

Faculty Senate Meeting

5 October 2012
12:00 noon - 2:30 p.m.
WHTC 125

- I. Call to Order by President Townsend at 12:04 p.m.
- II. Roll Call, **Present:** Mr. B. Townsend, Dr. A. Ramirez, Dr. F. Rhodes, Dr. M. Bennett, Dr. G. Clarke, Ms. V. Garcia, Dr. H. Mandal, Mr. J. Maxstadt, Dr. M. Muñoz, Dr. J. Norris, Dr. G. Potter, Dr. L. Prieto, Dr. M. Vargas
- III. Our guest Dr. Jeff Brown, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, was given the floor.

Dr. Brown:

The Senate was presented with a revised set of categories and requirements for membership to Graduate Faculty. These revisions had been previously approved by the Senate and the Faculty in 2008, but were not placed into the Faculty Handbook during its massive reworking. The two substantive revisions to this document are; removing the doctors/masters distinction and removing the outside recommendation to become a Graduate Faculty member. The Handbook Committee was charged with looking at these revisions and rectifying them with what is already present in the Handbook, so that they can be voted on in the November meeting.

Dr. Brown also informed us that he is currently working on revising the thesis process to completely move it to an electronic format, which will be housed in the Texas Digital Library. He is also currently modifying the thesis review process so that they can be submitted in a timely manner to allow for proper revisions and resubmissions. A new website is being built which will house timelines, tutorials, procedures and formatting guidelines for completing a thesis or a dissertation. It is hoped that soft timelines will be up for the Spring semester and hard timelines by the Fall.

- IV. The Senate welcomed our newest member Dr. George Potter, from the College of Education, Department of Professional Programs, to the group.
- V. The minutes of the October 5th Faculty Senate meeting were voted on and approved unanimously without revisions.
- VI. Committee Assignments:

The Senate was presented with a listing of Senate committee assignments and asked for individual approval. All assigned chairs were asked and accepted their chair positions.

- Dr. Muñoz was asked and agreed to chair the Committee on Committees.

- The Faculty Moral and Welfare Committee was charged with oversight on the implementation of the University Mentoring Program.
- The Budget and Finance Committee was charged with looking at the results of the Cost Savings/Revenue Generating web survey being conducted by Mr. Castillo, Vice President for Finances, and reporting those results to the Senate.
- The University Ethics Committee was charged with continuing to work with the Honor Council and the IRB.
- Dr. Norris volunteered to be the Faculty Senate representative on the Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee and Dr. Muñoz volunteered to be the Faculty Senate representative on the Technology Advisory Committee.

VII. Handbook Committee Revisions:

- Documentation and Presentations in Support of Applications (for promotion and tenure). A change was made to state “External peer review letters will be added as received by department chairs, with a copy provided to the candidate.” During the discussion it was brought up that it has been ‘suggested’ that peer review letters for promotion and tenure be changed from being optional to being required. It was decided that the Senate should look into the process of what is considered a proper peer review letter and then, separately, look into the decision to make peer review letters optional versus required. The wording for these changes was charged to the Handbook Committee. **The change was voted on and approved unanimously.**

- Changes to the Grievance Section, which were discussed in the last Senate meeting, were presented. One further change was introduced that “Faculty from the same college as either of the parties are not eligible to serve on a Grievance Committee”. **These changes were voted on and approved unanimously.**

- The words “in writing” were included in the section dealing with “notice of dismissal” on page 59. **This change was voted on and approved unanimously.**

- In the section “Failure to Meet Standards” the whole process was reorganized to be more logical and efficient. In the sections dealing with the Faculty Senate’s role in the process, the words “Faculty Senate” were replaced with “Faculty Senate President (or designee)”. Also, the section of “Due Process” was modified to state “the appropriate administrative officers **will** discuss the matter with the faculty member in a personal conference”. Other changes were discussed and wording was modified. It was suggested and accepted that the Faculty Handbook Committee meet with the Provost and get legal guidance on the appropriate wording for the first clause of the section. **The rest of the document was voted on and approved unanimously.**

- A couple of appendix documents, the new Honor Code and the procedures for hiring, evaluation, promotion, etc. for 1207 Faculty were submitted. **The Honor Code was approved,**

but it was asked that the 1207 Procedures be deferred from being added to the Handbook until all of the Colleges and Academic Units present their rubrics for evaluation and promotion to the Senate for approval.

- It was asked of the Senate to consider whether or not the new University College be treated as a freestanding Academic Unit. It was suggested that the Senate revisit the wording of the portion of the handbook dealing with “Faculty Status” and “Instructors”.

VIII. Discussion Items

- It was reported that there was a complaint submitted by a faculty member about the travel voucher process and the excessive time it takes to be reimbursed for travel. During the discussion it was revealed that the University will not properly reimburse you for travel unless you rent a car. The Academic Affairs Oversight Committee was charged with looking into this matter. Academic Affairs was also charged with contacting the Registrar about the status of students being admitted into classes without taking the proper prerequisites.

- The list of 44 Suggestions and Comments from the Spring 2012 Faculty Senate Questionnaire was discussed and roughly categorized in terms of; has been done, can't be done, assigned to a committee, tabled for later discussion... etc. Mr. Townsend volunteered to provide the Senate with a summary matrix of how each item would be dealt with.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.