

Faculty Senate Meeting

7 December 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, Dr. M. Muñoz, Dr. Q. Ni, Dr. J. Norris, Dr. L. Prieto, Dr. C. San Miguel, Dr. M. Vargas

- III. Our guest, Dr. Arenaz was given the floor:

- Student enrollment is currently 2% down, but credit hour production is 1.5% up from this time last year. We have about 700 to 800 Juniors and Seniors who enrolled in the fall and have not enrolled for the spring semester. Currently there are ~1300 students out there with 100 plus hours. We want to establish a multidisciplinary studies degree for those students who lack focus in their degree objectives in the hope of increasing student completion. A committee has been established to make recommendations for the structuring and implementation of this degree.

- The System's number one priority during the next legislative session is to try to restore some of the 18% cut from our budget. The Chancellor sent out a letter saying that there would be no tuition or fees increase in the upcoming year. We are currently considering implementing a differential tuition for some programs that are in high demand.

- We are now 3 years away from our SACS reaccreditation. They will be on campus in the Spring of 2015, so all of our materials have to be in by November of 2014.

- A university-wide committee, chaired by Drs. San Miguel and Duffy, has been established to review our QEP and everyone will have multiple opportunities to supply input.

- This year we had 11 candidates for promotion and tenure and 10 of those 11 went through the University Promotion and Tenure Committee with positive recommendations both from the Committee and from the Provost.

- We are currently talking with the A&M System Health Science Center, and with others, about the possibility of offering joint Bachelors and a Masters Degrees in the area of Public Health and Safety with a focus in environmental health and safety. We are shooting for the Fall of 2013 to get it started.

- The Provost would like to see all students go through an advisor that is in their field of interest and not go through a generic Advising Center. For upper-level students, this would mean putting an advising hold on their registration until they have seen an advisor within their Department.

- The Provost requested that on an item to be changed on page 39 in the Handbook dealing with a promotion and tenure candidates' right to include additional materials that the phrase stating "with a copy provided to the candidate" be removed. This is only in reference to external letters of review.

- Discussion followed on the wording on page 69 of the Handbook dealing with Faculty Termination that states "a faculty member has 20 days to appeal". A motion was made to change the wording to include "calendar days". A second motion was made to make an exception for a pending case to exclude those days in which the University is closed for Christmas holiday (Dec 22 - Jan 1). **Both of these motions were brought to a vote and both passed unanimously.**

IV. The minutes for the November Faculty Senate meeting were approved unanimously

V. Committee reports:

Academic Affairs Oversight Committee - have not met.

Assessment Committee - We are waiting to review Phase 1 of the AEIRs reports once the individual departmental reports have been entered into the new WEAVE Assessment tool.

Faculty Morale and Welfare Committee - Met to discuss mentoring and different rewards and/or incentives to encourage mentoring among senior faculty. The Committee plans to meet with the Provost to discuss different possibilities and then present their results to the Senate.

Budget & Finance Committee - Committee members participated in a discussion with the University Budget & Finance Committee on the recommendations made by Faculty and Staff from the past web survey on ways of either raising more money or ways of cutting expenses. Most of the ideas presented were either not practical or would save little money. There was a great deal of discussion on the use of University facilities by outside organizations and that the University does not currently have a uniform policy in place to cover such events. The Committee will continue to meet and discuss the more tenable items and then present a list to the Senate and to the University.

University Ethics Committee - did not meet.

Committee on Committees - Have met and are currently reviewing the new Compliance Committee and continuing to get the new Technology Advisory Committee and the Distance Education Committees fully organized and in place. The Distance Education Committee did meet recently to vote on the Distance Educator of the Year for 2012.

VI. Other Business

- Dr. Vargas reported that she was in a meeting with the Bookstore Committee to decide which of the book companies that we will use here. They have developed a rubric and will be inviting several book companies to come to TAMIU to give presentations on what their companies can offer us over the holiday break.

- Dr. Rhodes announced that the electronic voting on the Handbook changes by the Faculty will close at 5:00 pm today (Dec. 7th) and announced that, thus far, we have had 29.7% of the Faculty participate in the voting. It was emphasized that the Senate continue to spread the word to the Faculty that this form of voting is completely anonymous. Final results of the voting will be sent to the Senate by Dr. Rhodes via email.

- It was decided that the next Senate meeting will be on Feb 1st.

VII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Faculty Senate Questionnaire Spring 2012

1. Connect faculty with administration - **Morale & Welfare**
2. Bring back Teaching / Research Track - **tabled for later**
11. How to handle faculty being harassed by students via email / phone (not addressed in handbook) - **forward to Student Government Association**
13. Closer oversight of official and unofficial committees - **Committee on Committee's**
17. Low faculty morale - **Morale & Welfare**
23. Mentoring (mentioned 5 times) - **Morale & Welfare and open to continued Senate discussion**
30. Promote / support faculty related activities to increase connection with each other and university - **Morale & Welfare**
37. Clear departmentally defined contract terms for non-tenure faculty - **Senate**
41. Improve transparency in faculty evaluation and PTR process - **Assessment**
42. Senate should develop a FAQ page and a form that people can fill in to ask about situations that may have already been arbitrated on campus. - **Senate**