Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Faculty Senate Meeting

November 10, 2006


Guests: Suzette Chopin, Gary Jeffress, Stephen Southern, Wes Tunnell.

I. Approval of 10/13/06 minutes
   It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 13 Senate meeting. The minutes were approved as written.

II. Guest Speaker – S. Chopin
   Dr. Chopin spoke about the Extramural Associates Research Development Award, from the National Institutes of Health. This grant will assist TAMUCC in increasing our research output and will benefit all disciplines. She gave examples of subjects in the disciplines of Business, Education, Liberal Arts that are eligible for grants, as well as those disciplines traditionally writing NIH grants in the College of Science and Technology and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

   Goals for the program include promoting a research culture, to increase biomedical and behavioral research, and increase undergraduate research opportunities. There is an Advisory Board made up of members who have a lot of research experience, a Research Development Committee, made up of faculty members looking to gain expertise in research, and a pool of $40,000 to fund pilot projects. Contact Dr. Chopin at x6022 for more information on the Research Development Office.

III. Texas Faculty Senate Meeting - Linda Cook, Deputy Speaker
   The Council of Texas Faculty Senates met on Oct. 19-20 in Austin. There were concurrent meetings with the American Association of University Professors and the Texas Association of College Teachers. Cook reported that TAMUCC’s enrollment went up, while enrollment at other colleges and universities in Texas went down. She also mentioned that our faculty do not have any issues regarding shared governance, and this is not the case with other colleges and universities in Texas.

IV. Speaker Comments
   1. Hartlaub cancelled the December Senate meeting, as faculty will be in the midst of finals at that time. The next meeting is January 19, 2007
   2. The Core Curriculum Committee voted to include College Algebra as one of the courses that will meet a math requirement for the Core. This aligns us with the rest of the state in terms of math requirements. The Math Department is agreeable to this change. Dr. Wheeless noted that some departments may want to change their requirements or pre-requisites to take advantage of this change.
   3. Talley, as representative for Senate on the Calendar Committee, reported that they examined calendars for future years up to 2008-09. They corrected inconsistencies and errors, and proposed calendars were sent to the President’s Cabinet. Faculty Senate does not need to vote on these calendars, but can provide input. Questions were raised about holidays and final grades for Seniors due before finals are completed. Nursing has a problem with classes starting on Wednesday, with clinical classes occurring on Thursday, with no class prior to a clinical class. Johnson brought up the issue of graduating Seniors in summer sessions. If they take a final a week early during a summer session, they have missed a week’s worth of content, and that does not seem fair to the student, as well as being a problem for the faculty member. The Provost advised that Senate
review this issue this year or next year. She also suggested that we examine our final schedule. If finals only take 2 hours, perhaps we can tighten up our exam schedule.

4. Hartlaub introduced our guests: Dr. Southern, Counseling, College of Education, also Chair of the Graduate Council; Dr. Gary Jeffers, GIS, College of Science and Technology.

V. Committee Reports

1. Faculty Affairs – Yellen – The Committee looked at the Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty Positions policy. Senate can discuss this now and vote on it in January. The Committee made some grammatical changes to clarify the requirement for 18 hours in the field in which a faculty member is teaching, in Sections 2.2 and 2.4. Reuter asked if 18 semester hours was an increase from 12, and Cook replied that the requirement has always been 18. There was some discussion about keeping the word discipline in Section 2.4, but a suggestion was made to change the passage to: “…in the discipline or related field, with 18 graduate level semester hours in the field in which they are teaching.” This change should also be made in Section 2.5.

Section 2.5 provides for professionals who are not “clinical” professionals, such as C.P.A.’s or accountants. Education also has people meeting the professional description, for example a superintendent or principal, who will be sharing expertise in classes. The difference is research and service requirements. Thomas opposes this as it allows the University to replace tenured faculty with non-tenured faculty. She said the AAUP also opposes this. Several faculty noted that accreditation requirements do not allow the University to replace tenure lines with non-tenured contract faculty.

Cook replied that CONHS has had “visiting faculty” for 10 years and their status needs to be resolved with this policy. The addition of Section 2.5 may delay or obstruct the adoption of this policy.

Discussion on this issue continued, as the Provost asked if the University could not use “clinical/professional” faculty now to replace tenured faculty. Pohan added that the visiting professors allow the College of Education to function without additional tenure-track lines.

Another discussion was held, regarding instructors teaching 15 hours, which is more than a regular teaching load. Wheeless explained that a true visiting faculty member has established expertise, and the appointment is more of a courtesy appointment. She said the Southern Association of Colleges (SAC) will look at our visiting faculty.

Cook made a friendly amendment to delete Section 2.5. After discussion, Yellen asked if we change a policy, must it go back to the Deans and Director’s Council? Wheeless said that wasn’t always necessary, the President’s Cabinet will look at all the input to make a decision.

Yellen also noted another suggestion by the Faculty Affairs Committee was to combine the length of appointment for all types of non-tenure track faculty into another heading.

It was moved and seconded to table this policy for further discussion. Hartlaub advised Senators to talk to their constituents about this issue.

2. Awards, By-laws, and Elections Committee – Bickley – The ABE Committee has put forward a nomination for the Piper Professor Award. She was informed that Dr. Killebrew has signed it, and it will be submitted to the Piper Foundation for consideration.

3. Committee on Committees – Thomas – She reported that according to Murray’s research, no nursing faculty they can find have 12 month appointments. Her suggestion is to return to the Nursing faculty and ask what they want and what issues they want to resolve. She will advise the librarians to do the same. Regarding the Undergraduate and Graduate workload, she said there is no conformity in the University, all colleges are different.
4. Academic Affairs Committee – Causgrove – The Committee is bringing forward the change in the Nurse Practitioner curriculum as a discussion item. Cook noted that this is just a re-adjustment of clinical hours. As Senate has seen this proposal before, the question was raised if this was an action item. Wheeless asked if it has been through the Graduate Council. Winston explained the timeframe. Since graduate courses and catalog copy go to the Graduate Council first, the undergraduate catalog copy comes to Senate first. After the graduate copy passes Graduate Council, it comes to the Senate, usually in January, February and March. Causgrove noted that we need 2/3 approval in a vote to add this as an action item.

The Committee is also working on the issue of Academic Honesty, with Dr. Billeaux. There is a need to document the cases that faculty notices, and determine what happens to these cases and documentation after it goes to the Student Affairs office. He will have more to report in the future.

5. Budget Committee – Waheeduzzaman – Waheed is absent, but Hartlaub has asked Lovitt’s office when the Budget will be available to Senate, and/or in the Library. Bantell reported that they have received all the responses to their survey of the Colleges regarding how merit pay is distributed. They will meet next week to discuss the results.

VI. Action Items – Revised Policies

Hartlaub explained that usually these policies are distributed to the applicable committees, but he distributed them to the whole Senate, so the whole Senate will act on them.

1. 15.01.01.C1.01 – Administration of Research Enhancement Program – This essentially changes the person in charge of the program from the VP of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to the VP for Graduate Research. Another change allows faculty to receive this grant for 2 years. King suggested adding the distinction of not supporting a doctoral student working on their dissertation as a Principal Investigator. He also brought up the idea that a 2 page bio might be preferable to a 20 page CV, regarding section 7.39. After some discussion, King offered a friendly amendment to use a truncated CV or bio not to exceed 4 pages. It was moved and seconded to approve the friendly amendment. The friendly amendment was approved. It was moved and seconded to approve this policy as revised. The motion passed.

2. 15.99.99.C.1.01 – Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee – Terms of committee members were changed, and the change is endorsed by the Committee members. It was moved and seconded to approve the policy revision. The motion passed.

3. 15.01.01.C1 – Externally funded Grants and Contracts – Discussion centered around grants which are awarded and must begin during an academic semester, there is no possibility for release of time. Deans have approved the grant, but faculty cannot be re-assigned. Faculty must choose between teaching or research, or working for free. Thomas suggested striking the word, “rarely”, in Section 5.3.1. There was more discussion regarding the approval process and the routing of grants through the administration. Hartlaub requests that we approve or table. Thomas suggested deleting “in advance” and “such approvals will be rare.” It was moved and seconded to table this and send it to the Committee on Committees to bring back alternatives. Wheeless noted that this policy is approved, and it will govern practice until something else is approved.

VII. University Prep High School issues – Senate response

Hartlaub wrote a letter to Dean Hopkins, and some Senators said the letter supported and endorsed the program, although Senate did not vote to support the program. Waheed had suggested in the Executive Committee meeting that Senate pass a resolution, which would be stronger than a letter. Hartlaub noted 2 issues: 1. University Prep is here and done, and faculty will need to deal with it. 2. We would like faculty input into any program that affects other programs on campus. We need better communication in advance of grant applications.
Pohan said that this is a national item of interest in Education circles. There was more discussion and an offering of a resolution by Cook, which stated:

“Whereas, the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M University –Corpus Christi is committed to providing the highest quality education to all of its students, and
Whereas, the Faculty of Texas A&M University –Corpus Christi are not only the content experts of the various university curricula but also responsible for the execution of said curricula, and
Whereas the Faculty Faculty of Texas A&M University –Corpus Christi are committed to the controlled growth of the university and the judicious and appropriate use of educational resources,
Be It Therefore Resolved that the Faculty be consulted in the development and planning of educational programs, especially programs that affect multiple departments and educational units.”

At 4:00 p.m., Buck moved to extend the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

Pohan made a motion that a representative from every college impacted by the University Preparatory High School should sit on an advisory board for the University Preparatory High School program. A friendly amendment was offered to include other university units that may be impacted, such as the Library. The amendment was clarified to say “faculty from every college and a representative from other units impacted” sit on the advisory board. It was moved and seconded to approve the friendly amendment. Pohan’s revised motion was seconded and Senate voted to approve the motion.

Wheeless noted that the lack of communication that resulted in this situation is due to our quick growth. The Deans have a new procedure in which they will bring information about grants and programs to the Deans’ Council, with the responsibility of the Deans to communicate to faculty any grants that may affect others. The VP of Scholarly Research also will also be aware of such grants to assist in the communication process.

VIII. Provost’s Comments
Wheeless explained the long time frame and long process involved in getting new programs approved by the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Board. It is due to this long process, and the fact that the Senate will not be meeting in December, that she is asking Senate to act quickly on two programs. Dr. Tunnell introduced the Master’s degree and the Ph.D. in Marine Biology, which is a collaborative program between TAMU at College Station, and TAMU at Galveston and TAMUCC. The program will incur no costs through the first 2 years, and then formula funding and external funding should be in place. Dr. Tunnell anticipates 5-7 students per year with a maximum of 20. Students will take classes here and the degree is awarded from College Station. Library resources should be well taken care of, with a long history of undergraduate classes and the Harte Research Institute contributing money for Library resources.

As this is an emergency item, a 2/3 majority is needed to put it on the agenda as an action item, then Senators will vote on the item. A motion was made and seconded to add this as an agenda item; the motion passed. A motion was then made to endorse this proposal, it was seconded. 17 voted yes to endorse, 0 no votes, and 2 abstentions. The motion passed.

Wheeless introduced another program request, which is for a Master’s Degree in Geospatial Surveying Engineering. We do not have pending authority, so we must request through the Board of Regents and through the Coordinating Board for planning authority. The Senate can approve of this program as a concept or as a proposal. Dr. Jeffress noted an enormous demand for this degree, and all courses will be available online. All courses but one are already being taught for the Computer Science degree with an emphasis in Geo-science. Estimated numbers of students are 10 the first year, 20 the second and 30 students per year after that. Costs are all covered in tuition and fees, and start up costs are less than $50,000. The Blucher endowment and the Harte endowment will contribute to this program.

Southern noted that the Graduate Council has reviewed this proposal and approved it. It was moved to place
this on the agenda as an emergency item. The motion was seconded and passed with 2/3 majority. It was moved to approve the proposal as it stands. During discussion, it was noted that 2 new faculty will be hired, 1 in year 3, and 1 in year 5 of the program, with a position for internet support requested in year 2. Faculty voted on the motion, with 16 approving, 1 opposed and 3 abstaining. The motion passed.

Wheeless reminded the Senate of the Faculty Convocation on Jan 5th. She will discuss what she’s learned from visiting with the faculty and what we should do to proceed from here. She apologized for bringing these emergency items before the Senate.

IX. The good of the order
No items were discussed under this agenda item.

X. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Submitted by Sally Bickley, Secretary