Lamar University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
September 6, 2006  
  
Senators Present: Arts and Sciences: Jeff Forret, Kenneth Dorris, Dave Castle, Nancy Blume, Emma Hawkins, Sheila Smith, George Irwin, Christine Bridges, Dianna Rivers, Steve Zani, Jeremy Shelton, Terri Davis, Jim Love, Valentin Andreev, Dale Daniel, Mike Matthis, Randall Terry; Business: George Kenyon, Celia Varek, Jai-Young Choi, Kakoli Bandyopadhyay, Soumava Bandyopadhyay; Education: Kim Wallet-Chalambaga, Lula Henry, Bill Holmes, Bernadette Moore, Krystal Osho, Barabara Hernandez, MaryE Wilkinson; Engineering: Paul Corder, Malur Srinivasan, Mien Jao, Berne Maxum, John Gossage; Fine Arts and Communication: Nicki Michalski, Randall Wheatley, Sumalai Maroonroge, Zanthia Smith, Ann Matlock, Kurt Gilman; Library: Theresa Storey, Jon Tritsch; Developmental Studies, Umporn Tosirisuk; LSC-PA: Mavis Triebel  
  
Senators Absent: Arts and Science: Chung-Chih Li, Rick Altemose, Mary Kelley; Engineering: Brian Craig; Fine Arts and Communication: Kurt Dyrhaug  
  
  
1. The September 6, 2006 meeting was called to order at 3:04 by President Kurt Gilman.  
  
President Gilman welcomed new and returning senators to the new academic year.  
  
President Gilman requested that any corrections of contact information be sent to Bonnie Kelinske.  
  
2. President’s Report  
  
Goals for the 2006-2007 Senate:  
Faculty salaries/equity concerns—It is important for us to continue to press for appropriate salaries for the nature of our disciplines. Also important is the completion of the current equity plan, and the establishment of a new plan in order to avoid future salary inversion.  
Faculty Development—Our faculty are well known in their individual disciplines, and rightfully deserve every opportunity available for further development. We must continue to secure, along with and through our administration, adequate funding for faculty advancement.  
Communication—At Lamar we enjoy a high level of shared governance. To maintain and enhance this privilege it will be necessary to keep the channels of communication open on all levels, from administration to Senate and to the faculty that we represent.  
Follow through/follow up—As a senate, we pass many resolutions and provide advice to administration in many areas. It is our further responsibility to see that these provisions are followed through and enforced by those responsible for doing so.  
  
The President has allocated a 3% merit pool to be distributed to faculty effective October 1.  
  
The Voluntary Modification of Employment (VME) was approved by the President over this past summer. I have distributed to you the final version of the VME—the legal version that came out of the Senate Budget and Compensation Committee last Spring semester. To date, one faculty member has taken advantage of the VME. Note that the document contains time restrictions, and the VME will have to be reevaluated upon expiration of the current schedule.  
  
Please review the handout containing the Possible New Summer Schedule. This is a compilation from several sources, including the Faculty Senate, and the Provost would like feedback on it soon. I have ask Faculty Issues to make a recommendation concerning this, so please provide them with you comments and suggestions. You also have a copy of the schedule for 12 and 15 day mini session class periods, which has already been approved by our administration.  
  
You also have a handout containing Lamar’s new Mission Statement, which was approved by the Regents recently.  
  
The Research and Sponsored Programs Administration has been established to provide assistance, grant writing opportunities, and other forms of enhancement for faculty. Dr. Don Cotton was appointed director of Sponsored Programs Administration. Dean Jack Hopper was appointed to Associate Provost for Research. Dr. Hopper will also remain as Dean of Engineering.  
  
In the College of Fine Arts and Communication, Communication Disorders and Deaf Education have been split into two departments—Deaf Education, chaired by Dr. Toni Martin, and Speech and Hearing Sciences, chaired by Dr. Bill Harne.  
  
Chairs to be evaluated this year are: J. Jordan (E&ES), K. Lee (Ch. EGR), H. Lynch (Ac.&Bl), J. Storey (Hist.), R. Yuan (Civ. EGR).  
  
During this past summer, Dr. Doblin called a meeting with Dr. Bill Holmes, Dr. Howell Lynch, chair of CCD, and me to discuss the possible formation of a New Chair Training Seminar. The purpose would be to assist new chairs in performing tasks such as F2.08 evaluations and other processes concerning their faculty. Dr. Doblin would like our input as to how this seminar might be accomplished and the mechanisms it might involve.  
  
In a memo from Dr. Doblin dated 8/14/06, which you should have received recently, it was stated that beginning this Fall, 2006, Office Suite 2003 would become the official document processing suite for the TSUS and all of its components. This memo also stated that my.lamar.edu would be the official web site for e-mail and internal communication, and that Hal and Sal would be phased out over the next year. By Spring, 2007, Sal and Hal e-mail will be forwarded to my.lamar accounts, and Hal and Sal will be shut down by the end of the Spring semester.  
  
In the area of facilities and repairs, you are no doubt aware of the many projects ongoing around campus, not the least of which is repair of roofs damaged by hurricane Rita. I will have a more complete report on repair and construction after we meet with Dr. Simmons and Dr. Doblin at the end of this month.  
  
You were all e-mailed a copy of the Senate Roster, a list of committee assignments, and the schedule of meetings for 2006-2007. Please look these over carefully and report any mistakes or updates concerning your own personal information to Bonnie Kelinske in the Faculty Senate office.  
  
Please make every effort to attend the Constitution Day 2006 Program on Monday, September 18 at 7:00 PM in the John Gray Center Auditorium. Featured speakers on that program are Dr. Jeff Forret, Dr. Larry Elliott, and Dr. Terri Davis.  
  
Please also make plans to attend the 2006 Distinguished Faculty Lecture on Monday, October 16. This year’s lecturer is current Vice President of the Faculty Senate Christine Bridges-Esser.  
  
This past May the Senate approved changes in the Faculty Development Leave Application process. Copies of this were emailed to you along with the Minutes from the May Senate meeting.  
  
I recently attended a meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee that focused on a Lamar University Vision Statement. This, along with a proposed university “slogan” should be available soon.  
  
The Lamar University Fall Fest has been scheduled for November 18, 2006.  
  
Enrollment at Lamar for the fall, 2006 semester, as of 9/5/06 was approaching 10,000.   
  
3. Corrections were requested for the minutes from the May 3rd meeting. Marye Wilkerson was in attendance but marked absent. A motion was made by Dianna Rivers and seconded by Mike Matthis to approve the minutes as corrected.  
  
4. Senators met in their committees to discuss projects for this year.  
  
The Senate reconvened at 3:39.  
  
5. Committee Reports  
  
Academic Issues: Terri Davis  
The committee will meet again next Wednesday to discuss the new summer schedules and will immediately forward a report to Dr. Doblin.  
  
  
Faculty Issues: Lula Henry  
The committee has set up its next meeting.  
  
Budget and Compensation: Ann Matlock  
The committee will meet next Wednesday. The committee will again survey senators regarding merit raises. The president’s goals seem to closely align with the committee’s focus for the year. Student growth will be examined to make sure that there are proportional adjustments to faculty and administrative salaries.  
Dave Castle was elected vice-chair. The committee will welcome actual copies of letters received by faculty about their raises. The subject of determining merit pay should be included in the new chair workshops.  
  
Development and Research: John Gossage  
George Irwin was elected vice-chair. There is a new form for development leave applications. The committee will meet next week. Paul Nicoletto will be asked to present a workshop about completing the leave applications.  
  
Distinguished Faculty Lecture: Steve Zani  
Dr. Farah Goulas, the former chair, left the committee in excellent shape and things are coming along well. Dr. Christine Bridges-Esser will present the lecture at the University Theatre October 16th.  
  
Staff Appreciation Day: Mark Asteris  
No Report.  
  
6. Old Business: none.  
  
7. New Business  
Dr. Hsing Wei Chu has been replaced on the senate by Paul Corder. Dr. Chu did run a number of elections but was not able to fill the University Curriculum Council position because it had to be nominated by the Senate. Valentin Andreev nominated Dave Castle, Terri Davis seconded the nomination. Christine Bridges moved to elect by acclamation. The motion carried. Valentin Andreev stated there does need to be a new election in computer science. President Gilman said that would be handled.  
  
8. Open Discussion  
  
Senator Andreev stated that the Dean of Arts and Sciences has set aside .1% of the merit pool for use as she desires. It was stated that other deans do this as well, and this leads to a dilution of the merit pool. Senator Holmes suggested there needs to be a review of the process used. This led to a statement that some chairs mix merit and equity, which is not the correct method. It was also mentioned that the equity program is still in process and the budget committee should review how this fits with current hires.  
  
Senator Andreev stated that we need to standardize chair review processes so they are similar to what Dr. Doblin does when he presents dean reviews. The subject is referred to the Faculty Issues Committee.  
  
Senator Matlock noted that there is no buffer for faculty who make comments on chair review forms. The structure of the committee needs to be altered to protect faculty. Berne Maxum supported this idea. Senator Kennon remarked that the process needs to include a Likert type scale, and that the faculty and administrative responses need to be separated and weighted appropriately.  
  
Senator Bandyopadhyay asked when the new budget will be on the Web since the currently posted budget is two years old. Bill Holmes said that Mike Ferguson is aware of the situation but there should be follow-up.  
  
Senator Andreev asked that immediate updates should be made on the Web.  
President Simmons is working on the parking issues although he finds them puzzling because there are fewer students on campus but bigger parking problems.  
Randall Terry announced that the Arts and Sciences faculty have not received their evaluations from last year. Senator Maxum said he was told they were being held in reserve until the merit announcement was made. Senator Matlock replied that faculty should know their merit evaluations whether there is money available or not. Senator Davis said it was fundamentally wrong to sign your contract without knowing your evaluation results. President Gilman said that Dr. Doblin was concerned last year when the F2.08s were not returned and the problem is obviously continuing.  
  
Vice President Bridges asked how the dorms were acquired by the University. President Gilman said that this issue will be discussed at the meeting with the President and Vice President.  
  
Senator Dorris would like to have an academic dishonesty policy in the hand book.  
Christine Bridges asked about the “web hotline” link on the webpage President Gilman said that President Simmons does not like this either.   
Senator Rivers asked if anyone has received their contracts yet. No one has.  
Senator Forret commented on the on line evaluations for spring. The low turn out rate skews to the negative and can have an impact on evaluations. The Executive Committee is examining this currently.  
  
  
8. Senator Maxum moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Senator Andreev.  
The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.