I. Pre-Senate Working Session (3:00–3:30 p.m.)

II. Call to Order by Senate President David Bringman at 3:31pm (Appendix A)

III. Senate Action

A. Approval of Minutes from September 25, 2017 Faculty Senate Meeting (Approved 30-0)

B. Brief Remarks from Dr. Jennifer Frum, University President: Not Present.

C. Brief Remarks from Dr. Chris Curtis, Interim Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs: Advising started today. We’ve made an effort to do the 15 to finish in recent years. We are not hitting that target and we don’t know why. Take this back to your departments for their input. Consolidation update – curriculum is going to pace. It’s a tight target. Wednesday last week was a bad day. I appreciate your efforts as campus leaders at communicating with your faculty senate leadership. We are trying to learn from this. We start our last 8 weeks of the term this week as Armstrong State University. We can’t control what people who want to terrorize are doing. But, how we deal with it as an institution and how we stand together, we do have control over. I know we worry about the threat of violence and the safety of our students. I appreciate the concern we all have. President Frum appreciates your willingness to communicate and move forward. Questions?

Question: I don’t purport to speak for every black faculty member. This brought abject fear into our community of African-American faculty, staff, and students. I had a faculty colleague who told me that she only had one African-American student in class the next day. We are underwhelmed with how President Frum handled this. At the very least, we should have had counseling available. GBI is supposedly handling this, but never informed us of the results of the shooting investigation some time ago. The fear is real and is not going away. I’m not afraid, I am pissed. I don’t feel the campus is yet handling this appropriately. ASU was started as a school formed by white people who did not want to go to school with black people. That we are ending as ASU with this threat to black people is horrendous.

Response: I appreciate your words. We did make counseling services available to students right away. We also did have African-American students attending class. We did communicate students should not be penalized for not coming to class. But, our students were out there – our African-American students were out there. It is an insult to their strength to say they weren’t out there. We need to make sure the message we are sending out is that we are proud of our students and want to take care of them.

Comment: That’s not the narrative we are putting forward. We have tried to communicate to our students – don’t be afraid. I’m telling you what my white colleagues are telling me.
Question: When was this message found?
Response: Tuesday afternoon.
Comment: We get an email Wednesday. Would the response have been different had this been a bomb threat?
Response: That's a reasonable analogy, but not a great analogy. This was a message that was not broadly communicated. It wasn't put out on Facebook. It was written in a restroom.
Comment: Why do we have to wait 24 hours? I learned more from WSAV then from my Deans and Dept. Heads. They got a vague message.
Response: We work through different means of communication. The official email went out at 11:00. Unofficial communications went out previously.
Comment: A downed power line gets an immediate Blast message and a racial threat gets a delayed email.
Response: The question is do we want to foster this? The point of terrorism is to terrorize.
Question: Since Columbine, we've had a lot of time to put together procedures. We should be proactively implementing these procedures. We should know, right now, what those procedures are. Our students were panicked because they didn't know what to do.
Response: That's the value of having these discussions.
Question: What are our procedures?
Response: We have lock down procedures for an active shooter. In the eyes of our investigators, this did not rise to that threat level. We are investigating, yes. We are continuing to investigate. You don’t make good decisions based on fear.
Question: I've been on some emergency response teams. I know there are multiple response paths, depending on the situation. We have people here who know what those protocols are.
Comment: In 2017, you don't want to be terrorized. You want to control the story. However, the alternative to sending out a Blast message is not to keep information from faculty, it is to let faculty know so that they aren't finding out from Facebook.
Statement read by faculty member:
On Tuesday, two disturbing events occurred. The first was the discovery of a racist threat of gun violence in the Science Center. I am certain we agree that such expressions are deplorable, horrifying, and must be denounced. The second was the decision by our administration that the threat was an idle one even though it was an immediate one, using the word "today." Several hundred students, staff, and faculty present in the Science Center were not informed. In fact, we heard of it almost 24 hours later just before the Savannah Morning News broke the story. In the absence of any information regarding how the decision was made, I am livid that the administration chose to gamble with so many lives, keeping their fingers crossed that nothing would happen. I had a right to know of the threat as soon as it was discovered but since that information was not shared, I have no confidence that future incidents will be handled differently. The fact that a downed power line prompted an immediate response amplifies the negligence displayed on Tuesday.
Response: Do you want to talk about the investigation and the process? I’ll cede the floor to the Deputy Chief (see Section D below).

Continuation of remarks and questions for Dr. Chris Curtis:
Question: Where is President Frum?
Response: She is in Atlanta. She has a meeting with the Chancellor and a dinner tonight.
Question: At what point do you make a determination that there is a need to meet with the faculty senate given that you haven’t thus far attended a senate meeting and given recent events that faculty are very concerned by, so that you rearrange your schedule?
Response: She did rearrange her schedule to meet with senate leadership this morning.
Comment: We should have been told as soon as the first administrator was told.
Response: But a Blast would cause the same problems and chaos in the classroom.
Comment: This is symptomatic of a larger pattern. She has informed senate leadership that they should not send forward resolutions. She did not inform faculty about the Health Sciences Building ribbon cutting, except a hand chosen few. She is not here at senate meetings.
Comment: I did receive direction from our Dean and we did communicate to Dept. Heads. There was some attempt Tuesday afternoon. Deans were communicated with and attempted to bring Dept. Heads and faculty into the loop. In terms of protocol, we don’t have these things laid out for us. I asked Dr. Frum if I could bring this up for discussion in the classroom and she said “yes.”
Comment: We have never had any training. We’ve talked somewhat about active shooter situations, but there are so many situations that we need to know how to deal with.
Question: Has the President’s office made any plans to have a campus conversation where faculty, staff, and students are together to talk about things like this.
Response: Yes, we’ve talked about this with the diversity council and we’ve talked in president’s council. So, yes, you’ll be hearing about a campus conversation.
Question: If this would happen tomorrow, will we hear about it right away?
Response: Yes.

D. Brief Remarks from Chief Deputy McBride
Chief Laura McCullough (Chief of GSU): You can always reach out to me. I am here on campus quite a bit. Tyrone is your contact here on campus. We’ve had a lot that has gone on this week. You have a lot of questions and concerns.
Chief Deputy Tyrone McBride (Active Chief on ASU): Today I was supposed to talk about de-escalation. Since there are pressing issues, I could come back at a later date to talk about that.
Question: Can you talk about the incident and the protocol for determining risk level?
Response: When our students came to our office, at that time, it was already getting put on social media. At that point, we tried to investigate witnesses and suspects. We
preserved evidence and then had it cleaned up. We started working with administration right off the bat. Our next step is to let the Chief McCullough know. Officer presence was there – on campus – Tuesday afternoon. We started working it right away. Preliminary investigation is when our officers go out to a scene. We then turn it over to our investigators.

Question: How is the threat assessed?
Response: There is a continuum that comes up. If we could have put a hand on sometime at the time, we can conclude immediate threat.

Question: So, if someone called in with a bomb threat, what would be different?
Response: Part of my past study in law enforcement is in threat assessment. It has to do with the language, the wording, the time frame. There are times we’ve had bomb threats when we haven’t closed campus down. Other times, the wording does cause us to lean toward greater caution. I can tell you this didn’t reach that level. When we saw the image with the meme, that increased our concern, but we were able to quickly identify the poster and understand the context.

Question: Could this have gone wrong? Does this happen often?
Response: I can’t say this happens often, sure things can go wrong. This time social media beat us to the punch.

Comment: Knowing that social media does beat you to the punch, doesn’t it increase the importance of keeping faculty informed?
Response: I can’t respond to that part. I can say we are still investigating.

Question: Wasn’t the second post because of a lack of response?
Response: No. We had already been cleaning it up.

Comment: The issue seems to be that it would have given faculty, staff, and students more comfort if we had seen a police presence for the rest of the week.
Response: We brought in officers. We had more officers on campus and they were in high traffic areas. They were in buildings. They were on foot.

Comment: I was in the Science Center until 9pm – for the entire day. I didn’t see a single officer.
Comment: I was too – all day – and didn’t see a single officer.
Response: We did hourly checks.

Question: Do we have cameras in that building?
Response: No.

Comment: One of my concerns is that this could be someone who is not part of our Armstrong community. Our police station now is not up front and we have problematic through traffic.
Response: We don’t have gates. We want the community to come in. I also think – what if…. We’re not going to stop you if you don’t “look like” a student, because “what does a student look like”? All we can do is try to remain vigilant. If someone is an issue and causing problems, then we ban them from campus. If they come back, we arrest them.
Response: We need you all to be vigilant too. If you notice things that concern you, please let us know.
Comment: That was one of our points, is that if faculty had been informed, we could have been on the look-out and perhaps provided some information.
Response: We’ve heard that from students as well. We are still learning the best way to get information out to everyone on this campus.
Question: Was there any formal report made? Can you share the information about level of threat?
Response: We constantly communicate with the administration. We were in constant communication. The only formal report is a police report. Right now, this is still an active investigation.
Question: Will the police report have the information about the assessment of level of threat?
Response: Yes, that will be in part of the report, but it isn’t ready to be released yet.
Comment: I would love to be able to find out who made this threat.
Question: When did the student who posted the photo see the writing?
Response: After class. A 30 minute window.
Question: Have you used the social media analytics to see when the first post occurred?
Response: Yes.

Motion to move into executive session (4:30pm). Second.

Motion to move back into regular session (5:02pm).

Senate President David Bringman: We are now back in regular session.

Senator: I make a motion to present and vote on the resolution for a vote of no confidence in President Frum. Second.

Reading of resolution (Appendix B):
Whereas the faculty are concerned about a pattern of a lack of transparency, lack of engagement with the faculty senate, disregard for faculty concerns, and effective communication, be it resolved that the faculty senate of Armstrong State University lacks confidence in the leadership of Interim President Dr. Jennifer Frum.

Discussion from floor?

Comment: I think this is going to hurt the campus, and not Dr. Frum. This will hurt our leaders going forward. This will not impact me, but this may demonstrate some problems with our campus and our ability to effectively manage ourselves moving forward.

Comment from Dr. Chris Curtis: My sense is this also is directed at me and my ability to lead moving forward. I would feel the need to resign my position.
Comment: This does not have your name on this. This is not directed at you.

Comment: This was not our only concern (what happened last week).

Dr. Curtis: But I was involved in the decision making last week.

Comment: At the end of the day – the buck stops with the President.

Comment: I will give you an example where a decision was overruled. Finals week. Faculty and academic leadership made a recommendation and it was overruled.

Dr. Curtis: We had a conversation and her concern was about faculty and students having to stay around an extra week.

Comment: Another example – we then lost our day to give our standardized exam.

Dr. Curtis: This is an unusual semester. The President plays a key role in the university, but all of these decisions are made in conversation with faculty – Dean’s council, etc. This vote will shape the discussion for the next few months about what the senate will be in the new university.

Comment: You’ve taken this to the highest level that faculty can speak. But she is only here for 8 more weeks. This will have long-term outcomes. If there is another way to give a message of disagreement, I would encourage you to do that.

Question: This is all going in the records? In the minutes. This is already public record. Has the objective been met just by having this debate.

Comment: How does this look from the outside? We might be viewed as being bitter, lashing out, because we are the underdog. I would have liked to have had feedback from others in my department before voting on this.

Comment: Dr. Frum has made note of a faculty member whining – she made that comment in front of her colleagues. I feel as though President Frum lashed out at someone who was unable to respond.

Question: I wonder, this incident came up quick. Is there anything we could craft that would ask for more engagement?

Response: This has already been put forward as is.

Senator: I call the question.

Second.
We are voting to end discussion. (24-5). Discussion has ended.

We are moving on to do the actual vote of no confidence.

Senator: I would like to table the resolution. Second.

Discussion on tabling?

Question: Do you have a date?

Comment: No.

Question: What is the implication of tabling with no date?

Response: The last time that happened, was with the DACA resolution, which was tabled and caused problems for Cliff and our university in the consolidation.

Can I make a friendly amendment to table it until November 27th?

Senator proposing tabling: Yes.

All in favor of tabling until next regularly scheduled meeting? (Approved 22-8).

Please share the proposed new senate bylaws with your colleagues.

Other business from today’s agenda has been moved to next meeting.

Motion to adjourn? Yes. Second.

IV. Adjournment at 5:25pm
V. Minutes completed by:
   Wendy Wolfe
   Faculty Senate Secretary Fall, 2017
Appendices
   A. Attendance Sheet
   B. Resolution
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Appendix A

Faculty Senators and Alternates for Fall, 2017 (Senate Meeting 10/16/17)
Whereas the faculty are concerned about a pattern of a lack of transparency, lack of engagement with the faculty senate, disregard for faculty concerns, and effective communication, be it resolved that the faculty senate of Armstrong State University lacks confidence in the leadership of Interim President Dr. Jennifer Frum.