceed regarding “senior administration’s actions that have brought faculty to the point of utter frustration.”
 - The meeting is not intended to be a “venting platform,” or “retaliation,” and it is not about union negotiations, or for personal agendas.
 - The meeting is intended to discuss the President’s proposed CEET building office in the context of a history of “disregard and revision of policies and guidelines without the voice of Faculty Senate.”
 - Don stated numerous examples of this disregard, which I won’t include directly here for the sake of brevity.
- Don encouraged Senators to make decisions with three questions in mind:
 - What will best support our students?
 - What is best for the success and sustainability of Oregon Tech and its programs?
 - What is the best for all Oregon Tech employees?
- Don spoke at length about his enthusiasm and support for Oregon Tech.
- Christopher Syrnyk read the Faculty Senate Resolution on Presidential Office Relocation Plans out loud.
 - This resolution is included in the April Senate packet, **on pages 11 and 12**, and was passed by Faculty Senate at its March 2, 2021 meeting.
- Don reported that SenEx met with Drs. Naganathan and Mott last Friday, and then Don, Christopher, and Lindy Stewart met again with Drs. Naganathan and Mott on Wednesday as a follow-up. He attempted to summarize Dr. Naganathan’s response during these meetings.
 - Don said that Dr. Naganathan claimed to have a “different management style than Oregon Tech is used to.”
 - He also said that Dr. Naganathan argued that the location of his office is not under the Senate’s purview, and that he was making the move at someone else’s recommendation, though he would not divulge the identity of the person who made that recommendation.
 - Don said that Dr. Naganathan claimed that the new office would help him draw in more donors.
 - He also said that Dr. Naganathan claimed that this move would help free up office space on the Klamath Falls campus.
 - Don said that the free space opened up in Snell Hall as a result of the move would help house staff moved out of Boivin Hall during its renovation.

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Discussion of Report and Potential Responses to the Actions of President Naganathan

- Sean Sloan asked if anyone knows the cost of the renovation of the President’s current office.
 - No one was able to provide an exact number for this.
- Sean also made the comment that Oregon Tech has historically stayed “lean and mean” on the administrative side by asking faculty to take on minor administrative roles, and that Dr. Naganathan’s effort to grow our administrative ranks is changing this.
- Robyn Cole expressed disappointment that the use of space in the CEET has not been a shared governance issue. She believes that the space could be much better utilized as a space for students.
- Christopher spoke in response to Sean Sloan’s earlier point about Oregon Tech’s move away from the “lean and mean” administrative model. He questioned whether or not this change has actually been beneficial to the university.
- A question in the Zoom chat asked where the student spaces initially planned for the CEET will end up due to the President’s office move.
 - Don stated that his understanding is that the increased office space in the CEET beyond the original plans was expanded into what was originally planned as “unfinished space.”
- Ryan Brown asked how much space Dr. Naganathan’s new office is going to take up.
 - Don clarified that the new office space will be 1,800 square feet total, but that it is a cluster of four offices for Dr. Naganathan and his assistants.
 - Dr. Mott clarified that there are two office suites: one for Dean Keyser and the other for Dr. Naganathan.
 - Don clarified further that Dean Keyser’s office suite was in the original building plans, and is 1,200 square feet.
- Christopher commented that Dr. Naganathan has stated that his move to the CEET building is actually a cost-saving measure in response to the Boivin renovation.
- Don clarified that this discussion is not *just* about the CEET building, but about a pattern of disregard for the faculty’s and Senate’s voice when decisions that affect the entire university are made by senior administration.
- Joe Reid asked if Oregon state laws were followed when the CEET building funds were repurposed to adjust to the new building plans.
 - Dr. Mott responded to say that the state was not particularly specific about how the funds were used. She suggested that we follow up with Thom Darrah for more details.
- Don responded to a question in the chat asking what the role of Senate is, and what the Senate’s view on shared governance is.
 - To the shared governance question, Don stated that it is governance that takes into account all of the university’s stakeholders. He said that he likes to think of shared governance in terms of the Rotarian Four-Way Model, which asks four questions of any action:
 - Is it fair?
 - Is it good for all?
 - Will it build positive relationships?
 - Is it honest?
 - Lindy Stewart spoke to Senate’s unique role of working to maintain communication between faculty and administration at what has historically been a non-unionized university. This has put Senate into the role of faculty advocate, since there was no other advocating body until very recently.
 - Don read an excerpt from the Faculty Senate charter as a response to the initial question. The charter can be found [here](#).
- Robyn argued that senior administration has fiduciary and legal responsibility to act in the best interest of the entire university, and that they are failing to take faculty into consideration with their current conduct. She hopes that communication improves in the future.

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- CJ Riley spoke as a member of the Facilities Planning Commission, which he said has not met for multiple years. CJ said that this Commission exists specifically to provide input on the development of projects like the CEET, and yet it isn't being used for its intended purpose.
- Ryan raised the question of how much 1,800 square feet (for the President's office) really matters in the grand scheme of things when the building in total is 70,000 square feet, which he estimated amounts to around 4% of the building's total usable space.
- Christopher spoke to the earlier question about Senate's role in shared governance in part by referencing the Faculty Senate's mission statement (found [here](#)) and the Board of Trustees' definition of shared governance, and making the point that those two documents are not mutually exclusive.
- Monica Breedlove spoke in praise of former Oregon Tech President Martha Ann Dow and pointed out that the Dow Center, when first built, could have also contained a large Presidential office, but that space was dedicated to student learning instead. She encouraged us all to consider what's best for our students.
- Sean spoke to cite policy OT-20-015, wherein it is explicitly stated that faculty and administration should work together to be financial stewards of the university.
- Todd Breedlove spoke to make the point that we shouldn't focus the discussion on the CEET building move only, but instead on the greater problem of lack of communication between faculty and senior administration, and how we might improve going forward.
- A question in the Zoom chat asked if the CEET move might improve student access to our administrators.
 - Lindy said that her understanding is that the students wouldn't have better access to the administration in the CEET; however, part of the plan may be to move more student services staff into the vacated space in Snell, which would make *those* staff more accessible to students, in theory.
- Sean spoke in support of the office move "from the 10,000 foot view," as he believes it would help bring in more money for the university.
- Joe spoke in support of Sean's point, then continued on to express concerns about senior administration's refusal to engage in shared governance in cases like the NTT faculty promotion policy passed by Senate and then ignored.
- Kyle Chapman questioned the efficacy of the President's move to the CEET as a fundraising opportunity, considering that the CEET itself had to be funded largely via bonds, not through donors' contributions.
- Kyle also seconded Todd's comment about staying focused on a pattern of bad communication and not getting bogged down in details about the CEET building move in particular.
- Monica agreed with Kyle's and Todd's comments. She continued on to bring up the recent ignoring of the university's policy on tenure relinquishment as an example of the bigger picture problem. She also described an instance of faculty input being ignored during the development of new workload guidelines.
- Ryan asked a clarifying question based on the title of the Senate Resolution under discussion: is this discussion about the CEET move, or something broader?
 - Don referred Ryan to the text of the document, which indicates larger concerns than *only* the CEET office move.
 - Ryan followed up by asking what faculty have done or could do in the future to offer an "olive branch" to senior administration to improve the situation.
- Don discussed the history of unionization efforts at Oregon Tech: there were failed attempts to unionize earlier in the university's history, so what changed since then? He argued that it was senior administration's unwillingness to follow policy that led the faculty to unionize in the first place.
 - Ryan reiterated the point that he's not seeing *how* we fix the problems that we're facing.
- Yasha Rohwer spoke to make the point that our Faculty Senators are speaking on behalf of all of the faculty, so their grievances aren't necessarily individual grievances, but the grievances of all of their constituents. He also spoke in favor of Don as "an olive-branch kind of guy."

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- Ryan agreed with this as well, but suggested that we try to seek out “more novel approaches” to addressing our grievances.
- Don spoke to clarify that he called this meeting because he has felt pressure from Senators and his constituents to act on behalf of faculty. He said he has no particular agenda in mind, but is seeking input from the Senate at large about how to proceed.
- Lindy pointed out that there have been “countless” meetings already to try to address and fix the issues that the resolution enumerates, with little to no progress. She spoke particularly to all the work faculty put in on committees, only to have the results of that work ignored more often than not.
 - Ryan replied to this comment, not to disagree with Lindy, but to question how we can seek a solution to this problem that is productive. He suggested dropping our complaint about the move to the CEET building, with the understanding that it would be a compromise toward better relations between faculty and senior administration in the future.
- Don asked that only non-Senators give any final comments before the Senators move into executive session.
 - Robyn expressed being at her “wit’s end” with Dr. Naganathan’s leadership, and encouraged the Senate to advocate for new leadership for the university going forward.

Motion to Invoke Executive Session of Faculty Senate

- Cristina Negoita moved that the Senators convene an executive session. I seconded this motion.
- Seth Anthony asked for clarification about what the purpose of the executive session is.
 - Don responded that the session is being convened so that Senators can talk frankly and directly and a course of action can be decided upon.
- A two-thirds majority vote is required to move into executive session. The vote was unanimous in support.

Return to Regular Senate Meeting

- **Note:** Due to technical difficulties, the brief section of the public meeting that took place after the Senate executive session was not recorded. Don McDonnell provided this summary statement:
 - "Based on feedback from faculty during this faculty-wide meeting, Senate has charged SenEx to draft a resolution that details the concerns that have come to light during Dr. Nagi’s time at Oregon Tech." We will reconvene Tuesday, March 16 at 6pm to discuss and vote on the resolution.
 - A vote was then held to charge Senate Executive with drafting this new resolution. The vote passed.

Adjournment

Don McDonnell adjourned the meeting at 8:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Bunting, Secretary

Minutes

The Faculty Senate met for a special session on March 16, 2021, via Zoom, due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

Note: This Senate meeting included an executive session, which is not public and therefore is not part of the recording or the minutes.

Attendance/Quorum

President Don McDonnell called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. All Senators were present except for Ashton Greer, Tracey Coon, and Addie Clark, who were represented by alternates C.J. Riley, Maureen Sevigny, and HuiYun Li, respectively.

Special Session Agenda

Statement by Dr. Naganathan

- The meeting began with a motion to allow Dr. Naganathan to speak at the beginning of the agenda. The motion was made by Christopher Syrnyk and seconded by Lindy Stewart. The motion passed unanimously.
- Dr. Naganathan stated that what is at stake in this discussion is not the presidency of the university, but rather the name and ongoing reputation of Oregon Tech. He called recent events “a classic tragedy” and explained that he felt compelled to speak at this meeting as a result of this.
- He claimed that “a handful” of people have introduced “unrest and angst” into the university, and that he wants to speak out against this effort.
- Addressing the new resolution being brought forth by Senate at this meeting, he called it “a scavenger hunt” and “a smear campaign.”
- He spoke out against this “passive aggressive” and “duplicitous” behavior, which he claimed is contrary to the open communication encouraged by his town halls and his appearances during Faculty Senate sessions.
 - He also insinuated that certain claims made against him could be legally actionable.
- Dr. Naganathan stated that it is his belief that the vast majority of Oregon Tech employees want to put in an honest day’s work, and these people are negatively affected by efforts like the one that Faculty Senate is currently involved in.
 - He criticized Faculty Senate’s leadership for raising complaints about faculty welfare during a time of “real suffering” because of “real issues” in the world.
- Dr. Naganathan asked what actions Senate leadership has taken to improve faculty morale rather than contribute to negativity.
- He also claimed that Senators themselves are confused about the role of Senate: he pointed out that it is only advisory to the President, and that the President has final say in all matters.
- Dr. Naganathan thanked part of the Senate Executive Committee for being respectful communicators, and reiterated the importance of good communication.
 - He wants to hire a Director of Communications to improve internal communications within the university.
- Dr. Naganathan said he believes that the real issue at hand is the changing role of the Faculty Senate, and that some want to “preserve the past.” He claimed that Senate is confused about what shared governance is, and stressed that Faculty Senate is an academic body only.
 - He also argued that our academics are going to need more attention than ever looking forward, and so Senate should dedicate itself to meeting this particular need only.

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- Dr. Naganathan claimed that Senate’s actions are going to result in a drop in enrollment, and therefore a drop in revenue. He stated that he will not ask the staff to bear the burden of that prospective revenue drop.
- He explained that he has to be focused externally as the university’s President, not internally.
- He claimed that in individual conversations with staff, students, and faculty, he hears nothing but positive feedback. He said we need to focus on the positive to stay afloat during these challenging times, and pointed to our relative success during the pandemic as evidence that our leadership is strong.
- Dr. Naganathan said he “serves at the pleasure of the Board” and does not plan to resign.
- He also argued that we need to truly be “Oregon Tech Together” in order to get through difficult times.
- Dr. Naganathan then opened the floor for questions.
 - Ryan Brown asked a question to clarify that Dr. Naganathan understood that the Senate represents faculty, and is not a separate body from it.
 - Dr. Naganathan responded that he understood.
 - Sean Sloan asked if Dr. Naganathan would agree that compensation affects the quality of faculty we can recruit and retain, and therefore should be a facet of Senate’s purview.
 - Dr. Naganathan said that we should focus on putting together a “critical mass” of quality faculty. He did not appear to answer Sean’s question directly.
 - Lindy asked a question on behalf of one of her constituents: what is the plan for getting Oregon Tech out of its current financial difficulties? Will this plan be “off the backs of the faculty”?
 - Dr. Naganathan said that the key is to keep our place in the marketplace.
 - He discussed at length the need to attract new students, and to lease equipment from interested companies.
 - He also spoke about a \$3.3M investment in our manufacturing equipment by the state.
 - Lindy asked a follow-up question to clarify how faculty can be involved in growing the university.
 - Dr. Naganathan talked further about building the university’s industry connections, then implied that it is the Provost’s and Deans’ responsibility to engage with faculty directly.
 - Robyn Cole spoke in support of not just faculty but also staff during this time of change. She then encouraged Dr. Naganathan to show more of a physical presence on campus in the future as a gesture of connection with the rest of the university.
 - Dr. Naganathan said that he is doing his best during a difficult time.
 - CJ Riley spoke to his disappointment that during the pandemic, we’ve had *less* communication between the various groups on campus, when it should have been more present. He cited the faculty welfare survey conducted in winter and spring of 2020 and the lack of response to the results from senior administration as an example.
 - Dr. Naganathan provided his willingness to cut his speaking time short during this afternoon’s town hall as evidence of his efforts to improve communication.
 - He also spoke again to the need for a dedicated Director of Communications.
 - Andria Fultz spoke to the fear that some faculty and staff have for Dr. Naganathan, and explained that soliciting non-anonymous questions for town halls doesn’t allow these people the opportunity to express their views. She suggested that we need to put more work into fixing the “inside” of the university and less immediate focus on the “outside.”
 - Dr. Naganathan responded that he needs to travel and advocate for Oregon Tech, because otherwise we might lose our place at the table. He claimed this is in part because of the move for each Oregon university to have its own Board and advocacy structure and how this makes it more difficult to lobby for resources at the state level.

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- Monica Breedlove spoke to the lack of unity on campus currently, despite the slogan “Oregon Tech Together.” She said that leadership comes from the top down, and she is concerned about what the current state of university morale says about our leadership. She is also concerned about what she has experienced as a lack of options for faculty to make their voices heard when they have serious issues that need to be addressed.
 - Dr. Naganathan responded that what’s needed is more empowering of the Provost, the Deans, and department chairs.

Report of the Executive Committee

- Don thanked everyone who provided information for the new resolution, as well as those who worked on drafting and revising it.
- He also spoke to the content of the resolution, and that the intent was to express the concerns and grievances faculty have with our current leadership, but not to attack or offend anyone.
- Don provided “a little history” of how we got to this point.
 - Basically, this new resolution came about after last Thursday’s special session, when it was agreed that the resolution regarding the CEET building was too specific and did not represent the full scope of the faculty’s concerns.
 - Ultimately, there are two new documents being introduced tonight. One is the new Senate resolution, and the other is the supplementary report.
- Christopher spoke to summarize the contents of the supplementary report.
 - He read the preamble to the report, which I will not transcribe here for the sake of brevity. The full report is included in the April 2021 Senate packet, **on pages 14-22**.
- Cristina made a motion to accept the resolution, which was seconded. This opened public discussion of the resolution.

Discussion of Resolution and Potential Responses to the Actions of President Naganathan

- Veronica Koehn spoke from her perspective as the chair of the Communications department and as a scholar who studies communication ethics in the public sphere. From this perspective, she argued that she has concerns with how Oregon Tech, as a state school funded by Oregon taxpayers, is spending its money. She said that she has had concerns about this for a few years now.
- CJ asked if there would be an opportunity to make editorial changes to the resolution and/or supplementary report.
 - Don responded that that discussion should happen in the executive session.
- Robyn asked if Don could explain what the steps are if we vote to accept the resolution.
 - Don responded by referring to the resolution itself:
 - Call on Dr. Naganathan to tender his resignation
 - If that call is ignored, then call on the Board
 - If that call is also ignored, we will proceed with a vote of no confidence
 - Robyn also asked if the only faculty voting tonight are Senators.
 - Don responded yes, but clarified that if a vote of no confidence occurred, it would be a vote from all faculty, taken anonymously.
- Ryan asked a question to clarify the concerns Veronica expressed earlier. He requested a specific instance or example in which state funds were misappropriated to add to the supplementary report.
 - Veronica did not have any new examples that weren’t already in the supplementary report ready to hand, but encouraged us to pursue this question further in the future.
- Mason Wichmann (ASOIT representative) spoke next, asking what a vote of no confidence would truly accomplish.

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- Don responded, explaining that it is an expression of dissatisfaction from the faculty body in current leadership, and could lead to Dr. Naganathan being removed from his position.
- Mason also spoke out in support of Dr. Naganathan. He said that he sees Dr. Naganathan as being fully transparent in his dealings with students, and that he finds some of the claims in the supplementary report to be contradictory.
 - Don expressed appreciation for Mason’s input.
 - Ryan spoke to provide more detail about one of the sections of the supplementary report: specifically, that the claim about static enrollment in the report was meant to show the amount of money spent on admissions compared to the gains made as a result of that investment.
 - **Note:** For clarity, I wanted to note here that this portion of the supplementary report was removed before the final draft of the report was voted on, so it can no longer be seen in the version of the report included in the April 2021 packet, **on pages 14-22.**
 - Ryan also questioned the relationship between availability and transparency.
 - Mason said that students don’t want a lot of volatility, and that a vote of no confidence would add to that in a negative way.
- Paula Russell started by expressing appreciation for those who worked to put the report together on a short timeline. She is concerned with the wording in the supplementary report, and wanted to know how much each of the claims in the report were vetted before being included.
 - Ryan spoke in response to Paula’s concern, saying that he was the person who wrote the first draft of the report because he was “on the fence” and could perhaps approach the issue in a more objective way than members of Senate Executive.
 - He said he included “only things that could be traced back through an audit trail.”
 - He left out anything that he couldn’t find source material for.
 - Don spoke to corroborate what Ryan said. He added as well that Senate Executive also went over the document, fact-checked it, and made changes when appropriate after Ryan’s initial draft.
 - Christopher also supported Ryan’s characterization of the creation of the document. He made the point that the information the supplementary report is based on is publicly available, and he encouraged faculty to read up on the policies on their own and come to their own judgments about the value of the report.
- Christopher spoke in support of the university’s staff, and reiterated Don’s earlier point that this report is not meant to cast them in a negative light, but to only focus on the concerns and grievances faculty have about Dr. Naganathan’s leadership. He also spoke again to Senate Executive’s attempts to generate an unbiased and factually accurate report, and encouraged faculty to provide feedback on the document if they have any.
- Sean asked for clarification on whether we were voting to accept the documents first, or editing them first.
 - Don responded that the edits will be made during the executive session, and then the vote will be taken when we reconvene the public session.

Motion to Invoke Executive Session of Faculty Senate

- Terri Torres moved that the Senators convene an executive session. The motion was seconded.
- A two-thirds majority is required to move into executive session. The vote was unanimous in support.

Return to Regular Senate Meeting

- Don explained that we made some edits to the report during the executive session, and that the final version of the report will be sent out to all faculty tomorrow. The final version of the report is also included in the April Senate packet, **on pages 14-22.**
 - He also clarified again that this vote (on the resolution) is not the vote of no confidence, but is instead a vote to “open that avenue.” If it occurs, the vote of no confidence will be from *all* faculty, not just Senators.

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- Christopher read the resolution; for the sake of brevity, I haven't typed it out here. The full resolution is available in the April 2021 Senate packet, **on page 13**.

Vote on Senate Response to the Actions of President Naganathan

- Cristina moved to vote on the resolution. I seconded the motion.
- The vote passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Don McDonnell adjourned the meeting at 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Bunting, Secretary

Whereas the Oregon Institute of Technology has a long history of being a teaching institution that prioritizes the needs of students above all else;

Whereas the Oregon Tech Strategic Plan adopted in 2020 lists the first value that the university is guided by as “Prioritizing student and graduate success in every decision or action at every level of the university” and also lists the very first Pillar of support for the foundation of the university’s strategic goals, objectives and actions as “Commitment To Student Success”;

Whereas the Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology (CEET) building currently under construction on the Klamath Falls campus was described in a quotation from President Naganathan in a November 28, 2018 OIT press release as necessary because reaching the goals of the university “...requires that we invest in state-of-the art laboratory equipment, in modernizing classrooms, and in thoughtfully created collaborative spaces which help our faculty nurture an innovation ecosystem.”;

Whereas the press release went on to say that public funds provided by the State of Oregon and private funds provided by donors would “...provide students with a truly distinctive experience that centers around an innovation ecosystem of entrepreneurial resources, modernized and integrated labs and facilities, exceptional faculty and professional mentors.”;

Whereas President Naganathan has announced plans to move his office into a large suite of newly constructed rooms in the CEET building;

Whereas the use of space in the CEET building for a presidential office is incompatible with the announced educational goals of the building that were used to justify funding by Oregon taxpayers and donations from private individuals and would deprive students of valuable classroom and/or laboratory space;

Whereas the President already has a perfectly functional office that was fully renovated in 2017;

Whereas the President has not fully consulted with the campus community, most notably Faculty Senate, about his planned office relocation;

Whereas the President has in the past assured members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that space in the CEET building would be open for use for all members of the campus community when questioned about the labeling of rooms in a preliminary architectural plan;

Whereas Dr. Naganathan's actions with respect to his proposed office move is part of a larger pattern of behavior by him and his administration of disregarding existing OIT policy, not practicing shared governance, and failing to consult with the entire campus community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Oregon Institute of Technology Faculty Senate:

1. Calls on President Naganathan in the strongest terms to abandon his plans to create a presidential office in the CEET building and instead devote that space to student educational use;
2. Calls on President Naganathan to consult more widely with the campus community, particularly students and faculty, in an open and honest review of the proposed uses of space in the CEET building;
3. Puts President Naganathan on notice that if he goes forward with the creation of a presidential office in the CEET building that the Senate will regard this as a serious violation of the principles of shared governance and an abrogation of his duty to provide the best quality education possible to Oregon Tech students, and thus he is not fit to continue to serve as our President.

RESOLUTION REGARDING OREGON TECH FACULTY CONFIDENCE IN DR.
NAGANATHAN

Whereas Dr. Naganathan has repeatedly failed to practice shared governance and provide appropriate leadership, as outlined in the attached Report of the Oregon Tech Faculty Senate Executive Committee; and

Whereas Dr. Naganathan has failed to respond to repeated efforts by faculty leadership to correct this situation; and

Whereas the Oregon Tech Faculty Senate no longer has confidence in the leadership of Dr. Naganathan; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Oregon Institute of Technology Faculty Senate:

1. Calls on Dr. Naganathan to immediately tender his resignation;
2. In the event that Dr. Naganathan does not resign, the Senate will conduct a vote of No Confidence with respect to Dr. Naganathan's leadership among all full-time Oregon Tech faculty and make the results of that vote available to the Oregon Tech Board of Trustees and the general public;
3. The Senate recommends that faculty support a vote of No Confidence with respect to Dr. Naganathan.

REPORT OF THE OREGON TECH FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REGARDING OREGON TECH FACULTY'S CONFIDENCE IN DR. NAGANATHAN'S LEADERSHIP

March 16, 2021

Dear Members of the Oregon Tech Board of Trustees,

At the request of the Faculty Senate, representing their constituent majority, the Oregon Tech Faculty Senate Executive Committee has compiled a report outlining examples of grievances against Dr. Naganathan since his hire in 2017. The contents of this report are the result of the collective input of Oregon Tech's faculty senators. The intent of the report is to articulate how Dr. Naganathan's leadership has caused persistent and ongoing issues that affect Oregon Tech faculty and the student body it serves, and to enumerate those issues to the best of our ability.

While every point of this document may not be correct to the last detail, in part due to lack of transparency of budgets and administrative decision-making processes, we believe that the overwhelming body of evidence supports these broad and extensive areas of deficiency in Dr. Naganathan's leadership.

The Oregon Tech Faculty Senate Executive Committee strongly compels the Board of Trustees to carefully consider the contents of this report, which addresses Dr. Naganathan's leadership and management style only and makes no assertions about or judgments on his character. The report will outline the following areas of deficiency:

1. Disregard of existing Oregon Tech policies and the editing of policies without Senate approval.
2. Lack of commitment to shared governance as established by the Board of Trustees Resolution No. 15-2.
3. Failure to execute responsible fiscal management of Oregon Tech monetary, capital, and human resources.

Examples of Disregard of Existing Oregon Tech Policy and Editing Policy without Senate Approval

1. [Policy Addition and Revision OIT-01-001](#), specifically the provision "All new and revised policy for Sections 10 and 20 of the Oregon Institute of Technology Policy Manual shall be reviewed by the Faculty Senate and acted upon according to the Constitution of the Oregon Institute of Technology Faculty."
 - Dr. Naganathan acted unilaterally and made changes to [Faculty Department Chair Selection and Evaluation OIT-21-030](#) without Faculty Senate

recommendation, and as such, this is the only policy directly affecting faculty (as chairs are still faculty) signed by Dr. Naganathan, solely.

2. [Tenure Indefinite Tenure Selection OIT-20-030](#) has a specific provision stating “All parties shall abide by the timeline set forth in this policy. However, the Dean or Provost may modify the timeline if either determines a reasonable need to do so, but not by greater than 90 days and with notice to the affected faculty.”
 - One faculty member’s progress toward tenure and promotion was halted in violation of the timeline set in OIT-20-030 without recourse to appeal.
3. [Academic Rank and Tenure for Unclass Administrators OIT-20-231](#) states that “1. Unclassified administrators employed on fixed-term renewable appointments will not be awarded tenure, except as may be earned in ‘Granting of Academic Rank to Unclassified Administrators’ 2.c. Unclassified administrators are eligible for multi-year contracts at the discretion of the President.”
 - Dr. Naganathan and other senior administrators were granted tenure immediately upon hire.
4. [Faculty Compensation OIT-20-015](#). Listed below are the specific provisions in the policy, coupled with examples of noncompliance:
 - Section 5, under “Increases to Base Salary,” the policy states that “The COLA adjustment will be a minimum of 2% per year. If the CPI is greater than 2%, the FCC, with the approval of the Faculty Senate, will recommend to the provost whether available funds above 2% will be used for COLA, market, equities, or merit.”
 - Oregon Tech faculty have not received this COLA adjustment for 3 years, and for many years COLAs have been below the CPI without consulting FCC.
 - Section 6, under “Increases to Base Salary”, the policy states “The FCC and Provost’s Office will examine and make recommendations on salary levels in the university as a whole, salary disparity among departments/disciplines, minimum salary levels (institutional floor data and comparator data) and salary compression. Such review will take place on a biennial basis.”
 - At least one department has experienced several instances where new hires were compensated more than seasoned, experienced faculty members. This has led to severe compression within that department, and no resolution has been proposed to address this inequity.

- The section “Salary Administration” states, “Overall administration of the faculty compensation policy is the responsibility of the provost, or designee, in collaboration with the Faculty Compensation Committee (FCC), the vice president of finance, and subject to the direction of the president. The FCC is a Faculty Senate standing committee whose membership is appointed by the Faculty Senate President. The committee will meet to review and address faculty compensation issues. In the second year of each biennium, the committee will review and make recommendations regarding institutional floors and market equity adjustments. The committee will also make recommendations to the president and provost in determining the allocation of available compensation funds.”
 - Senior administration refuses to grant FCC’s requests for a meeting.

- The section “Comparator Adjustments” states, “The Provost’s Office will direct institutional research (IR) to collect College and University Professional Association (CUPA) data by discipline from OUS-approved list of comparator institutions for OT. If data are not available for a discipline, the academic department, with the final approval of the FCC and the provost, will determine a list of comparators based on the criteria established by the state system in the document ‘Developing Peer Groups for the Oregon University System: From Politics to Analysis (and Back).’” The same policy states, “Comparator floors are 87.5% of the above-calculated averages.”
 - Previous senior administrators commissioned a 3rd party firm (MGT of America), to conduct a study to either discount or corroborate the established CUPA data, and whose services cost Oregon Tech \$50,000. The MGT of America report corroborated the CUPA data, and Dr. Naganathan’s response was to create an “Independent Compensation Committee” comprised of Oregon Tech personnel in response to the report. The results of the “Independent Compensation Committee” concluded that CUPA data, selections of FCC comparators, and the MGT of America report were all incorrect.
 - A substantial number of Oregon Tech faculty members’ compensation remains below the floor, with no plan to remediate the deficiency.

- Due to senior administration's refusal to meet with FCC, compensation has stagnated for all faculty.
5. [Academic Appointment, Rank and Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Instructional Faculty OIT-20-046](#) (Latest Draft)
- The Faculty Senate committee on Rank, Promotion, and Tenure was charged by SenEx with drafting an appointment, rank, and promotion policy for Non-Tenure Track Instructional Faculty in 2017. RPT completed its charge, the policy was vetted, voted on, and passed by Faculty Senate, and then was rejected by President's Council. Despite increased hiring of NTT faculty over the last four years, Oregon Tech remains without a policy for appointing those faculty and providing them with established rank(s) or pathway(s) to promotion.
6. [Faculty Merit Pay OIT-20-016](#)
- President Naganathan's plan to award merit raises disregards established policy. In addition, it fails to adhere to protocol regarding policy changes as stated in the policy [Policy Addition and Revision OIT-01-001](#).
7. [Board Policy on Operating Budget Fund Balance](#)
- Provision 1.1.2 states "Reporting of program revenue cash balances is at a level that provides the Board of Trustees, Legislature, and the public with a complete, consistent and transparent understanding of end-of-year balances."
 - The lack of shared governance with respect to financial and budget planning issues has led to the misallocation of resources. In particular, the administration has used ad-hoc mechanisms to set budget priorities in a way that excludes faculty input, rather than using existing policies and mechanisms for budgeting that provide for a faculty voice.
 - Provision 1.1.1 states "Oregon Tech has the necessary flexibility to manage program revenue accounts to meet cash flow needs throughout the year, financial commitments, plans, and goals."
 - There continues to be no coherent plan to address our ongoing budget deficits beyond increasing student numbers and raising tuition yet again.

- There continues to be no contingency planning for an economic recession and/or cuts in funding by the State of Oregon.

8. [Administrative Compensation Plan OIT-20-044](#)

- Unclassified, Administrator Base Salary increases from \$7,373,355 (FY 2017) to \$10,180,449 (FY 2020)
- Unrestricted salary increases to the President's direct reports that outpaced COLAs by orders of magnitude.

Examples of Lack of Commitment to Shared Governance as Established by the Board of Trustees Resolution No. 15-2 “A RESOLUTION ON SHARED GOVERNANCE AT OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY” [Resolution 15-2 Shared Governance](#)

1. Proposed creation of the Associate Dean positions

- No Faculty Senate input in this decision. There was also a lack of clear position duties for the Associate Deans as well as a lack of evidence of need. The last time Oregon Tech went through major leadership structure changes, the entire Oregon Tech community was involved in the process and we carefully considered these decisions.

2. New Associate/Assistant Vice President Job Titles

- These positions were all promotions from positions that formerly had the title of director. While the roles remain the same, the title changes came with significant salary increases. According to Dr. Naganathan, this was necessary so that our directors have the same status as their peers at other universities. He often uses the example that a Director of Human Resources from Oregon Tech does not have the same status as an Associate Vice President of Human Resources at Oregon State University and thus cannot interact effectively. There is no evidence to support this claim nor is there any evidence to suggest that our directors were ineffective in the past.

3. Denied/ignored request for more detailed information/data

- FOAC has only been provided high-level financials and has repeatedly requested more detailed information. The committee has requested data

on several issues, one being the \$2+million in salary savings this year and similar for prior years that seems to be coincident with both the senior admin raises and budget deficit, with no response.

4. Ignoring the recommendations of hiring committees

- Senior administrators have been hired outside of the university's established hiring procedures, and contrary to the input of their respective hiring committees.

5. Creation of new positions and then appointing people to them with disproportionate raises

- As just one example, a position originally titled "Secretary to the President", was revised to be the "Senior Advisor to the President." This position was not advertised, no search was performed, no additional credentials or education were required, and the individual was appointed by Dr. Naganathan.
- The Portland-Metro Director of Academic Affairs was appointed without a competitive search process.

6. Disregard for 2018 CEET Visioning Report

- "The responsibilities of the Facilities Planning Commission are 1) to recommend to the President the priority for building construction, remodeling, and optimal building utilization during master planning efforts, 2) advise on major changes in the use of space, and 3) to review requests for additional space and equipment which would become a part of the building inventory." This is taken from the charter of the Facilities Planning Commission, which did not meet as part of this process.
- The original plan for the building included a student common space and café in what is now a 3,000 square foot conference room. Instead of this space being used daily for student collaboration and sharing, it will be used infrequently for important meetings and events approved by the president.
- The president's 1,800 square foot office suite, originally slated to be a student entrepreneurial space, was reappropriated without the input of faculty of the Facilities Planning Commission.
- If you combine the president's office with the conference room area, it is twice the size of classroom space in the building at 4,800 square feet. This is deeply concerning given the current difficulty scheduling classroom space on the Klamath Falls campus. With the president now directly

controlling the use of 16% of the usable space on the main floor of the CEET, this is clearly a departure from the vision and defined purpose of this building.

- The new plan minimizes space for “The Garage”/Entrepreneurial Lab, which also impacts usable space for other labs. The Garage was featured in [the CEET groundbreaking "virtual ceremony"](#) (around 2:00) and is still posted on the Oregon Tech website to solicit funds for the building, despite having been eliminated as a result of space being allocated for the President’s office move.

7. Examples of Unclassified Administration Salary Increases

- Senior Advisor to the President: 66%
- Senior Executive Assistant: 12%
- Vice President of Finance: 30%
- Vice President of Student Affairs: 21%
- Associate Vice President of Strategic Enrollment Management: 40%
 - Though this position is currently not filled, this increase was implemented before the position was vacated.
- Acting Director (while searching for an Associate Vice President) of Human Resources: 34%
- Assistant Vice President of Government Relations: 77%
 - Though this position is currently not filled, this increase was implemented before the position was vacated.
- Assistant Vice President of Financial Operations: 47%

8. President’s office spending increased 70% from 2017 to 2020, without consultation with FOAC regarding necessary budget details.

- Budget increases to student success, College of ETM and HAS, were less than 20% during this same period.

9. Kernot Stokes report

- Audit of the Student Projects and Grants was completed in April of 2020. 13 significant findings, 5 observations, and 6 process improvements were identified. These findings have not been meaningfully addressed.

10. Unmet and/or abandoned goals

- Stated enrollment goal of 7,500 students by 2028 without an overarching plan.
- Grow diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - Not met (no partnership with Latino organizations and communities created, no international student recruitment).
- Modernize general education component.
 - Essential Studies renovation abandoned.
- Establish the Faculty Innovation Center.
 - Abandoned.
- Invest in talent.
 - No evidence that this goal is being met in terms of faculty recruitment.
- Pilot formalized mentoring and professional development programs.
 - Abandoned.
- Create facilities master plan.
 - Abandoned.

Examples of Failure to Execute Responsible Fiscal Management of Oregon Tech Monetary, Capital, and Human Resources

1. Faculty positions have been cut/not replaced and many more have been changed from tenure track to non-tenure track (i.e., one department has lost 1.5 faculty positions, 1 position has been changed to NTT, and now they must work 129 WLU in overload just to teach the curriculum across both campuses).
2. Request for funds from the 2017-19 OREC budget \$223,000 carry-over has been blocked for the last 2 years, preventing its use in some high-impact applied research projects. Each time different reasons were given from VP Fox, with the

last indirectly from the President. The question remains whether those funds still exist or were “appropriated” for other means.

3. State support increased by \$1.29 million from 2018-2019 and another \$1.37 million from 2019 to 2020, yet we find the university ‘short’ on funds.
4. Overall revenue increases of \$3.81 million from 2018-2019 and another \$4.94 million from 2019-2020, yet we find the university ‘short’ on funds.
5. Staff layoffs during the same timeframe as new, senior administration positions are created and filled.
6. Increases in administrative positions and salaries resulted in a \$2,000,000 increase in base salaries between 2018 and 2019, almost the exact amount of our deficit.
7. Significant tuition increases with the understanding that the funds would be devoted to new teaching equipment and the funding of new programs. Data and documentation relating to the usage of these revenues to their promised recipients have never been furnished.

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OIT-20-046

The purpose of this policy is to provide criteria and procedures for the evaluation and promotion of non-tenure track instructional faculty at the Oregon Institute of Technology. This policy serves to differentiate non-tenure track instructional faculty appointments from the traditional tenure track faculty. This policy defines the responsibilities of non-tenure track instructional faculty and serves to provide guidance to such faculty and their departments in assessing the appropriateness of their activities. Oregon Tech recognizes several faculty categories. Each category is created to be unique to the responsibilities and expectations of faculty.

As a public university, with constraints imposed by external factors, offering innovative and rigorous applied programs in fast evolving fields, the university, department and programs strive to maintain academic quality while supporting an environment that enables the emergence of new programming and the personnel to teach in those areas. This requires hiring policies that preserve a strong academic environment while providing the flexibility to allow development in new areas. The availability of tenure and non-tenure tracks ensures faculty can pursue successful careers while providing for institutional capacity to thrive. Whenever possible, the regular academic instruction of students should be the responsibility of faculty members to whom the institution is willing to make the commitment of tenure. As such, non-tenure faculty hires should be decided upon by department chairs, in consultation with the college Dean.

Non-tenure track instructional faculty should have the same opportunities to participate in governance and in curricular deliberations as tenure track faculty. Since their primary focus is on pedagogy, they will not be expected to participate at the same level as tenure track faculty in professional development or service and any metrics that may be used to monitor their performance should reflect that.

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Promotion between ranks is intended to:

- Reward excellence in teaching, along with satisfactory or exemplary performance in other areas.
- Provide additional stability through the possibility of an earlier notice of annual appointment, along with the possibility of multi-year contracts.

Evaluation Criteria for Promotion

The following criteria will be used to determine the faculty member's level of performance:

- Maintaining high quality teaching
- Continuing professional growth
- Performing service on behalf of the department
- Demonstrating professional integrity and a willingness to cooperate with colleagues

The concentration of a faculty member's professional activities may shift over time. As faculty progress through their careers, they may devote proportionately more time to different activities such as departmental service, program and curriculum development, teaching, advising, and/or activities related to professional development. Consequently, the expectations for individual faculty members may change. For the purpose of promotion between Instructor ranks, the fundamental criterion is meeting established expectations and goals within the four criteria listed above. Because a faculty member's Annual Performance Evaluation (APE) is based on meeting objectives established in collaboration with the department chair and agreed upon in the Faculty Objectives Plan (FOP), the APE may guide reviewers in assessing the faculty member's performance as the focus of his/her career evolves.

This policy contains criteria for evaluating faculty in instruction, professional development, and departmental service. The criteria in the following section are included here to guide the evaluation process.

Instruction

Given that this is their primary focus at Oregon Institute of Technology, Instructors will excel in teaching in the following ways:

- Demonstrate knowledge of subject matter
- Develop and revise curriculum to meet departmental and course objectives, as appropriate
- Organize and deliver course materials to stimulate interest and discussion
- Demonstrate growth in instruction
- Employ a variety of assessment tools for evaluation of both teaching effectiveness and student learning
- Maintain student numerical evaluations at a departmentally established level

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Professional Development

Faculty will advance knowledge in education and/or areas consistent with institutional, departmental, and personal goals and objectives. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Participate in conferences, workshops and classes in education and/or discipline
- Hold membership and participate in professional organizations within discipline

Departmental Service

While institutional service is not a requirement of promotion for NTT-Faculty, departmental service is encouraged. Faculty should contribute to the advancement of their department and programs consistent with departmental and personal goals and objectives. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Serve on departmental committees
- Participate in student advising and/or student activities
- Contribute to student recruitment and/or retention
- Participate in special projects (i.e., grants, on-campus presentations and conferences, documentation development, etc.)

Additional criteria for promotion review include professional integrity and a willingness to cooperate with colleagues. The following lists are not exhaustive but rather indicative of conduct that promotion review committees should consider.

Professional Integrity

Candidates shall demonstrate professional integrity in the following ways:

- Model high ethical standards as defined by the candidate's profession
- Deal honestly, fairly and openly with colleagues and students
- Respect others
- Accept responsibility for actions and decisions, and their consequences
- Follow through on commitments

Willingness to Cooperate

Candidates shall demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with colleagues in the following ways:

- Accept responsibility for departmental projects that are compatible with and further its mission and long-term goals
- Contribute to a stimulating intellectual environment in the candidate's department
- Abide by departmental decisions
- Follow policies and procedures of the institution

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Instructor I to Instructor II

Eligibility Requirements:

Four full years in current rank, master's degree or higher or industry standard certification as previously defined and documented by the department and approved by the college dean. However, instructors who complete the master's before serving four full years in rank will be eligible to apply for promotion the following April if they meet all other criteria.

Criteria for Promotion:

- Demonstrate excellence in teaching.
- Demonstrate service by contributing to departmental objectives.
- Show evidence of continuing professional development.

Instructor II to Senior Instructor I

Eligibility Requirements:

Four full years in current rank, master's degree or higher.

Criteria for Promotion:

- Continue to demonstrate excellence in teaching, commensurate with rank.
- Demonstrate service by contributing to departmental objectives.
- Show evidence of continuing professional development.

Senior Instructor I to Senior Instructor II

Eligibility Requirements:

At least four full years in current rank, master's degree or higher.

Criteria for Promotion:

- Continue to demonstrate excellence in teaching, commensurate with rank.
- Demonstrate service by contributing to departmental objectives.
- Show evidence of continuing professional development.

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Procedure for Academic Rank Promotion for Non-Tenure Track Instructional Faculty

All parties shall abide by the following timeline. However, the provost may modify the timeline if he/she determines a reasonable need to do so.

By the end of week eight of winter term, the department chair shall organize a departmental committee for promotion review of non-tenure track instructors. All full-time department members, including the candidate, the chair, and tenured/non-tenured faculty, shall elect three committee members: two from within the department, and one from outside the department. If available, one member of the committee should be a non-tenure track faculty member. If there are fewer than two department members eligible to serve, additional committee members shall be elected from outside the department.

Faculty ineligible to serve on the Promotion Review Committee include the department chair, adjuncts, and faculty being considered for promotion. Faculty who have relinquished tenure prior to retirement are eligible to serve. When selecting committee members from outside the department, preference should be given to members of other departments in which the candidate holds a split appointment, and then to faculty most likely to be knowledgeable about the candidate.

Within a week, the department chair shall convene the Promotion Review Committee, which shall select a chair. Each committee member shall sign the statement of ethics document.

Promotion Review Committee's Responsibilities

At its initial meeting, the Promotion Review Committee shall also set a date and location for a meeting to be held during the second or third week of spring term to accept written and verbal comments from students and other interested individuals. A separate comments meeting shall be held for each candidate. The chair of the Promotion Review Committee shall send the time and location information for the comments meeting along with the candidate's name to the Provost's Office by the end of winter term. The Provost's Office is responsible for advertising the comments meeting.

The comments meeting shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- The candidate may not attend the meeting, but will have access to comments in the written report of the committee, as noted below
- Only one person giving comments may be in the room with the committee at a given time
- One member of the committee must keep careful notes of the meeting, indicating the name of each speaker and the content of the remarks. The notes must be sufficiently detailed to capture the essence of the testimony

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The committee may solicit other information to confirm documentation in the candidate's portfolio or to verify comments gathered during its review. However, no anonymous input may be solicited or accepted, nor can sources be kept confidential. Anyone offering verbal or written information must be informed that the candidate will have access to that information and that source anonymity cannot be preserved. In the case of verbal information, careful notes of the conversation must be kept, including the participants' names.

If the candidate has a split appointment at the time of review, the committee shall solicit information from the appropriate departments in which the candidate has served.

The committee will prepare a separate written report for each candidate. The report must indicate the committee's recommendation, agreed to by a simple majority, and include the names and signatures of committee members and their individual votes. In addition, the committee shall list specific activities where the candidate has met or exceeded the promotion criteria and/or identify specific areas where the candidate has not met the criteria. The committee shall submit the report to the department chair by Friday of the sixth week of spring term, along with the candidate's portfolio, notes taken during the comments meeting, and all documentation accepted and used by the Review Committee in its deliberations. The content of the committee's deliberations are confidential and shall not be divulged by its members.

Department Chair's Responsibilities

The department chair shall notify each candidate, in writing, of the committee's recommendation by the end of the seventh week of spring term.

The department chair shall attach a letter of support/non-support to the committee report and forward the report, the letter, the candidate's portfolio and all documentation to the dean by Friday of the eighth week of spring term.

Dean's Responsibilities

The college dean shall review the recommendation from the committee and the department chair's letter and write a letter of evaluation deciding an outcome. The dean shall decide promotion status in each case, and officially notify, by letter, each faculty member by the end of spring term. The dean shall send all documentation other than the e-portfolio related to the review to the faculty member's evaluative file in the Provost's Office in accordance with the Faculty Records Policy (OIT-22-010) by the end of spring term.

Salary Increase for Promotion in Rank

Salary Increase for Promotion in Rank shall be at least 5%.

Extended Non-Tenure Track Appointments after Promotion in Rank

To provide for a greater degree of job security than standard non-tenure track appointments, extended non-tenure track appointments may be recommended. Extended non-tenure

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track appointments are to be proposed only for faculty who have been promoted. Additionally, those appointments can only be made by mutual agreement of the department chair and dean, contingent on stability of funding and departmental needs.

Extended non-tenure track appointments have terms of up to two years and with administrative approval may be extended for one year at the end of each year. This type of appointment thereby leaves the faculty member at the beginning of each year with an appointment having the same length as the prior appointment.

Candidate's Rights

A candidate may request from the chair of the Promotion Review Committee copies of the written documentation collected by the Promotion Review Committee and all notes kept of oral testimony. The candidate must make this request in writing by Monday of the fourth week of spring term. The Promotion Review Committee Chair shall provide the documentation no later than Friday of the fourth week of spring term.

After reviewing testimony given at the comments meeting and all documentation accepted by the Promotion Review Committee, a candidate may request a meeting with the committee to challenge questions of fact. By majority vote, the committee may decide to expunge information from the documentation. This meeting must take place before the committee makes its recommendation and before the fifth week of spring term. Only questions of fact are open to challenge.

The faculty member may respond in writing to the committee report. The response will be attached to the report and sent to the dean through the department chair.

At the conclusion of the review, a candidate may request from the provost, in writing, the Promotion Review Committee's report, the department chair's letter and the dean's decision.

Grievance procedures mandated by OARs 580-021-0050 and 580-021-0055 are located in the Policy and Procedures portion of the Human Resources section of the Oregon Tech website.

Recommended by:

Faculty Senate – March 2nd, 2021 (Revised from policy approved by Faculty Senate Jun 6, 2017)
President's Council –

Approved:

Date: