

Faculty Senate Meeting

3 Feb 2012
12:00 noon - 2:30 p.m.
WHTC 125

- I. Call to Order by Mr. Townsend at 12:10 p.m.
- II. Roll Call, **Present:** Mr. B. Townsend, Mr. J. Maxstadt, Dr. F. Rhodes, Dr. M. Bennett, Dr. G. Clarke, Dr. S. Duffy, Ms. V. Garcia, Dr. L. Hemmer, Dr. M. Moran, Dr. M. Munoz, Dr. J. Norris, Dr. L. Prieto, Dr. A. Ramirez, Dr. C. Sung, Dr. M. Vargas
- III. Our Guests Dr. Arenaz and Dr. Blackwell were given the floor.

Dr. Arenaz announced that our Regents have charged the System Universities with developing a set of metrics so that we can compare ourselves with each other and this work is almost complete. Another charge given was to develop Systemwide learning outcomes and learning objectives with appropriate rubrics. Once complete, the Provost will share these with the Senate for comment because they will have to be mapped into our own Core within a year.

The Provost also updated the Senate on Faculty Promotion and Tenure announcing that last year's group of Faculty were very strong. The two Faculty who came up for Full Professor had excellent external letters and were received very positively and out of the eleven Faculty who came up for tenure only one was denied. Dr. Arenaz stressed that those who obtained external letters in this process were considered strong candidates by the reviewers and that the Senate should consider placing this in some form in our Handbook. Dr. Arenaz also stated that he has continued to have meetings with those Faculty who will be going up for Promotion/Tenure in the next couple of years to help guide them through this process.

The Provost shared with the Senate a revised class schedule that will be implemented this Fall. During the discussion it was suggested that the class final exam schedule be placed in a more visible location on the University's website.

Dr. Blackwell discussed with us the current University and Honor Council's work on the tightening of penalties for students with repeated plagiarism/cheating offenses. Second time undergraduate offenders would be suspended and third time expelled from the University and a first time graduate offender would be suspended and second time offense be expelled. It was suggested that changes be made as to the length of time a student has to respond to and go through the appeals process and the degree to which the concerned Faculty is notified during the process. It was pointed out that at College Station when a student gets any letter from Judicial Affairs during the process, that letter is also copied to the faculty member who initiated the complaint in order to keep the faculty member informed throughout the process. Also, currently, with every notification sent out to the student there is a maximum of five days response time allowed. It was suggested that this be increased to seven University business days. It was also suggested that graduate students who are reported for the first time be automatically brought

before the Honor Council.

The Senate was asked to assist in coming up with some uniform guidelines for the Faculty on coping with the degree to which a student act is considered to be plagiarism/cheating and the Academic Affairs Committee was charged with looking into this concern.

IV. New Business

There was discussion as to whether or not there should be a uniform set of rules on the use of computers/iPads in the classroom. The concern was that the use of these devices could be a potential distraction to neighboring students. It was suggested that all things electronic that could serve as a distraction be included under 'disruptive behavior' in the syllabus and it be clearly stated in the syllabus what the penalties would be for such disruption. It was also suggested that we consult our colleagues for feedback and then send any appropriate recommendations to the Senate who would forward it to the Handbook Committee for consideration.

There was also discussion on the use of cell phones in the classroom. It is decided that there was no need, at this time, for a University policy on the use of cell phones in the classroom

It was announced that the Texas Council of Faculty Senates will be meeting on Feb 17th and 18th in Austin and the Provost will play for the travel fees.

V. Committee Reports

Handbook Committee - The six changes that the Faculty approved last semester have been incorporated into the Handbook. Mr. Maxstadt provided us with the text for the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Nontenured Clinical Educator Track to be inserted as an appendix in the Handbook. It was suggested to use this as a model for other Departments who have fixed-term Faculty. Also, a brief document was provided that would go into the Handbook under "Others with Faculty Status" as to what those documents that end up in the Appendix to the Handbook need to include. The document to be included in the Handbook was voted on and approved unanimously by the Senate. The document to be included as an Appendix was sent back to the Committee for some corrections/updates and it was suggested that the corrected document be sent to the Departments of concern as a suggested model for producing their own documents.

It was also suggested that when next the Handbook Committee meet they take up the issue of Faculty who do not chose to select advocates from the Grievance Pool during the Grievance Process.

Academic Affairs Committee - The Committee met with the Provost to see how things stood with the Promotion and Tenure Process and will continue meeting with him and report their findings to the Senate.

Assessment Committee - This Committee met and reviewed the evaluation instruments for the Administrators and for the Faculty Senate. They also discussed how the results of the evaluation would be reported and suggested that the overall results should be discussed between the Faculty Senate President and President Keck and that the Assessment Committee would report the appropriate results to the perspective Deans of the University. It was suggested that the Faculty should receive some summarized set of results from the evaluation process. It was also reported that the evaluations would be given electronically and all efforts would be made to have it completed before the March Faculty Senate meeting.

Faculty Morale Committee - The question was asked and agreed to that the Faculty Questionnaire be added electronically to the Administrator Evaluations. It was suggested that we review the previous Questionnaire and see if there are still any loose ends to tie up. A request was made that some Faculty members volunteer to come in a day or two early in the Spring semester to help out with student advising and registration. The suggestion was made to compensate these volunteers by releasing them from their obligation to attend Graduation.

The Senate was asked to form an Ad Hoc Committee to suggest policy for release time for Professors who teach graduate courses, graduate seminars and who chair dissertation committees.

The Senate needs to investigate the functionality of the current Mentorship Program for Junior Faculty to see if it is even happening.

Budget and Finance Committee - Mr. Maxstadt volunteered to be on this committee.

Ethics Committee - Will be continuing their on-going work with the Honor Council.

Committee on Committee's - Will be meeting this month and have collected a list of the committees in the College of Education. Task forces will not be included in this list.

VI. The revised minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

VII. Meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.