Lamar University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2006

Senators Present: Arts and Sciences: Valentin Andreev, Nancy Blume, Kenneth Dorris, Jeff Forret, Emma Hawkins, George Irwin, Hikyoo Koh, Jim Love, Mike Mathis, Dianna Rivers, Steve Zani; Business: Kakoli Bandyopadhyay, Jai Young Choi, George Kenyon; Engineering: Paul Corder, John Gossage, Mien Jao, Bernard Maxum, Malur Srinivasan; Fine Arts and Communication: Kurt Dyrhaug, Kurt Gilman, Ann Matlock, Zanthia Smith, Randall Wheatley; Library: Theresa Hefner-Babb, Jon Tritsch; Developmental Studies: Umporn Tosirisuk; Education: Kim Chalambaga, Lula Henry, Barbara Hernandez, Bill Holmes, Bernadette Moore, MaryE Wilkinson; LSC Pt. Arthur: Mavis Triebel

Senators Absent: Arts and Sciences: Christine Bridges, David Castle, Dale Daniel, Terri Davis, Mary Kelley, Don Owen, Jeremy Shelton, Shelia Smith, Randall Terry; Business: Soumava Bandyopadhyay, Celia Varick; Engineering: Brian Craig; Fine Arts and Communication: Sumalai Moonroge, Nicki Michalski,

1. The December 6, 2006 Faculty Senate Meeting was called to order by President Kurt Gilman at 3:01 pm.

2. Dr. Robert Culbertson received a commendation from the faculty senate and Dr. Doblin for his nomination for the Carnegie Foundation Teacher of the Year Award. Dr. Culbertson was also nominated for the 2006 Piper Award.

3. Bonnie Kelinske, secretary of the Senate office, was presented with an award for her service to the Senate for the past five years. Bonnie is retiring from Lamar at the end of the fall semester 2006.

4. A motion was made by Berne Maxum and seconded by Lula Henry to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2006, Senate meeting.

5. President’s Report

The Chair evaluations are almost finished in the College of Arts and Science.

Applications are being accepted in the CIO search. Emphasis is being given to someone with good communication skills. There was discussion on having a dialogue with administration to emphasize the differences between Administrative and academic computing. Prince Thomas will represent the faculty on the search committee.

The regents met on campus last week and agreed to a tuition increase, however any or all of this increase can be rescinded by the TSUS Regents, pending the outcome of the current legislative sessions. There is a bill with the 80th legislature to reduce the core curriculum by 6 hours.

A web site has been established addressing SACS planning and time lines. President Gilman has the address for all those interested. SACS will now require a report every five years after their main review.

The construction of Cardinal Village IV has been delayed. This construction delay is state wide and not just related to Lamar University. The Provost says that the project is back on track, however the construction will not be completed in the middle of the academic year. The project will either be ready by fall of 2007 or fall of 2008.

There have been 64 new PhD programs approved by the coordinating board, and they have decided that the rate of approval and the criteria must be amended. In the future 3 consultants will be necessary for approval not two. In particular Lamar University will be held to Tier 1 standards. There was a question as to whether Lamar has been held to lower standards in the past. The main reason for tightening the PhD standards is the ability to fund and staff each program adequately.

A new draft of the policy on Academic Policies by the academic council has been given to the Academic Issues Committee.

President Jimmy Simmons will be holding his annual holiday reception tomorrow, December 7, from 10AM to 1PM on the 8th floor of the Gray Library.

6. Committee Reports

Academic Issues - Terri Davis: No Report

Faculty Issues – Lula Henry:
The Faculty Issues Committee is still working on the parking issue and the Chair review process.

Budget and Compensation – Ann Matlock:
The Budget and Compensation committee surveyed the faculty of Lamar University in late October, 2006 to learn how they are being informed about their merit and equity raises. By November 1, 2006, we had 100 responses. David Castle created a format for analysis of the results from the 100 surveys that were received by the November 1, 2006 deadline. More surveys have come in since that time and will be integrated in to the analysis later.( An initial examination of these late surveys shows a larger percentage of faculty answering “no” to questions #8 and #9 than shown in our current analysis.)

Faculty from 30 departments responded and in almost all cases, there were more than one response for each department.

The findings from the survey were discussed at the meeting of the Budget and Compensation Committee on November 8, 2006 and the committee selected the findings that we think are most important to share. A copy of the original survey is included with this report for reference.

Conclusions:
The most positive results were on questions #1 and #2:

Question #1: Survey results show that 96% (79 0f 96) of Lamar faculty were informed of the amount of their merit raise either in writing, verbally, or both. Only 4% reported that they were not informed.
82% a. or b. 14% b. only 4% c.

Question #2:
95% reported that they knew the amount of their total salary raise 3% knew the percent only 2% were not informed

Several of the other questions show areas that we think need work to improve them. A summary of the results on these questions follows:

Question #3:
a. 87% (72 of 83) of those responding knew their merit category.

b. and c. 57% knew either the percent or dollar amount allocated to each category of merit, but 43% did not know the dollar amount or percentage allocated to each category. While 43% is not a majority of faculty, we think that it is a very large percentage and that all faculty should be informed of the amount of merit funds allocated to each category of merit.

d. Only 31% knew the number of faculty at each merit level. 69% did not know the number of faculty at each level. Faculty members need to know how many faculty are at each ranking in order to evaluate their own progress, and our committee thinks that this is an area that needs work.

We think that faculty should be informed of how many are ranked at each merit level and how funds are allocated at each level. We encourage deans and chairs to inform all faculty of both the amount or percentage of merit funds allocated to each category and how many faculty are ranked at each merit level.

Question#6:
74 % of the faculty responding knew how their merit raise was calculated
but 26% did not. We think that all faculty should be informed as to how their merit raise was calculated and believe that it is not acceptable that 26% of faculty do not know how their raise was calculated.

Question #7:
Most faculty – 90% - agree that their merit raise reflects their F2.08.

Question #8:
64% of faculty were informed of the process, but 36% were not. We think that this is an area that needs work. Most negative responses came from three colleges: Business, Engineering, and Fine Arts. Of those answering “no” in the College of Business 7 of 9 came from the areas of Information Systems, Economics, and Accounting. In Engineering, 6 of 9 answered “no”.
These responses came from Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Electrical Engineering. In the College of Fine Arts, 6 of 10 answered “no”. These responses came from Communication Disorders, Music and Art. 4 of 5 responses from the College of Education, answered “no” to Question #8. There were also “no” responses from the following College of Arts and Sciences departments: History, and Earth and Space Sciences.

Question #9:
60% responded that the process was shared and/or agreed upon by the department or the college. However 40% responded that the process was not shared and agreed upon. We think that is an area of concern that should be addressed. Faculty need to understand and agree to the process by which they are evaluated.

The written comments on the survey tend to reinforce some of the responses that were seen in the survey. Faculty are especially concerned about the need to know how many faculty are evaluated as being at each merit level and what amount or percentage of merit funding was allocated to each level. Faculty are also concerned about the need to understand a process for evaluation that is agreed to by the faculty.

Development and Research – John Gossage:
Our subcommittee, after having had an extra meeting during the month of October, did not meet in November.

Distinguished Faculty Lecturer – Steve Zani: No Report

7. Old Business - None

8. New Business - None

9. Open Discussion/Comments -
There are still some faculty in the Department of Arts and Science that have still not seen copies of their F 2.08’s from last year.

George Kenyon noted that a complaint was made to the Chief of Police concerning parking. Their police response was that if a violation is occurring that you should get the name or license number of the violator and report it to the police.

Kurt Gilman stated that the recreation center is progressing and the administration is still targeting a January partial opening.

Since student fees will be eliminated, the language labs are concerned that they will not get the money they need to operate. They have asked the faculty senate for the support of the fees. Bill Holmes gave assurance that real lab fees are not affected by this ruling. There is still some question about certain fees in Music, Theatre, and Dance, and other departments.

Berne Maxum asked if course fees are $60 per lab with a limit of 2. President Gilman will check into this matter.

Bill Holmes noted that Lamar University has been cited by “The New York Times” as one of the top 130 universities with an enrollment of over 2000 students in achieving campus diversity.

Mike Mathis noted that there is still dismal response rate for the student evaluations. He stated that administration feels a 20% response rate is acceptable. Kurt Gilman stated that the 30% is the actual number that the administration is working with but even that is bad. The Provost has said that the percentage must be higher or the data is useless.

It was noted that students who have not signed up for My Lamar cannot access the evaluation forms.

Jeff Forret said that the prize system that the evaluators are offering is not incentive enough for the students to fill out the forms and perhaps the only way to make the system work is to make the evaluation a requirement for the students.

10. The December 6 Faculty Senate Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.