Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting  
January 18, 2008

Senators in attendance: Jennifer Anderson, Mary Bantell, Sally Bickley, Kent Byus, Tim Causgrove, Nikki Changehit, Sue Elwood, Bryant Griffith, Mark Hartlaub, Randall Johnson, Scott King, Margaret Lucero, Ian MacDonald, Mary Kay Mortimer, Marvarene Oliver, Greg Reuter, Nancy Rogers, Sharon Talley, Waheed, Elaine Yellen

Ex officio: Anantha Babbili, Kathy Winston

Guests: Jessica Grumman (photographer)

Meeting called to order at 2:02 by Speaker Mark Hartlaub

The minutes from 11/16/07 were passed with corrections

Introduction and welcome to new senator Nancy Rogers from the College of Health Science.

Smoking Policy update (by Bantell) – A written report was submitted and distributed to the Senators before the meeting. Bantell indicated that this is a controversial policy. Currently there are disparities between the various existing policies on campus. She met with Student Government. She also met with Chenaux and indicated that he would form a committee to consider the smoking policy. He expects this committee to start meeting soon and will contact Senator Bantell about this later. One senator asked about the Student Govt. opinion regarding the smoking policy. She said it appeared that most of the officers were generally in favor of a smoke-free campus, but were unwilling to come out with a stand that might be seen as contrary to the students that smoke. Another question was asked of Bantell concerning whether this policy could impact enrollment. She responded that where it has been done before, it has not had a negative impact on enrollment. Sometimes the parents of students appreciate having some limits for smoking due to the potentially negative health effects. It was asked, why it would not be acceptable if people just smoked outside? She responded that smoking can cause adverse health effects on others. However, it may be enough to create locations that are far enough away that the adverse effects on others can be prevented. It was asked, if there is evidence that second-hand smoke can impact others outside? She answered that research indicates that the chemicals remain in the area and can impact others even while outside. It was also asked, what will we do about staff smokers? Her recommendations for the committee will include staff as well as faculty and students.

Speaker Comments (Hartlaub):

The University Preparatory High School update is not ready yet.

International Faculty report – The 29 international faculty members were sent an email to solicit there input on issues relevant to the international faculty. They were emailed a couple of times. Only15 responses were received. A written report summarizing these comments was provided to the Faculty Senators. This information will be shared with Debra Cortinas and the Provost. The comments were both positive and negative. All of the faculty members that responded indicated that they were glad that the Faculty Senate was looking at this issue. Hopefully the feedback will help Cortinas to improve and she seems genuinely interested in this information. A spreadsheet will be put together so that individuals will always know where their paperwork is at, so they will get clear information. We should also make it clear what HR can do for the international faculty and what they can not do for them. One senator indicated that there seemed to be a lack of sensitivity about faculty concerns. The HR people should...
indicate that they do care about faculty and their concerns. This is reflected in some comments; however other individuals seem to have had a different experience. It would be good if someone could meet International Faculty at the airport when they arrive in Corpus Christi. A Senator indicated, that she thought things had improved during the last two years. Another Senator recommended that the Faculty Senate also become more involved with international students and how they are welcomed to the campus. The Provost spoke about a meeting where the issue of internationalization was discussed with many faculty members in attendance. The number of international students is increasing. International students do not seem to be getting the help they need. It is important that the faculty indicate to the Provost that this is important to them so that there is more emphasis on accommodating these students. The Provost is making this area a priority. Some senators indicated that most grants are strongly biased to U.S. citizens which can create barriers to the international faculty members.

Bickley – Made the following motion:
The Faculty Senate is requesting that Provost Babbili create an international office on this campus that would handle the issues and concerns relating to international faculty and students. The merits of having an international office were generally discussed. It was indicated that some pieces of this issue are currently handled in different parts of the campus. The motion was passed through voice assent.

Merit Pay – Hartlaub indicated that he met with all of the Deans to discuss merit pay. As a result we now know much more about how decisions are made. The merit pay survey still has not been done in the Library.

Gigliotti (Liberal Arts) - As a result of the discussion Gigliotti realized that merit pay was not administered uniformly. Then he directed the Chairs on how he wanted it conducted - teaching 50% research 40% service 10%.

Hamilton (Nursing and Health Science) – She indicated that a form was used, which was provided to Hartlaub. Faculty members are asked what percentage of time they want to focus on each area and then they are rated based on that commitment.

Abdelsamad (Business) – He indicated that he works with the three Chairs to determine how faculty are rated. The lowest rated faculty members are penalized. Faculty can appeal their decision to the Dean if they disagree with their evaluation.

Pezold (Science and Technology) – He was open to change, but has not made any changes yet. There are two models used in that College which evaluate faculty members differently. The faculty members seem satisfied, but he is not sure he wants to use two different systems for evaluation. He also does not like giving a faculty member zero. The percentage of teaching research and service are evaluated differently based on whether they teach at the undergraduate, masters, or doctoral level.

Hopkins (Education) – The Dean and Chairs have a meeting. All names go on the board and Chairs make their case for what they think is reasonable. The Dean indicated that on rare occasions she changes those evaluations slightly. One Senator indicated that the money going to the college is at issue more than the process that is being used.

Benefits for new employees used to begin in September, but this will be changed to December. Hartlaub has been trying to get further information. Cindy Hanson left a message indicating that this came down from the State several years ago, but TAMUCC was covering those months for new faculty. It was costing $100,000 in our budget. It appears we will not be able to do this any more. Faculty can get insurance coverage, but they will have to pay for it themselves. Hartlaub will try to get more information on this.

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Committee (Talley) – BAAS degree proposal – The committee met and discussed the degree. After discussion the committee recommended that it be approved with two specific
recommendations written on a handout (minutes of committee meeting) that was provided to Senators. The faculty has expressed concern that they are hearing about major programs late in the process. We, the impacted faculty, need to know when programs are being created. The Deans apparently know, but this information is not necessarily being communicated more widely. The earlier it comes to Faculty Senate the more we can be involved in the planning and preventing the delay of programs. The Provost indicated that he would make sure that this did not happen while he is the Provost. One senator pointed out the proposal was tabled last time. The Science and Technology College had a discussion electronically with a vote of 7 for and 5 against the proposal. Hartlaub indicated that he would bring this up at the Provost’s Council meeting. Senators indicated that they were surprised at the lack of communication on programs that impact faculty. The Provost indicated that he is going to start a Chairs Council that will be informed and the Faculty Senate will also be informed of important issues. He is hoping this will be a two-way communication process.

The committee proposed that we vote on the recommendations of the committee as well as the BAAS degree proposal. The recommendations were disentangled from the degree proposal for the vote. This overall issue of both the recommendations and the proposal were generally discussed. Some faculty indicated that they still did not feel that there had been widespread discussion of the BAAS degree proposal. The Provost indicated the importance of the proposal being approved now, in order for it to get through the necessary processes in time for next fall. He also indicated that there would be adequate training and support services for this degree in place by the fall semester.

The two concerns written on the handout and submitted by the committee were voted on as follows:
Yes, 18, no 0 abstentions 1

The motion was returned to the table regarding the proposal for the BAAS degree.
The program and proposal were generally discussed by the Senators.

A motion to extend was approved by voice assent

The motion was voted on as follows:
Yes – 13, no – 4, abstentions - 3

ABE Committee (Hartlaub) - The award season is coming up and emails will be coming out soon for the faculty awards. Also elections for senators will be coming up in March.

Committee on Committees (Johnson) – The Graduate Council needed a voting member and Bryant Griffith volunteered for the position.

Faculty Affairs committee (Oliver) – The Dean’s evaluation form has been adapted for use in evaluating Graduate Dean Knull. Copies of the proposed evaluation form were distributed to the Senators at the meeting. A senator suggested that the Associate Dean may be handling many of the issues that were previously handled by the Graduate Dean. We will have to decide if we want to address evaluation of the Associate Dean at another time. Once the Faculty Senate approves the evaluation form it will go to the Dean’s Council. The Provost was asked if the Chairs would be evaluated every year or every other year. The Faculty Senate wants the Chairs to be evaluated every year, but it is not currently being done that way. Oliver would like the new evaluation form to be voted on at the next meeting. She is asking for any comments or corrections from Senators before the next meeting. Emeritus Status for D. Marinez - We will be voting on this at the next meeting
In addition, the committee is continuing to work on the P & T policy.
Budget Committee (Waheed) – The Faculty Development Leave Policy is still being worked on. The rules are already in place, we just need to decide how to operationalize the policy. Formation of a Faculty Development Leave committee will be needed. The Budget committee will discuss the financial issues. The Provost is seeking funding to cover the Faculty Leaves. If we continue to work out these issues then the first leaves may be available by 2009. The committee will make recommendations to the Provost and then the Provost will take them forward.

A motion was made:
The Faculty Senate will seek nominations to staff the Faculty Development Leave Committee with two faculty members from each College according to the policy. Waheed made the motion and Oliver seconded it. It was passed by voice assent

Provost comments (Babbili) – He indicated we have a good framework that we can build on to continue to work together in the future.

MacDonald indicated that there is a desire to have a Teaching Excellence Committee for peer teaching review in the College of Science and Technology.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Margaret Lucero