

Faculty Senate Meeting

6 May 2011
12:00 noon - 2:30 pm
WHTC 250

- I. Call to Order by Mr. Townsend at 12:04 p.m.
- II. Roll Call, **Present:** Dr. M. Bennett, Dr. G. Clarke, Dr. P. Hoang, Dr. A. Limon, Mr. J. Maxstadt, Dr. A. Moran, Dr. M. Munoz, Dr. J. Norris, Dr. L. Prieto, Mr. B. Townsend, Dr. A. Ramirez, Dr. F. Rhodes, Dr. M. Vargas.

Dr. Stephen Duffy was welcomed as our newest Faculty Senate Member.

- III. Our guests Dr. Arenaz, Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Plank were given the floor.

Dr. Arenaz:

- Nothing new to report on the budget. The Senate did pass their version of the budget. We (TAMIU) have been instructed to build our budget around the House version which is not as kind as the Senate budget; asking for an 18% reduction in our appropriations.

- UISD is expecting between a \$22 and \$32 million budget deficit so that they say they can no longer afford to bus the students to our campus who are currently here taking dual enrollment / dual credit courses. We have agreed to pilot some of our courses (History and second semester Freshman English Composition) on their campus this fall using our faculty. With the possibility of offering them Math and first semester English Composition in the spring. We are also looking at the possibility of using modified online lecture captures to distribute course content to these students.

- It was mentioned that if the "Gun Bill" passes that TAMIU's insurance premiums would skyrocket and we would have to fire people in order to pay our insurance.

- Dr. Arenaz announced that he had received a recommendation from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that Dr. Frances Rhodes be chosen as our first Ombudsperson. The Provost agreed with this recommendation and will send out an email to the campus affirming this decision. Dr. Rhodes will be serving a two year term as TAMIU's first Ombudsperson.

- The Provost was asked to address the issue of 3rd year review of faculty and reminded the Senate that 3rd year review is a Departmental process where the Department may make one of three recommendations to the Departmental Chair regarding the individual undergoing review:

1. The individual is making adequate progress toward their tenure and should continue what they are doing;

2. The individual is making progress toward their tenure, but there are weakness(es) that need to be addressed;

The first 2 recommendations go ‘as advisory’ to the Department Chair and stop at the Dean level where a decision is rendered. Dr. Mitchell also clarified that if the individual did not chose to rectify any weaknesses then this information would be sent to the Provost as a negative recommendation. Dr. Mitchell informed us that the Provost and the Deans meet twice a month and much of their meeting time is devoted to discussing the weaknesses of untenured faculty and how they can be better mentored and strengthened.

3. The individual is not making good progress toward their tenure and is not a good fit within the Department. This option goes immediately to the Provost who may issue a terminal letter, in which case the individual will have one more year of employment at this University. This third option is taken in consultation with the respective Dean of the College / School and only after all aspects of the individual’s performance are thoroughly reviewed.

Dr. Mitchell:

- He believes that the faculty should see the Chair’s, Dean’s and Provosts comments on their yearly PPE report before they write their own comments so they can properly respond to any issues that may be have been brought up throughout the entire process.

- Dr. Mitchell was asked to address the question as to “how a faculty member could get a 3 on an annual evaluation(s) and still not get tenure or pass a mid-term review?” The Dean’s response was.... Tenure is looking at the overall body of work and the overall performance over the full 5 years. The evaluations are strictly on a year-to-year basis and so that within a given year it is possible to get a “3” but over the course of all of one’s pre-tenure years the total body of work may be inadequate for tenure. Dr. Mitchell also suggested to the Senate that our constitution be changed so that the untenured and nontenure track faculty be allowed to have their own Senate Representative. Dr. Rhodes has a copy of the text necessary to make this change and will pass it along to the Handbook Committee.

- Dr. Mitchell also suggested that on promotion and tenure decisions that every tenured faculty should have some voice on some level, unless they are in the Administrative chain. It was clarified that those who have an evaluative role on faculty is our current working definition of an Administrator.

Dr. Plank:

- Some new faculty have approached her with the suggestion that there be a difference in the type, processes and degree of mentoring between ‘new’ and ‘old’ faculty.

IV. Old Items:

- The minutes of the March Faculty Senate meeting were approved unanimously with the amendment that the Senate had previously approved of the Provost's revised Fall schedule plan.

- The minutes of the April Faculty Senate meeting were approved unanimously with no revisions.

- A suggestion was made that the sentence on page 44 of the Faculty Handbook "Faculty teaching a doctoral seminar *will* receive release time...." to change the word "will" to "may", so that the Dean could have some flexibility in making the decision. It was pointed out that the Faculty usually receives release time if they teach a doctoral seminar and not before then because before then schedules are generally unknown for individual faculty members. The concern was also made that this sentence may have been placed in the Handbook to achieve SACS (or other) accreditation for those programs. Also the concern was made that changing the wording might mean that no course release was given even during the semester the course was taught. A motion was made and seconded (on the condition that the new wording meets all accreditation requirements) that the wording of the sentence be changed to.....

"Faculty teaching a doctoral seminar will receive one course release time in the semester in which the seminar is delivered and may receive one course release time prior to the semester in which the seminar is delivered." This was voted on and approved unanimously.

- Discussion followed on the requesting of external letters of support for tenure applications. It was requested in the April Meeting that Senators elicit feedback from their constituents. Mr. Maxstadt reported that all of the Librarians were against it. It was decided that further discussion on this topic be tabled for the fall.

V. Committee Reports:

- Budget & Finance Committee: nothing to report

- Academic Oversight Committee:

- Dr. Vargas reported that they had worked a great deal on Assessment and were currently working on the Faculty evaluations through the Chancellor's Awards and would be coordinating the work carefully in conjunction with Mary Trevino and Veronica Martinez so that they would know ahead of time what to prepare and how to prepare the evaluation packets.

- Ethics Committee: nothing to report

- Committee on Committees: nothing to report

- Faculty Morale Committee:

- It was noted that the Faculty Questionnaires have not been distributed to the Faculty and this needs to be addressed at the first Senate meeting in the fall.

- Handbook Committee:

- There are 5 revisions of the Handbook that were previously approved by the Senate and are still awaiting approval by the Administration before they can be sent for a vote by the Faculty. Some of these items need to be further modified during the summer so it was decided that these changes would be addressed during the fall semester.

VI. Announcements:

- The 2010 - 2011 Senate Certificates will be distributed during the Fall 'beginning of the semester' meeting.

- A synopsis of the work accomplished by the 2010 - 2011 Senate was provided:
 - Completion of many of the 33 items in last year's Faculty Questionnaire
 - We have our Ombudsperson in place
 - Resolved many of the Handbook issues
 - Completed the Administrator evaluations
 - The student evaluations are close to completion

The 2010 - 2011 Faculty Senate was adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

VII. Reconvene the 2011 - 2012 Faculty Senate at 2:16 p.m.

- Election of new officers for the 2011 - 2012 Faculty Senate - Dr. Rhodes
 - The Floor was opened for nominations for position of President:
 - Dr. Vargas was nominated but declined
 - Mr. Townsend was nominated and declared President by acclamation
 - For position of Vice-President:
 - Dr. Bennett was nominated but declined
 - Dr. Sung was nominated
 - Mr. Maxstadt was nominated and won the position by a majority of votes
 - For the position of Secretary
 - Dr. Bennett was nominated and declared Secretary by acclamation
 - For the position of Elections Officer and Parliamentarian
 - Dr. Rhodes was nominated and declared Elections Officer and Parliamentarian by acclamation

2011 - 2012 Senate was adjourned at 2:25 p.m. and reconvened as the 2010 - 2011 Senate

Discussion and voting for the Teacher of the Year and Scholar of the Year followed.

VIII. The May 6th meeting was completed at 2:50 p.m.