Minutes of the Faculty Senate  
March 14, 2008

Senators in attendance: Anderson, Bantell, Byus, Cammarata, Causgrove, Changchit, Elwood, Griffith, Hartlaub, Johnson, King, Lucero, MacDonald, Mortimer, Oliver, Reuter, Rogers, Talley, Waheed, and Yellen

Ex Officio in attendance: Anantha Babbili, Christine Silliman, Kathy Winston,

Meeting called to order by Speaker Hartlaub at 2:04 p.m.

The February minutes were approved by voice assent.

*Presence of Provost and Assistant to the Provost at Senate Meetings* (Hartlaub) – Speaker Hartlaub usually meets with the Provost between the time of the Exec meeting and the scheduled Faculty Senate meeting. Provost Babbilli is concerned about viewing Faculty Senate votes on controversial issues. We already reserve the right to excuse the Provost from part of the meeting. One senator indicated that she liked having the Provost at the meeting. Another senator suggested that paper ballots be used when there is a controversial issue. Hartlaub indicated that he wants the Provost to hear the minority as well as the majority. Other senators agreed that they like the openness that is currently an aspect of the way we operate. They want the Provost to hear first hand about the concerns of faculty. This is more of a problem when untenured individuals need to speak about an important issue. In summary, there appears to be no reason to change what we are doing, but we should keep in mind that we can use secret/paper ballots whenever confidentiality is an issue.

The Provost would like to host a special event for the incoming and outgoing senators and their significant others after the Faculty Senate meeting in which the changeover occurs.

*Texas Council of Faculty Senates report* (Yellen) – Yellen and Lucero attended the TCFS meeting last month. A copy of our “Roundup Report” was provided in the Faculty Senate packet. This report was shared with the other attendees at the TCFS meeting. Yellen’s report touched on the following issues:

- Talking to the legislators about faculty salaries
- Faculty rights
- Textbook prices
- College readiness standards – The TAKS test is being realigned based upon what is being taught in the classes
- AAUP – Made a presentation about the history of academic freedom. He also discussed having younger students in the classroom. He indicated that faculty should be protected under academic freedom and should therefore be able to cover any material that has a legitimate pedagogical purpose.
- Texas Academic Board - They are working on “closing the gap” criteria. Peer group meetings will report in April. Funding may be tied to student course completion rather than enrollment.
- Panel discussion on facilitating communication – They suggested that we try to gain a faculty representative on the coordinating board and regular meeting with our campus President.
- At the system-level meeting we asked how others were handling the insurance coverage for new faculty. Most campuses are not covering the initial health insurance for new faculty, while only a couple are still paying for it.

*Speaker Report (Hartlaub)* – Hartlaub indicated that he met with D. Cortinas. She seemed grateful to have the comments regarding the issues of international faculty members. It appears that often when there are problems she does not hear about it. A letter is being created that will more clearly indicate to international faculty what HR can and cannot do for them. Some of the problem seems to occur due to the different standards used for different system schools. Also, HR is working on keeping more accurate records and reporting when materials need to be processed. She agreed to work on this and try to complete things sooner. They are also distributing some of the work load so that materials and work will be completed sooner. Provost Babbili would like to have each international student greeted more warmly and formally as they arrive in Corpus Christi.

*NCAA Tournament* – Hartlaub is trying to get information on the flow of funds from the NCAA Tournament. He has not yet heard from Brian Teter, but he did contact Swint Friday. Swint Friday agreed to assist him in acquiring this information.

*Faculty Senate election* – The request for nominations went out last Friday and some nominations have come in.

*Committee Reports:*
*Academic Affairs (Talley)* –
- More revisions have been made on the Masters of Communications degree. It has already been approved by Graduate Council. Talley proposed that we approve this program. It was seconded by Oliver and passed by voice asent.
- A Summary of the substantive changes to the Undergraduate Catalog copy was provided in the Faculty Senate packet. Talley briefly described some of the major issues in it and then proposed that we approve these changes. This was seconded by Reuter and passed by voice asent.
- Changes to the Graduate Catalog copy was also provided in Faculty Senate packet. Again, Talley briefly discussed some of the key changes. In particular she described the procedure for enforced withdrawal. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by Mortimer and passed by voice asent.
- Changes to the College of Business Graduate Catalog copy were provided in the Faculty Senate Packet. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by Oliver and passed by voice asent.
- Changes to the College of Education Graduate Catalog copy were also provided to the Faculty Senate. The changes were discussed. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by Yellen. This was briefly discussed by senators and then passed by voice assent.

- Changes to the College of Liberal Arts Graduate Catalog copy were provided in the Faculty Senate packet. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by Chanchit and passed by voice assent.

- Changes to the College of Nursing Graduate Catalog copy were provided in the faculty Senate packet. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by Bantell and passed by voice assent.

- Changes to the College of Science and Technology Graduate Catalog copy were provided in the Faculty Senate packet. Some substantive changes, as well as minor changes were discussed. Talley proposed that we approve the changes. This was seconded by MacDonald. A senator asked for clarification on some courses and then it was passed by voice assent.

- Talley introduced a revision of the student grade appeal procedure. A copy was provided in the Faculty Senate packet. The changes are intended to bring the policy in line with current practice. Section 2.5.2 was added to the policy. This provision is intended to enhance our ability to dismiss frivolous appeals. This would screen out cases that do not have a basis under the criteria of the policy. The vote will be taken at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

- Talley also introduced a new policy - Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases. The burden of proof on these cases is on the faculty member. Dave Billeaux did most of the work on this and worked with faculty members, as well as Student Affairs. The policy is complex and there is a flow chart included in the packet to indicate how these cases should proceed through the system. There is also a form included that requests a signature from the student. Currently we do not have a policy that is specifically used for this purpose. A question was asked regarding how many cases are currently being handled. We currently do not have good records on this specific type of incident. This policy will help clarify this type of issue and hopefully that will lead to better recording. Another question was asked regarding the training of the faculty members that will hear these cases. Yes, the plan is to give faculty training. Previously, if a student refused to sign or did not appear it would automatically go to appeal. Under the new policy they will be contact by Student Affairs and if they do not sign they will no longer be able to appeal. One senator asked for clarification on the types of behavior that would be covered by the policy. Also, will faculty get training on the identification of specific behaviors? We hope that will also be clearer under the new policy. Student Affairs expects that the number of cases will go up, but after it is clearer to the students that the standards will be enforced, it is hoped that the number of cases will go down. There was a general discussion of when the form should be submitted and how various situations should be handled. One senator asked that the policy be distributed to all faculty asking individuals to contact their senators with their comments. Another senator indicated that he thinks we need to communicate much more clearly what is and is not appropriate behavior. Hartlaub indicated that there has been a discussion about having education for
students about academic misconduct as soon as they start taking classes. Provost Babbilii indicated that it is important that we get this policy in place as soon as possible. Having this policy is important for SACS accreditation.

- The committee just received information on the Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering proposal. The committee will continue to work on this and bring it to the next meeting.

ABE (Hartlaub) –

- Change in our by-laws is proposed to better reflect the various Colleges’ representation in the composition of the Executive Committee. The proposed changes in the by-laws will make them more consistent with current practice. A draft of the changes was provided at the meeting. Talley asked what we should do if due to the composition of committee chairs a conflict results in the overall composition of the Executive Committee according to the changed by-laws. It was pointed out that a different member of the committee could sit on the Executive Committee instead of the committee chair. This will be an action item at the next meeting.

- Awards up-date (Anderson) – The decisions have been made regarding the awards and letters are being forwarded indicating the decisions. The Case nominations have been extended until Monday March 24th.

Committee on Committees (Johnson)

- Johnson proposed that the Faculty Senate approve the policy on adding the lecturer positions. This was seconded by Rogers. One senator indicated that he did not like the requirement of having a Ph.D. in these positions and suggested that if an individual has a Ph.D. that individual should be put into a tenure-track position. Another senator indicated a concern that tenure-lines could be replaced with Lecturers. Some academic areas have more trouble than others in getting Ph.D. qualified adjuncts. There was some discussion of the relationship between this policy change and other policies. A senator pointed out that it appears that individuals in these positions would not be likely to have the necessary research to qualify for teaching in graduate classes. Another senator indicated that there may be a problem in some programs where there are not enough tenure lines to cover all of the courses without Visiting slots to cover the rest of the classes; however the Visiting slots are limited regarding the number of years they can stay. The vote was for – 17, against – 0, and 4 abstentions.

Faculty Affairs (Oliver)

- The Faculty Affairs Committee has drafted changes to the Tenure and Promotion policy. The Provost has been asked to review the changes before it is brought to the Faculty Senate.

Budget Committee (Waheed)

- The election of University Faculty Development Committee representatives will be held right after Spring Break. A policy for the functions and responsibilities of the University Faculty Development Committee was provided at the meeting.