

Faculty Senate Minutes
March 2, 2018
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Room: Modular Building A, room 1B

Call to Order

Attendees: Ann Bliss, Andrew Sanders, Amy Porter, Jenny Wilson, Rodolfo Valdez, Ed Westermann, Billy Kiser, Claire Nolasco, Deirdre McDonald, Marina Narvaez, Bob Shelton, Lawrence Scott, Scott Gage, Ramona Pittman, Caroline O'Quinn, Robert Vinaja, Scott Peters, Gilbert Barrera

Online: Robin Kapavik, Ramona Pittman

Approval of Minutes- Peters makes a motion to accept the motion, and it is approved.

Administrative Updates-

(Dr. O'Brien) – Budget has gone through the URC. There are 24 positions that were approved. We will front load money for academic positions that will be searched for in 2019. This allows us to stockpile money for start-up for new faculty. We need to be taking a long road initiative for these open lines. There is \$200,000 in the research council. \$100,000 was added to the research council fund, but he would like advice on how to use it correctly. It could be used for other things for faculty.

Valdez: The purchase of items must be done through vendors and that does not always work. There are particulars that might need to be refigured to account for the specialized equipment. Software is an example of that. Accounting does not want us to do this. So, what is to be done?

Provost: This shouldn't have been happening. There are new staff that need a chance, but you should be able to do this now. Just give them some time.

Westermann: We are growing. Are we going to have the space? Is there a plan for this strategic growth?

Provost: The answer is 800 students new this fall. We don't need a study. Avg. classroom use is 60 hours. More portables must be done before fall. New academic building is slotted to open in 2020, and the other needs to be opened in 2022 and not 2025.

Executive Committee Updates- (Amy Porter) – Executive Committee Report- March 2, 2018

· Lorrie Webb has been invited to the April meeting to update us about the work on Jag Tracks, and she plans to attend.

Alumni Power Hour: Thursday March 22 at noon at the Patriots Casa. Faculty should attend.

Please help get people to the Starving the Beast screening

Texas Council of Faculty Senates Report

The meeting began with a panel consisting of Evan Smith who is the CEO and Co-Founder of The Texas Tribune, Rep. Donna Howard (Dem. From Austin who sits on the Higher Education Administration and Appropriations Committee), and Commissioner Ray Paredes of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. They reviewed the 85th Legislative Session noting they entered it with budget problems; they had to look to cut money where they don't have to give money by law. They believed that for Higher Ed Policy the session was a wash; the biggest change was that they authorized community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees; said there had not been a stampede to do this because it is a lot of work to get the accreditation to do this. It was noted that dual credit programs have bumped up enrollment at Community colleges. A question was posed- with the population growth in the state, are we prepared for this growth? - answer: the college-going rate of HS seniors has declined over the past two years; we need to stop treating public education and higher education as separate entities, so in the last session when the legislature did not reform public school funding, it has a huge impact on higher education. Next question: Do all kids need to go to college? Answers: The 60 by 30 Texas Strategic Plan says that at least 60% of Texans aged 25-34 will have a degree or certification by 2030 so that we will have the people ready to fill jobs that exist or will exist; Paredes said that we send 52% of HS grads to college, so we are a long way from sending too many; he noted that even vocational jobs require some higher education, and data still shows that college grads earn more money than vocational grads; so for the 60 by 30 goal we are at about 42% now; finally on this issue he said that around 2000 Texas was undereducated so the goal was to get Texas to average.

They also discussed outcomes-based funding that is trying to get students to graduate in less than 6 years; data shows that students who do not finish in 6 years have less success in finishing (except for at UTEP); there have been mixed reactions to the outcomes-based formula funding- the best plan in their opinion is to create different matrices for different institutions, and let the institutions pick what fits them. Commissioner Paredes said that the Higher Ed Coordinating Board is required to make funding recommendations to the legislature, and the board regularly recommends higher levels of funding than is given; yet, institutions can do better with the money (he was not a fan of new medical schools for one); he hates unpaid internships and says they are grossly discriminatory; he also does not like faculty members not teaching due to grant buy outs. Paredes also said that universities should have admissions standards which meet the commitment to help all students to succeed; he said it is immoral to accept students that universities know cannot succeed.

DACA discussion- There was not a lot beyond statements, providing resources to students and asking legislators to resolve DACA; at UTRGV students have asked for a DREAM center and DREAMER advocate training where a person who had completed the training could put a sign on their door and provide support to students

Round up report trends from other universities: Many campuses are working on defining titles for non-tenure track faculty and working to create paths to promotion for them, salary compression continues to be a major concern, several schools mentioned that their numbers of international students have declined and that has hurt the schools financially.

Sanders: It might be a cultural piece wherein it thought that we all carry guns and the political issues might be causing issues.

· Most universities have not had merit raises this year; some schools were going through competitive salary adjustments (U of H), and West Texas A&M Senate is conducting a study comparing faculty merit raises to administrator merit raises. UNT has a new Provost who has made Deans send out their goals to faculty and the faculty complete a survey evaluating how well the Deans have done in accomplishing these goals

We are supposed to do rolling evaluations. They should be happening this year, yearly. Porter will follow up concerning the dean evaluations. What happens with them and what is the purpose. Westermann: There would be a feedback loop. If communication comes up in those surveys, then it should be brought up. The problem is that did we know what the areas of weakness are and then see growth. Shelton: The 60/30 plan. It is an unfunded mandate. Porter: The legislature session talked a lot about funding in public education. Higher education is connected to secondary education, and there are funding issues. Barrera: As we grow, what is our vehicle as faculty to reach out to the legislature? Does Faculty Senate have feedback on this legislative session? Do we just go forth as individuals? Porter: We pass resolutions, and then we can move through the process to make our positions known. In addition, AAUP and TACT (Texas Association of College Teachers) can act: both contact and advocate on the behalf of college teachers. Palo Alto has a chapter. It might be something we want to add to our campus.

O'Quinn: How do we support our students who are DACA students? Silvia Medel in International Affairs can help. If someone is struggling, then that is where to go. Barerra: Disclosing your status is very scary right now. Peters: Go to Counseling and Wellness as they are bound by confidentiality.

Old Business

Program Coordinator description/responsibilities (Andrew Sanders)- Acquired many documents. The positions were created when we were much broader departments. It is recommended by Porter that we circulate it and revisit the issue. Valdez: I'd like to see where this is all supposed to go. Faculty Senate should ask where this is coming from and how do the PCs fit into the scheme of things. It can't be that it is a job that happens and then is gone or that is added and then taken away. Nolasco: Some of the PC responsibilities are being overlapped with the chair and then sometimes with the Dean.

Timely distribution of contracts and faculty evaluations (Bob Shelton, Ann Bliss, Jenny Wilson): Shouldn't it be that there are 2 different letters (dean and chair) and should be independent of one another and thus not echoing the same comments. Gilbert: Does the chair have complete veto power or, what is the extent of the authority? Westermann: They are able to change faculty evaluations, and thus basically, we have taken some of the load off the chairs. Valdez: When the panel of faculty has a different view, or balances the talk in the meeting, it could be that there is a skewed view of the faculty. Shelton: Is there a way? It is a chair's responsibility to know how they want to use the

report. Westermann: The committee votes. The recommendation is sent to the chair. They can accept or make another recommendation. Whatever the faculty committee's recommendation is, it should be forwarded. It should then be TWO reports. Shelton: There is a complete lack of checks and balances. Valdez: Instead of adding severe policing, we need to make sure that faculty are being told when they are needing improvement. Porter: Would like to see a resolution on this next meeting. Add to points #3 and #4 such that there is more detail.

Recommendations:

- *Faculty evaluation and reappointment letters become two independent actions.*
- *Faculty evaluations timeframes be changed from a Calendar Year to an Academic Year.*
- *Hard dates for Faculty evaluations be established at the University level.*
- *An appeals process be implemented.*
- *Suggested Calendar using 2017-18 Academic Calendar:*

	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
	<i>Action</i>	<i>1st Year Faculty Retention for Year 2</i>	<i>2nd Year Faculty Retention for Year 3</i>	<i>3rd Year and subsequent Years Retention / Tenure</i>	<i>Promotion</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Deadline for written statement of intent</i>				<i>29-Sept-17</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Faculty begin to update dossiers</i>	<i>01-Aug-17</i>	<i>16-Jun-17</i>	<i>01-Aug-17</i>	<i>4-Oct-17</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Dossiers submitted</i>	<i>08-Jan-18</i>	<i>08-Sept-17</i>	<i>08-Jan-18</i>	<i>08-Jan-18</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Dossiers reviewed Department level</i>	<i>12-Jan-18</i>	<i>12-Sept-17</i>	<i>12-Jan-18</i>	<i>12-Jan-18</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>Deadline for Department comm. report</i>	<i>22-Jan-18</i>	<i>22-Sept-17</i>	<i>02-Feb-18</i>	<i>02-Feb-18</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>Deadline for Chair's report</i>	<i>25-Jan-18</i>	<i>27-Sept-17</i>	<i>07-Feb-18</i>	<i>07-Feb-18</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>Deadline for candidate to appeal Departmental-level report</i>				
<i>8</i>	<i>Dossiers available for College comm. Review</i>	<i>05-Feb-18</i>	<i>6-Oct-17</i>	<i>16-Feb-18</i>	<i>16-Feb-18</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>Deadline for College comm. report to be provided to Candidate</i>	<i>14-Feb-18</i>	<i>20-Oct-17</i>	<i>02-Mar-18</i>	<i>02-Mar-18</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>Deadline for</i>	<i>20-Feb-18</i>	<i>25-Oct-17</i>	<i>15-Mar-18</i>	<i>15-Mar-18</i>

	<i>Deans' report to be provided to Candidate</i>				
11	<i>Dossiers available for Provost Review</i>	<i>21-Feb-18</i>	<i>26-Oct-17</i>	<i>21-Mar-18</i>	<i>21-Mar-18</i>
12	<i>Deadline for candidates to appeal College-level report</i>				
13	<i>Dossier available for T&P Appeals Board review</i>				
14	<i>Deadline for T&P Appeals Board recommendation regarding College Level Report</i>				
15	<i>Deadline for Provost's report provided to the candidate / Available for President's review</i>	<i>16-Mar-18</i>	<i>15-Nov-17</i>	<i>5-Apr-18</i>	<i>5-Apr-18</i>
16	<i>Deadline for candidates appeal the Provost's report</i>	<i>21-Mar-18</i>	<i>21-Nov-17</i>	<i>11-Apr-18</i>	<i>11-Apr-18</i>
17	<i>Deadline for T&P Appeals Board recommendation regarding Provost's Report</i>				
18	<i>Deadline for President to notify candidates of actions</i>	<i>30-Mar-18</i>	<i>7-Dec-17</i>	<i>27-Apr-18</i>	<i>27-Apr-18</i>

Committee Reports-

Elections-Formed the Distinguished Faculty Committee and they will be meeting soon.

New Business

Defining Lecturer Positions and Paths to Promotion (Scott Gage)- Coming as a director of freshman composition: In working with non-tenure track faculty, there are material consequences to not having policy regarding these positions. Asking for us to take on this issue and according to 12.07 recognizes those faculty positions as having the ability to have multi-year contracts and categories of different titles. Liberal Arts at College Station clearly encapsulates the qualifications etc. that then gives them a pathway to stable employment. Recommends a policy that would be appropriate for our university. None are tenureable, but each category has a different requirement. After 5 years, faculty can submit a dossier and then go through review and be approved for a title and promotion change. Valdez: What is the point of doing this if we need to be hiring more tenure track? Gage: Some of the lecturers aren't sure if they are even coming back the following semester. Westermann: This is a long overdue initiative. It shows that we value their contributions. Shelton: How do these implied raises work in accordance with the title changes? Porter: Scott, Sanders, and Vinaja, Shelton will meet after the Provost has looked at it and has given some feedback. The policy will also be discussed in terms of Library. O'Quinn: Information about how the salaries are set for full-time lecturers.

Students bringing children to class (Jenny Wilson)-

Westermann: This is a policy issue. This can be an auditing issue as well (taking a course without paying). This needs to be made a recommendation. Porter: Conversations need to be had with student affairs. Valdez: When you regulate and create policy it could be that the outcome isn't what you want. Porter: The Provost will be consulted.

Final Exam Scheduling (Nolasco)-

Shelton: This was looked at before, and it was said that faculty wanted a 2 hour time block for final exams. This became mute when this schedule came out. Westermann: There is software that does this. Kiser: This is policy, and problems shouldn't be happening.

ISSUES REGARDING FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE (1) The Spring 2018-16 week final exam schedule provides the same final exam time to multiple classes that do not have overlapping normal class meeting times. a) Some faculty teaching classes at different days and times were assigned the same final exam day and time. Some students taking different classes at different days and times were assigned the same final exam day and time. b) This leads to scheduling conflicts for faculty and/or students (who end up being double or triple booked, since two or even three of their classes were assigned the same final exam time). (2) There does not seem to be a good quality control process to check for such conflicts when the administration is creating the final exam schedule. a) There needs to be someone in the administration closely examining the assigned final exam times so that the same final exam times are not assigned to multiple classes that do not normally have overlapping class times. b) Once those conflicts are identified, the final exam schedule needs to promptly and proactively modified so that these conflicts are not a continuing issue. c) Faculty members should not be relied on to detect schedule conflicts (most faculty are not going to invest the time to scan the schedule to see if other classes have the same assigned final exam time their classes do). (3) When faculty members give feedback regarding detecting schedule conflicts, the problem is not addressed in a timely manner and faculty may even have to give the same feedback repeatedly in order to see any revision addressing the issue enacted. (4) As an alternative, the former practice of scheduling final exams during regular class time slots should be considered. (5) The university should consider looking at and following how other universities handle creating final exams schedules. a) Several faculty members have indicated that their prior institutions did not have such problems with final exam schedules. Example: (1) One faculty's Thursday 2 pm class has the same assigned final exam time as two other classes that have different class times. All of the following classes have the same final exam time (Friday, May 11th 1:30 – 4 pm) MWF 1 pm classes Thursday 2 pm classes Friday 2 pm classes a. Students may be enrolled in all three classes and be expected to be in three places at once for final exams. b. Despite repeated feedback of the scheduling conflict by the faculty involved to the administration, the conflict was not resolved. (2) The attached schedule

also shows that there are many other cases of the same final exam time being assigned to classes leading to double or triple booking students and/or faculty.

Announcements

***Starving the Beast* screening: March 20 at 7:00 pm in the Vista Room**

Adjournment: 12:59pm.