Faculty Senate  
February 7, 2007  
  
Attending:   
Arts and Sciences: Valentin Andreev, Nancy Blume, Christine Bridges, David Castle, Dale Daniel, Terri Davis, Kenneth Dorris, Emma Hawkins, George Irwin, Mary Kelley, Hikyoo Koh, Jim Love, Mike Matthis, Don Owen, Dianna Rivers, Jeremy Shelton, Sheila Smith, Randall Terry, Steve Zani Business: Kakoli Bandyopadhyay, Soumava Bandyopadhyay, Jai Young Choi, George Kenyon, Celia Varick Education: Kim Chalambaga, Lula Henry, Bill Holmes, Bernadette Moore, Mary E. Wilkinson Engineering: John Gossage, Mien Jao, Bernard Maxum, Malur Srinivasan Fine Arts and Communication: Kurt Gilman, Ann Matlock, Nicki Michalski, Zanthia Smith, Randall Wheatley Library: Theresa Hefner-Babb, Jon Tritsch Developmental Studies: Umporn Tosirisuk Lamar State College, Port Arthur: Mavis Triebel  
  
Absent:  
Arts and Sciences: Rick Altemose Education: Barbara Hernandez Engineering: Paul Corder, Brian Craig Fine Arts and Communication: Kurt Dyrhaug, Sumalai Maroonroge  
  
1. Call to Order 3:03  
  
2. President Gilman began the meeting with the introduction of Jan Ray, the new secretary of the Senate office. Her office will be Maes 102, and her office hours will be 10-3 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. An updated email address was requested from each senator so that Ms Ray will be able to successfully send mass mailings.   
  
3. Dr Stephanie Yearwood, SACS liaison, provided an update on our accreditation process. Her complete report is in appendix A.   
  
4. Donald Cotten, Director of Sponsored Programs, discussed Lamar’s positioning to receive outside funding through grants. His office is always ready to assist faculty who are interested in pursuing external funding through grants, copyrights, patents and so forth.  
  
5. Approval of Minutes  
Bill Holmes noted a correction on the last page. Student fees should be course fees. He also stated there is still question about whether language labs count as lab fees but we know that real lab fees are unaffected by the discontinuation of course fees.  
  
Dianna Rivers moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Terri Davis seconded the motion.  
  
6. Prince Thomas provided an update on the Chief Information Technology Officer search. The committee has narrowed the original pool of 39 applicants to a list of 6 with whom they will conduct phone interviews. If senators have any concerns or questions they would like addressed to the applicants, they should contact him at [pvthomas@my.lamar.edu](mailto:pvthomas@my.lamar.edu)  
  
7. Valentin Andreev reported on the New Chair Workshop, held on January 26, 2007. His panel provided advice for new chairs about faculty evaluations, promotion and tenure. It was stated that many department chairs were under the impression that tenure and promotion have been coupled, but that is not the case. The chairs need to be informed of the actual situation.  
  
New chairs were also provided information about the resolutions regarding informing faculty of the ways to assign merit raises.  
  
Dr. Andreev said it would be good service to untenured faculty for the senate to have an open forum to help them learn about university expectations regarding tenure and promotion. It might take a format similar to the chair development panel.  
  
  
8. President’s Report  
Online evaluations—The administration, in the most recent meeting with the Executive Committee and the President and Provost, supported our statement that the recent results are not significant enough to be used as a determining factor in tenure and promotion decisions.  
  
Course Fees—These fees will be eliminated effective Fall ’07. Lab fees are still collected, but these go first to the state, and are then returned via appropriations.  
  
Chair Evaluations—All have been completed, and in two cases, the evaluation committee contained an outside member.  
  
Building Renovation/Construction/Replacement—The opening date of the new Recreational Sports Center is still to be determined. Cardinal Village IV is scheduled to open by August 15, 2007. Renovation/Replacement of the Music Building is in the beginning phase. The university procedure now requires a company consultant to meet with faculty and staff to determine needs. An architect and construction manager then guarantee upfront costs, present these to the regents, and then the state. The Biology building renovation/replacement is to be next.  
  
TSUS Regents Professor—The TSUS regents will establish a set of criteria for the selection of a Regents Professor. Each campus will select a candidate through their respective committee search procedures.  
  
Map Room, John Gray Center—This will be named for Elvis Mason, who raised much of the money for the building of the John Gray Center. Mr. Mason currently chairs the Capital Campaign committee at Lamar.  
  
Early Retirement—At the recent Executive Committee meeting with the administration, they stated that there was no need to change current procedures for retirement. The ExCom requested that the VME be extended past the current expiration date, and Dr. Doblin will put this into motion through the system attorney.  
  
Staff Appreciation Day—The Senate, with the assistance of Mark Asteris, will move forward to establish a date and make general arrangements for this event.  
  
TSUS—Dr. Doblin has asked us to remind all faculty that “A Member of the TSUS System” must appear on all correspondence generated from Lamar University.  
  
  
9. Academic Issues-Terri Davis  
  
Because the overall University response rate for online evaluations is at 29%, the academic issues committee is planning a resolution for introduction at a future meeting. If senators have ideas about how the results should be used, they should contact the committee through [Davistb@my.lamar.edu](mailto:Davistb@my.lamar.edu)  
  
10. Faculty Issues-Lula Henry  
  
Report concerning chair evaluation:  
  
It was stated by Dr. Doblin that some of the deans have already started adding and outside person to the chair evaluation committees and that it will be added to the faculty handbook. The raw data will be treated the same as it is for the deans’  
evaluations.   
  
Other concerns:  
  
The committee will continue to look at parking and computer service issues.  
  
  
  
  
11. Budget and Compensation-Ann Matlock  
  
During spring semester 2007, the Budget and Compensation Committee plans to examine hard copies of the budget for this fiscal year and last. (The budget was not available online last year. The budget that was put online last fall lists faculty salaries, but does not break it down by department and college in a way that is easy to examine.)  
  
We would welcome suggestions from the Faculty senate as to other matters that we should consider. Other issues that we may take up concern:  
-The current Lamar budget planning process and its results  
-Issues that affect early retirees  
-The problems, as reflected in our survey results, of the informed consent of the faculty to their current processes for merit evaluations and raises.  
  
Since the Lamar University Equity Committee was formed in response to a resolution of the Faculty Senate, this report is an updating of the status of that committee. The committee met in November 2006, to elect a new chair and vice chair and to arrange the terms of the members of the committee so that they overlap. Ann Matlock was elected chair and David Castle was elected vice chair.  
  
Representatives of the committee have met with Dr. Simmons about plans for the committee in January and plan to meet with him again on February 19. We hope to have new members appointed and/or elected for a full committee meeting soon after that. We will report on the work of this committee to the Budget and Compensation Committee and the Faculty Senate at the end of the spring semester.  
  
The budget and compensation committee will meet next Wednesday, February 14 at 3:00 p.m. in Galloway 218, our usual meeting room.  
  
12. Development and Research-John Gossage  
  
The committee considered and approved a request to alter a request made last fall.  
  
13. Distinguished Faculty Lecture-Steve Zani  
  
The call has gone out for nominations for distinguished faculty lecture. The committee hopes to get all information in next month.  
  
14. Old Business-none  
  
15. New Business-none  
  
16. Open Discussion/Comments  
  
  
Email is causing many problems. Faculty are not getting all of their quarantine statements. Some faculty are using outside accounts to circumvent this situation. This information should be forwarded to Prince Thomas to include in the discussions with the CIO candidates. Kurt Gilman referred this to the Faculty Issues Committee.  
  
There are concerns in the biology department that hiring procedures are not being uniformly applied. This will also be referred to the Faculty Issues Committee.  
  
There are concerns among some on the faculty issues committee about the confidentiality issues in chair evaluations. It was suggested that the statement “recast phraseology” be added to the committee resolution to help protect non-native English speakers and those who have unusual syntax. Lula Henry stated that there was not an official resolution because the executive committee discussed this issue with Dr Doblin and was assured that the issue would be handled. The handbook will be checked to make sure that these changes are made.   
  
  
17. Adjournment of the Faculty Senate, moved by Randall Terry and seconded by Umporn Tosirisuk, occurred at 5:00 pm.  
  
  
Appendix A  
  
SACS Update  
Faculty Senate, February 7, 2007  
Stephenie Yearwood, SACS Liaison  
  
  
I. Faculty Roster  
Roster must make the case that every Lamar faculty member teaching courses in fall 2007 and spring 2008 has the proper qualifications to teach the courses assigned. Piloting the process now with Fine Arts and Communication.   
  
Phase One: Information from university databases is made available to chairs. Chairs review for gaps (are all syllabi uploaded?) and accuracy. Chairs send corrections to SACS office.Note: The SACS office will ask departments to upload all syllabi not uploaded by the 20th class day beginning next fall.   
Phase Two   
SACS Faculty Credentials Committee reviews all faculty and identifies those for whom there is not sufficient evidence of meeting SACS Faculty Credentials Guidelines (primary evidence is highest degree held. A minimum of 18 graduate hours in the academic discipline of the courses taught is expected for undergraduate teaching; terminal degree for graduate courses.)   
Phase Three  
This list of names is sent back to chairs. Chairs work with faculty to produce “additional documentation.” Information is added to database and documents are sent to the SACS office, scanned and uploaded.   
Phase Four  
The Faculty Credentials Committee reviews all faculty and approves or requests additional documentation until they are satisfied that documentation is sufficient.  
  
Types of Additional Documentation  
  
Both lists and actual documents needed  
  
• Transcripts or information about undergraduate or graduate work not reflected in Phase One documentation.  
• Diplomas, licensure or certificates held.  
• Related work or professional experience.  
• Honors and awards received in discipline of assigned teaching. Documents might include clippings, letters from grantors.  
Continuous documented excellence in teaching in the discipline.  
• Publications and presented papers in discipline of assigned teaching.  
• Other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning in the discipline.  
  
Messy and inconvenient for those teaching “by exception”  
  
The Final Product reviewed by SACS during web-based Compliance Certification  
  
  
Name/Rank Department FT/PT Courses taught Degrees Transcripts  
on File? Additional   
Documentation  
Jane Doe, Lecturer English PT ENGL 1301,  
ENGL 1302   
(links to syllabi) M.A. Education (21 hours in English)  
B.A. Communications  
(minor in English) Y [list with links to scanned images of supporting documents]  
1)Texas Teacher’s Certificate in Secondary English grades 8-12.  
2) Fellow of National Writing Project, 1992.  
3)15 years of experience as high school English teacher 1980-1995.  
4) Texas A&M Teacher of the Year Award for XYZ HS, 1993  
5) Letter from chair.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
II. Student learning assessment and improvement   
♣ We’re moving, but not there yet.  
o As of Jan 20, one academic program had not completed an assessment plan for 06-07.  
o The important thing is “closing the loop”—showing we are changing and improving instruction and learning.  
  
♣ Some assessment examples:  
o In Electrical Engineering, student projects on storyboards are on display so faculty can review them using a rubric they have devised.  
o In English 1302, five faculty members spent Martin Luther King day assessing a random selection of essays from the fall 06 final exam using this rubric:  
  
♣ Other assessments  
o General studies students are submitting portfolios which will be evaluated for communications and critical thinking.  
o The Core Curriculum committee has selected written communications and critical thinking as top priorities for assessment in core curriculum courses this spring.   
  
♣ Evidence of Improvement in teaching and learning???. Only 30% of programs filed IE Reports in 2005-2006. One or two showed some evidence of improvement. This is the year when it must begin to happen and be visible in our documentation.  
  
III. Strategic Plan  
♣ University Long Range Planning Committee has been working on a draft for 18 months. Not approved yet.  
♣ Draft (in current form) on the web at: http://dept.lamar.edu/sacs/strategic/planning.htm   
♣ Once approved (this spring): formal presentations to Faculty Senate, CID, SGA and other campus groups; open forums; a “comment” website.  
♣ Revisions and final approval likely before June.  
♣ Colleges will guide departments through implementation at department level next year.   
  
  
IV. QEP  
  
♣ QEP Development Committee has examined input from focus groups and existing data on Lamar students. Everything I report here is from their Dec. 06 report.  
♣ Based on data from the National Survey of Student Engagement, Lamar freshmen scored markedly below LU seniors and below students at comparable institutions on:   
– Active and collaborative learning.  
– Student-faculty interaction.  
– Enriching educational experiences.  
♣ The profile of our freshmen has changed significantly in the past six years:   
o more students under 20,   
o more African-American and Hispanic students and   
o more full time students.  
  
♣ Lamar Freshmen, compared to peer institutions in NSSE  
o Age distribution is about the same.   
o We have a higher proportion of   
– African-Americans  
– Part-time students  
– First generation in college  
– Off campus workers  
– Providers of care for dependents  
  
♣ The QEP Committee concluded that, “These freshmen define the future of Lamar University. We must enhance the learning experience of the students that we have and that we are likely to continue to enroll.” How?By promoting “engagement” for these freshmen.  
  
♣ Engagement means more  
Active and collaborative learning.  
Student-faculty interaction.  
Enriching educational experiences.  
  
♣ The National 2006 NSSE Report states that   
" Students who participate in collaborative learning and educational activities outside the classroom and who interact more with faculty members get better grades, are more satisfied with their education, and are more likely to remain in college. But the gains from those practices are even greater for students from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds, or who come to college less prepared than their peers."  
  
♣ Engagement of Freshmen might take many possible shapes:  
  
• Student to student engagement  
• Student to faculty engagement  
• Student engagement with academic content   
• Student engagement with the learning process  
• Long-term engagement with the community and a profession  
  
♣ Some recommended elements of a Lamar QEP  
• Course Redesign of core courses to enhance engagement  
• Undergraduate Research   
• Inquiry Based Learning   
• Enhanced Use of Technology in Teaching and Learning   
• Experiential/Applied Learning  
• Integrative Learning  
  
♣ Things the QEP CANNOT do…  
• Additional course requirements  
• Mandates to faculty  
• One size fits all approach  
• Just attack perceived weaknesses  
  
This spring, the QEP Development Committee is taking this “elements” list to focus groups for discussion and feedback.  
By June, the committee will make recommendations to the SACS Leadership Team.