Minutes of the Faculty Senate  
March 13, 2009

Attendance: Jennifer Anderson, Bilaye Benibo, Kent Byus, Kirk Cammarata, Niki Changchit, Mark Hartlaub, Karen Loveland, Margaret Lucero, Ahmed Mahdy, Michael Moody, Marvarene Oliver; Mark Pfeifer; Elizabeth Sefcik, Sharon Talley

Ex Officio: Anantha Babbili, David Billeaux, Robert Nelsen, Christine Silliman, Cely Smart

Guests: None

1 Speaker Lucero called the meeting to order at 2:03

2 The minutes from the February 20, 2009 meeting were approved as corrected (by voice assent).

3 Speaker’s Report  
3.1 Texas Council of Faculty Senates Meeting  
3.1.1 Shared governance models discussion – note that UT Dallas referenced “the California model”. Lucero asked for volunteers to research this model. Nelsen will email references for the shared governance model at UCLA. Most faculty senates meet regularly with the president. Lucero sent a message to the president’s office requesting a meeting with the executive council. A senator asked if any faculty senate presidents have representation on the coordinating board. Lucero reported that state law prohibited such representation but that some changes in the law were pending this legislative session.

3.1.2 Universities in the state are lagging far behind the goal in Hispanic enrollment relative to stated targets.

3.1.3 Textbook costs and alternatives continue to be an issue.

3.1.4 The Vice Chancellor of the University of Houston provided information about legislative issues.

3.1.4.1 Nine billion dollar state budget shortfall, covered by rainy day fund. Nelsen said revisions due out next week would increase to ten billion.

3.1.4.2 Talk of freezing budgets to current levels plus growth only.

3.1.4.3 Talk about deregulation of tuition. Several tuition-related bills will come before the legislature this session.

3.1.4.4 Report regarding the governor’s higher education reforms. There is no current legislation related to these reforms but some should be presented during this legislative session.

3.1.4.5 Textbook legislation. Several bills are in the legislature at this time.

3.1.4.6 Concealed handgun law – should pass house.

3.1.4.6.1 TCFS passed a resolution opposing this bill.

3.1.4.6.2 Lucero opened floor to discussions
3.1.4.6.3 Oliver moved that we endorse the resolution crafted by TCFS. Sefcik seconded.

3.1.4.6.4 Moody called for question. The motion passed (12 yes, 2 no, 0 abstain).

3.2 Proposed calendars 2008-2012 – the committee invited comments on the calendars. Cely Smart volunteered to compile comments for committee.

4 WebCT/Blackboard Task Force proposal (attachment) – Talley reported that the task force has met twice. The IT people are currently testing WebCT/Blackboard 9.0 for future implementation.

5 Academic Dishonesty Policy, second reading (attachment) – Sharon Talley

5.1 Talley proposed we accept the three proposed changes (sections 1.1.1, 2.2.3, 2.2.6.1), Oliver seconds. The motion passed (13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

5.2 Talley Moved to accept the proposed change to section 1.1.1 of the grade appeal procedure, Oliver seconds. The motion passed (14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

6 Committees

6.1 Academic Affairs Committee – Mark Hartlaub

6.1.1 Special admissions policy (attachment) – the committee modified examples presented at the last meeting to create an “Exceptional Talent Policy” proposal. Hartlaub moved to endorse the ETP, Sefcik seconds. Hartlaub indicated that the senate will receive annual reports regarding the number of admits under the policy and their academic progress. The motion passed (14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

6.1.2 Second baccalaureate catalog language discussion – Nelsen reported that the current policy forbidding a second baccalaureate was used at UT only and that it was an enrollment management issue that doesn’t apply to us. Hartlaub moved we drop the restriction from catalog, Talley seconds. The motion passed (14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

6.1.3 Graduate catalog copy briefly summarized. Hartlaub moved to accept. Sefcik seconds.

6.1.3.1 A senator asked if master’s and doctoral theses need to go through turnitin; the policy appears to require electronic scanning of papers. Nelsen reported this was left vague to allow for other plagiarism detection systems. A senator expressed concerns that this interfered with academic freedom and legislated the way we teach. Extended discussion followed on the issue. A senator proposed that we change the words “electronically scanned” to “checked” in the policy. Hartlaub accepted the friendly amendment. The motion passed (14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

6.1.4 Undergraduate Council – The committee presented a proposal to create an undergraduate council to oversee catalog copy and changes to undergraduate curriculum. Issues arise related to overlapping of responsibilities with the Core Curriculum Committee. Hartlaub moved we recommend the
development of an undergraduate council to the president, Changchit seconds. The motion passed (14 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

6.2 ABE Committee – Jennifer Anderson

6.2.5 Awards up-date – three calls for award nominations are still active. The Excellence Awards deadline was yesterday; the committee will submit candidates to Billeaux by 3/26. Case Professor Award is available, see relevant deadlines in the announcement. Student awards issues (see handout).

6.2.6 Elections – An email was sent to each college regarding nominations for replacement senators. Nominations for elected faculty senate officer positions at next meeting. Send nominations to Christine.

6.3 Committee on Committees – Nancy Rogers

6.3.7 No report.

6.4 Faculty Affairs Committee – Marvarene Oliver

6.4.8 Policies 12.01, 12.02, 12.05, 12.07, 15.01, 24.01.01, 29.01, 34.02 – second reading (attachments)

6.4.8.2 12.01 through 12.07 – comments from last meeting have been submitted, none added.

6.4.8.3 15.01, 24.01.01, 29.01, 34.02 – no comments received so far, none added in meeting.

6.4.9 Calendar procedure revision - first reading (attachment) – new policy includes moving to a four-year rather than three-year cycle and specifies membership. Add dates and deadlines. Comments to Oliver before next meeting. Second reading at next meeting. See FAC memo (handout) for more information.

6.4.10 Telephone survey results – sent report to Keith Franger. Broken phones already fixed, work order to install phone in missing areas submitted. ECDC may be a problem due to remodeling. Franger asked faculty to contact him directly if they discover a missing or non-functional security phone.

6.5 Budget Committee- Karen Loveland

6.5.11 Salary research – The committee has received 2—7-2009 data. Data are being complied and analyzed.

7 Provost Issues and Comments –

7.1 Chancellor’s Teaching Awards – Billeaux reported that 57 faculty, 97 sections 3,600 students will be evaluated.

7.2 Funding for Summer School -- will not be affected by budget. Administration has “found” money needed to fund the same number of classes as last year. Deans cautioned to schedule classes wisely, minimize overlaps, avoid low enrollment classes, and other strategies for most efficient use of resources.

7.3 Other comments

7.3.1 Retention is major issue -- Provost’s office is developing structural changes to reverse negative trends and will share recommendations at the next meeting. Issues include stronger advising, diagnostic tools to aid faculty in helping students, looking at barrier courses and bottlenecks, and financial issues. They are working on mapping of the application and admission process
through first year experience. Will likely to ask faculty to assist in implementing new strategies to increase retention.

7.3.2 Nelsen – three quick things:

7.3.2.1 BOR pulled and held all tuition packages, including requested increases (6%).

7.3.2.2 Advisors will be very busy for the next few weeks due to audit that found non-implementation of required software. Advisors will be working to implement it before the final audit.

7.3.2.3 Double-stacking classes -- Must have clear syllabi indicating the difference between graduate and undergraduate student requirements. In the future, the graduate dean will need to approve all double-stacked classes.

7.3.2.4 A senator expressed concerns about math preparation related to retention. Nelsen addressed some of the changes we’ll make under QEP to address math skills and the barrier to retention they pose.

8 Other issues?
8.1 Lucero asked for volunteers to attend the Provost Council meeting on Tuesday, March 24 (she has another meeting).

8.2 New materials from TCFS meeting are available in the faculty senate office.

9 Lucero adjourned the meeting at 4:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Karen A. Loveland, Faculty Senate Secretary