

TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Faculty Senate Meeting
March 6
WHTC 126

WHTC Room 125

I. Call to Order (time): 12:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call, Present: President Alfredo Ramirez, Jr., Kimber J. Palmer, Quingien Ni, James Norris, Hari Mandel, Gilberto Salinas, Leonel Prieto, Katie Lewis, Maria de Lourdes Vilorio, John Maxstadt, Marvin E. Bennett, Lynne Manganaro, Vivian Garcia, George Clarke, Marcela Morán

III. Approval of Minutes

Being no additions or corrections, the February 2015, minutes were approved.

IV. Our guests were given the floor:

Rosanne Palacios- the new Vice President for Institutional Advancement: Ms. Palacios introduced herself and her view of her office. She encouraged everyone to share with her the needs of our particular programs and departments.

Jackie Briseno- Student Body President: Ms. Briseno introduced herself and encouraged everyone, if they had not yet done so, participate in the “Great TAMIU Stampede” fund raising program, where all donations are matched by an anonymous donor.

V. Faculty Senate President Report

Executive Council Meeting

In addition to the report sent to all faculty members, Dr. Ramirez discussed an issue raised at the meeting. Apparently, there is concern about faculty failing to take their sick leave. Normally, a faculty person will schedule doctor’s appointments when they do not have classes; also, often faculty members do not report when they are sick and miss university functions or classes. This failure to report and request sick leave leaves sick leave accruing in the faculty member’s file. This can cause the university to incur an expense as they may be required to pay the faculty member for this sick leave accrual. Therefore, faculty will be required to report any time they are sick or attend a doctor’s appointment during a time that they would otherwise be on campus.

The Texas Council of Faculty Senates (February 2015, meeting in Austin):

- New A&M Board of Regents members are questioning the utility of having tenured faculty and have many questions of others as to whether it should be continued in our university system.

- Performance based funding appears to be a dead issue as the legislator who was pushing that scheme is no longer in the legislature.
- Passage of some form of legislation that will allow guns to be carried on campus appears to be inevitable this legislative session. There are various versions of a bill being considered. Some believe our best option would be a version wherein individual campuses choose what they will or will not allow on their own campus, rather than having a blanket bill for all schools. State Rep. Travis Clardy stated that he will support gun carry legislation due to political pressure, and that proponents will not allow other important educational legislation to be heard unless the issue is voted on.
- Some schools are experiencing issues with tenured faculty bullying non-tenured/tenure track faculty and have established anti-bullying policies on their campuses.
- The next meeting of this group will be in October and we are urged to attend.

VI. Faculty Senate Vice-President Report on Provost Council Meetings

No report was given the council did not meet.

VII. Reports from Committee Chairs

A. The Academic Oversight Committee, Dr. Gilberto Salinas

No report was given.

B. The Budget and Finance Committee, Dr. George Clarke

No report was given.

C. The University Ethics Committee, Dr. Lynne Manganaro

No report was given.

D. The Committee on Creation, Composition, and Responsibilities of Committees, Dr. Francis Rhodes.

No report was given.

E. The Committee on Faculty Work Environment and Morale, Dr. Qingwen Ni

No report was given.

F. The Faculty Handbook Revision Committee, Mr. John Maxstadt.

See New Business below.

G. The Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee, Dr. Jim Norris

Dr. Norris attended the recent meeting of this committee, but did not have any issues to report.

H. The Technology Advisory Committee, Dr. Brendan Townsend

This committee met recently and talked a great deal about defining the function of this committee. They are working on clarifying that, and he will share that information when it is available. Many people have expressed concern to Dr. Townsend about a lack of tech support by OIT when the equipment was purchased by grants or donated (in other words was not purchased through OIT). It has been the position of OIT that if the equipment is not a part of their refresh program, it is taxing on their resources. He suggests when applying for a grant for computer equipment that additional requests for technical support be included in the request.

I. The Assessment Committee, Dr. Kimber Palmer

Ms. Palmer apologized for not having moved further along in the process. Dr. Ramirez reminded the senate that this process is important and needs to be completed this year. It was decided that we would use the form most recently used, and that Ms. Palmer will contact Eric Garcia in OIT in the very near future to facilitate dissemination of the evaluation forms to all faculty.

VIII. Unfinished Business

A. In February, all faculty were polled electronically for their view on changing the grading scale from five point scale to a twelve point scale. The results were as follows:

	# voted	For	Against
Adj/Grad	20/122	5	15
Assoc.	28/48	15	13
Asst.	32/60	21	11
Fixed Term	9/26	3	6
Prof	13/30	5	8
VF	7/11	5	2
Inst	9/27	1	9
TOTALS	119/324	55	64

A majority of the faculty responding to the poll want no change to the grading scale. Kimber Palmer made a motion that the matter, then, be tabled for period of at least twelve months. This motion was seconded by Maria de Lourdes Villoria. Voting results on the motion were: For- 8; Against- 3. Motion carried.

Following a discussion, John Maxstadt moved to change the language

B. A concern regarding temporary membership category of the graduate faculty was raised. John Maxstadt made the following motion, which was seconded by Leonel Prieto:

“The length of membership of an appointment for temporary membership as a graduate faculty member should be changed from one semester period to once academic year.”

The motion carried with the following vote results: For- 11; Against- 1

C. Brendan Townsend raised the issue regarding his concern that the full-time graduate faculty requirements were too exclusive, and resulted in otherwise qualified faculty being excluded from being a graduate faculty member. He moved, seconded by Marcela Moran, that the following changes be made to the Full Membership Qualifications and what they are eligible to do:

“Full members of the Graduate Faculty must:

- Be tenured or on a tenure track on the Texas A&M International faculty;
- Hold the rank of Fixed Term, or “1207” faculty, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Full Professor;
- Have earned a doctorate or other terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline; and
- Produce continued tangible evidence of continued productive scholarship, as normally defined within the discipline concerned.

Full members are appointed to the Graduate Faculty for a term of five years and will be subject to re-evaluation at the end of the term. This membership must be approved by the Graduate Council.

Full Members of the Graduate Faculty are eligible to

Direct masters’ theses, and other graduate research;

- Teach graduate level courses, including doctoral;
- Serve on graduate student committees, including doctoral;
- Sit on the Graduate Council and in that position help set policies for the Office of Graduate Studies:
- Sit on standing and special committees of the Graduate Council;
- Serve as officers (secretary, etc.) of the Graduate Council; and,
- Chair standing committees of the Graduate Council.

To chair a doctoral dissertation committee, a faculty member must be tenured or tenure track and hold the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Full Professor.”

The motion was carried with the following vote: For-8; Against-4

IX. New Business

President Ramirez has been asked to appoint a member of the senate to the Budget Advisory Committee. Dr. Clarke was nominated and elected by acclamation to serve as the FS representative on the BAC.

There being no other new business, the President adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.