Faculty Senate
Held on: November 3, 2004, 3:00 p.m.
Held at: Gray Library

Senators present:Sandra Brannan; Peggy Doerschuk; George Irwin; Paul, Nicoletto; Christine Bridges-Esser; Terri Davis; Rick Altemose; Valentin Andreev; Paul Griffith; Alec Matheson; Dennis Miller, Martha Rinker; Dianna Rivers; Iva Hall; Shelia Smith; Emma Hawkins; Mike Mathis; Steve Zani; Jim Cammack; Celia Varick; Larry Allen; Jai Young Choi; Fara Goulas; George Strickland; Dan Chilek; Lula Henry; Bill Holmes; Bernadette Moore; Paul Corder; Mien Jao; Hsing-Wei Chu; John Gossage; Bernard Maxum; Kurt Dyrhaug; Ann Matlock; Sumalai Maroonroge; Nicki Michaleski; Jeff Lacy; Sara Tusa, Joe Kemble.

Senators absent: Don Owen; Dave Castle; Lee Thompson; Kakoli Bandyopadhyay; Nhung Nguyen; Kimberly Chalambaga; O’Brien Stanley; Jeff Wisor; Kim Ellis.

I. Call to order
II. A motion was made by Hsing-Wei Chu and seconded by Dianna Rivers to approve the October Faculty Senate Minutes
III. PRESIDENT’S REPORT: Bill Holmes
A. Update from the Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS) meeting October 22-23, 2004 in Austin.
1. TSUS Council of Faculty Senates business meeting and meeting with Chancellor Urbanovsky
a. These will probably not be a roll-back of tuition—you’ve got it—use it.
b. A draft of a new accountability system was presented October 28, 2004 to the Coordinating Board (admin cost will be one of the measures).
c. Looks like tuition increases will be the only way to increase revenue for awhile.
d. For the most part, TSUS schools are doing well on “closing the gaps.”
e. Chancellor will check on rules related to personal days off.
f. Chancellor search
2. TCFS Meeting (with TACT and AAUP)
a. Ruth Flowers, American Association of University Professors—discussed academic freedom. She cautioned us to beware of the so-called “Academic Bill of Rights.” This may be an attempt to control what professors say in the classroom. It could create academic “watch dogs.”
b. Catherine Parsoneault—Coordinating Board update.
a. Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS)
b. Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT)—approved July 15, 2004
c. Draft of accountability system for Texas Higher Education
c. Flavius Killebrew, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, West Texas A&M University, discussed several issues facing Higher Education, especially the draft of the accountability system.
d. Roundup Reports—discuss questions
e. Regional Meeting—Topics
a. Honor codes
b. Role of administers in Faculty Senate
c. Family friendly policies
f. Banquet: Dr. Raymond Paredes, Commissioner of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, emphasized closing the gaps and accountability system.
g. TCFS business meeting
a. Reports of officers—no change in dues--$300
b. Constitution and by-laws revision
c. Spring meeting February 18-19, 2005
d. Resolution supporting the rights of the Faculty Senate at Texas A&M University, Kingsville.

B. I have been asked by President Simmons to join him and Steve Doblin, Mike Ferguson, Barry Johnson, Kevin Smith, and Stephanie Yearwood on the Lamar University Leadership Team, which will direct our Institution through the upcoming Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaffirmation process.

C. Kim Chalambaga his agreed to serve as a Faculty Senate representative on the Distance Education Committee.

D. Rick Dyson has resigned as a Faculty Senator representing the Library. Sarah Tusa has been elected to finish his term.

E. Faculty Senate feedback on presentations related to student evaluations has been given to the President and Provost. At this time, there will not be a University-wide buy in with an external vendor. One or two Colleges may choose to experiment with the online.com vendor to determine if that approach has merit worth further study. A committee will be formed to work on our internal approach to student evaluations.

F. After discussing the results of the Faculty Senate survey concerning the salary raise notification process with the President and Provost, they agreed that it might be helpful for us to create a template for Chairs to use in this process. The Budget and Compensation Committee will create this form and present it to the Senate for review and approval, and then pass it on to CID and ACD for review and adoption.

G. Concerns about how well academic computing needs are being met continue to surface. The President and Provost seem to be committed to seeing an improvement in this area, and to study if it would help to remove Academic Computing from Administrative Computing.

H. Plans for Cardinal Village 4 are on hold right now. It seems that someone in the private sector is considering building an almost 390 bed facility in the area.

I. Lamar is not currently charging out-of-state tuition to a student after taking a course three times.

J. The Director of Developmental Studies will teach.

K. An adjunct faculty member, Damon Falke, has been invited to attend Faculty Senate meetings as an observer.

L. I still need election results for one position from FAC and three positions from A&S.

M. There is currently an ongoing national search for an Executive Director of International Admissions and Services.

N. Campus Safety Committee has recommended additional safety measures for the campus (more lighting, more cameras, speeding signs in parking lots).

O. Policy on minors.

P. Ad hoc committee recommendations on promotion of full-time, non-tenure track faculty.

Q. The May 2004 draft by the Committee to review policies on performance evaluation of faculty and post tenure review has been adopted after changes were made based on Faculty Senate input. One issue related to Marginal Performance (2—no merit) and Unsatisfactory Performance (1—no raise) is still being discussed.

R. I am on the Committee that is working with President Simmons to select a consultant for a feasibility study for a fundraising campaign.

S. Faculty Senate has been asked to consider providing an orientation for Tenure/Promotion Committees. We have also been asked if it would be helpful for faculty, if we provided orientation to candidates for tenure/promotion.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Academic Issues: Terri Davis

The committee will be discussing several issues: the survey from last year; a vehicle policy; grade change policy, and the exceptional student admissions. Nicki Michalski, a member of the committee recommended that the committee present the Senate with a resolution about the proposed grade appeal policy. From comments received and from her own perspective, there are some potentially large problems with the policy that the Senate should address or at least let Dr. Steve Doblin know we are concerned about the policy.

These are the concerns:
• A legal concern about changing the focus of the process from procedural to substantive
• Encouraging the student to believe that they do not carry a burden of proof in the process
• The release of confidential information to students (e.g., tests and grade books)
• A violation of the established chain of command
• A negative impact on academic freedom because of the shift to the substantive focus
• An increase in grade appeals
• A violation of the established procedure (although she thought this is moot because he new procedure would replace the old)

B. Faculty Issues: Hsing Wei Chu

We support the policy on e-mail communication: “It is expected that all faculty, staff and students will read university e-mail sent to their campus address at least once every week, and that campus action may be based on this exception. This policy applies to students during any semester/session/term the student is enrolled and to faculty and staff during periods of contracted employment, except official holidays or other periods when the campus is closed.”

We do not support the policy on electronic office hours for faculty: “In addition to regular office hours, faculty are encouraged to post and maintain electronic office hours during which they will be available to interact with their students via e-mail and/or similar forms of electronic communication.”

After discussion, Bill Holmes referred the issues back to committee for further deliberation and discussion.

C. Budget & Compensation: Ann Matlock

The Budget and Compensation committee met on October 13, 2004, and is scheduled to meet next Wednesday. November 10 at 3:00 p.m. in conference room 218, Galloway.

We discussed the results of the questionnaire that was sent out to members of the faculty senate, about the process by which faculty are now being informed about their merit and other salary increases. This questionnaire followed the form of the resolution passed last year by the faculty senate on this issue. The committee found a number of areas of concern in the results of this survey, which we are now distributing to members of the Faculty Senate.

The following are the areas of most concern:

- Question #3: A large majority of faculty was informed of their merit category, but very few received the other information that would have helped them to see the amount of the raises allocated to each category (see 3.b&c).

No faculty member reported learning the number of faculty in their department at each merit level or the percentage at each level in the college.

Only one faculty member reported receiving the average for the department (see 3.d, e, f).

- Question #4: Over half of the faculty reported that they were not informed of the amount of their equity raise prior to receiving their official FY2004 - 2005 contract.

- Question#6 - Almost half of the faculty reported that they do not know how their merit raise is calculated.

- Questions #8 and #9: About two thirds of the faculty reported that they were not informed of the “process,” which included specifics on calculation of raises prior to receiving notification. Almost two thirds reported that the “process” was not shared and agreed upon (sanctioned) by the departmental faculty.

These results were reported to the executive committee of the Faculty Senate and to the President and Vice President on Wednesday, October 20. The committee was asked to develop a form for chairs to use in informing faculty about their annual evaluations and salary raises. That will be the main order of business at the next meeting of the Budget and Compensation Committee next Wednesday, November 10. We have some samples of forms to look at and we invite any faculty member whose department uses a form that the faculty find useful, to please be in touch with us about it.

The Budget and Compensation committee also will be setting the agenda for our work for spring 2005, and we would appreciate any input from faculty about issues that you would like us to work on

D. Development & Research: Rick Altemose

Rick reported that the committee has received and will be evaluating 8 Developmental Leave Proposals to be voted on by the Faculty Senate at the December meeting.

E. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer: Dianna Rivers:

Dianna commended Dr. Terri Davis for her excellent Distinguished Faculty Lecture (DFL) on October 18, 2004, sponsored by Entergy Texas and Faculty Senate. Dianna also thanked the Faculty Senate for their support, and the DFL Committee for their wonderful and diligent work in providing the event. The DFL event included the dinner for 103 persons at the John Gray Library, the excellent lecture at the University Theater for over 500 persons, and the well-attended reception at the Dishman Art Museum.

Dianna has completed an orientation book for the next Chair of the DFLAC event, Fara Goulas, and will provide orientation to Dr. Goulas. This spring semester is packed with tasks to be accomplished by the Chair in order to have a successful event. Some of the responsibilities include organizing the next DFLAC committee, calling for nominees from the university and community, providing applications and encouraging responses from the nominees, having the committee systematically review, rank and select the lecturer, and then announcing the winner to the university and community.

The DFL committee meets next Wednesday, November 10, 2004, 3pm, in the Family & Consumer Science Building, room 106 for final wrap-up and critique of the event. Again, Dianna thanked the faculty senate for continued support of the important event.

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. New Business

There was no new business.

VII. Open Discussion/Comments

• Terri Davis asked about the new F2.08 schedule which Begins in January, 2005 and covers the previous two full semesters.
• Dianna Rivers indicated that some had not heard about the new schedule.
• Celia Varick was concerned about students who receive handicapped stickers, but are not handicapped.
• Bill Holmes encouraged faculty to participate in the “Cardinal Light” program.
• Peggy Doerschuk had a question about the raise category 2 that indicated that a person would receive no merit, but could receive a raise. Bill Holmes asked that Peggy put her concerns in writing.
• Dianna Rivers asked if there was an appeal available for the merit raise process

VIII. Adjourn