

MINUTES #138, FACULTY SENATE
December 9, 1992

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, December 9, 1992, at 3:15 p.m. in the Senate Room of the University Center with Candace H. Haigler, Vice President presiding. Senators present were Bradley, Burnett, Cismaru, Couch, Coulter, Curzer, Daghistany, Dunne, Dvoracek, Elbow, Fedler, Freeman, Goebel, Green, Henry, Hensley, Higdon, Hopkins, Huffman, Jonish, J. Mason, Meek, Miller, Morrow, Payne, Perl, Reynolds, Roy, Stoune, Strawderman, Trost, Troub, Wagner, Weber, Zanglein and Zartman. Senators Aranha, Benson, Mitra and Shroyer were absent because of university business. Senators Bliese, Davis, Dragga, and President Newcomb were absent with notification. Senators Dunn, Kiecker, D. Mason, and Urban were absent.

I. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Vice President Haigler called the meeting to order at 3:25 and welcomed the following guests: Donald R. Haragan, Executive Vice President and Provost; Len Ainsworth, Vice Provost; Virginia Sowell, Associate Vice President; Denise Jackson, Office of Development; Gene Medley, Admissions & Records; Steve Kauffman, News and Publications; Mary Ann Higdon, Library; Chris Loveless, Student Association President; Daniel O. Nathan, Philosophy; and Gina Augustini, Avalanche Journal.

Professor Clarke E. Cochran, Political Science, served as Parliamentarian.

II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Gary Elbow requested a correction of the minutes of the November 11th meeting to reflect more accurately the point he had made on faculty hiring. The example of banking was merely hypothetical. The minutes (on page 4) should be corrected to read: New faculty (including white men) are hired at differentially high salary levels when a field, as for example banking, is given priority. If the TTU administration placed a real priority on hiring minority faculty, it would pay what was necessary. The minutes were approved as corrected.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Senate agenda included information on raises recently received by TTU administrators out of the 2% merit-equity raise pool. Of the 18 full deans and vice presidents of TTU, 6 received salary adjustments of more than 2% (\$2,100-6,000), 7 received in the range of 1.75-2% (\$1,800-1,900), 2 got in the range of 1.5-1.75% (\$1,800-2000) and 3 received no raise.

IV. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Academic Council -- Candace Haigler (report distributed to Senators and on file in Senate office)

Vice President Haigler introduced at this point a discussion of the provisional admissions policy. Provost Haragan had requested that the Senate consider an Academic Council proposal to loosen provisional admissions procedures. Current requirements state that a provisionally admitted student must take 12 units in TTU's summer session before admission in the fall semester; 6 of these hours may be in remedial courses. Because of sentiments that this requirement may be too strenuous, the Academic Council passed a proposal requiring that provisionally admitted students need only complete one summer term or a spring semester

before enrollment; no requirement on number of hours or grades is included in this proposal. Under both policies, provisionally admitted students may also enroll after completion of 12 semester hours at another college with a GPA of 2.0. Provost Haragan expressed some concern that the proposal might compromise efforts to improve admissions standards. He suggested as a compromise that provisionally admitted students be required to complete either 6 or 9 hours in summer session with a C average; at least 3 of these hours would be in regular, non-remedial courses.

Vice President Sowell indicated that enrollment services had originally raised questions about the provisional program. She indicated a number of instances of confusion or lack of equity in the existing requirements: students could go to other colleges without meeting such requirements; students who had completed 9 hours of college-level work at a junior college and had earned A's and B's could not attend Tech under the 12-hour requirement, while students attending summer session and completing only 6 hours of college level work could enroll; students who needed to work could not afford to attend TTU for both summer terms. Vice President Ainsworth noted that the issue had been raised in part because few provisionally admitted students elected to attend both summer terms and the numbers doing so were declining. (In the last year approximately 200 out of 1600 provisionally admitted students chose to attend summer session.) Apparently students felt this route was too difficult, especially in instances when TTU academic advisors placed such students in difficult courses rather than assigning them remedial hours. While most provisionally admitted students who enrolled in summer session did meet their requirements for fall admissions, many of the administrators at the Senate meeting and some senators felt the 12-hour requirement left students too little time to relax after graduating from high school and before enrolling in the fall semester.

Most senators who spoke opposed loosening of the original requirements, noting that the 12-hour requirement was not too strenuous. According to information given at the meeting, 90% of those choosing to follow the plan succeeded. There was no clear information that students could not meet the standard, and given the availability of junior colleges and other alternatives, it did not deprive anyone of an education. Others argued that 3-hours of college-level work did not adequately demonstrate a student's capability. To revise the requirements as proposed by the Academic Council or even in Provost Haragan's suggested compromise would be inconsistent with the trend of increasing admission standards. The issue will be assigned to a Senate committee for further consideration.

Development Council--Paul Goebel (report distributed to Senators and on file in Senate office)

University Center Advisory Committee--Thomas Trost

Senator Trost reported that members of the UC advisory committee had toured the UC and had received a report on food services. The UC operated its own food services until 1989 when food services were leased to Housing and Dining Services for six years. While the UC had operated its food services at a loss, Housing and Dining has shown a profit, though the size of its profit was declining. Housing and Dining had received an adjustment of its contract in the spring of 1992, but a subsequent request for further adjustment was rejected in July 1992 and there is an impasse on contract negotiations over food service at the UC.

Research Council -- Fred P. Wagner, Jr. (report distributed to Senators and on file in the Senate office)

The impact of providing health insurance and 3% raises to graduate students was discussed. Research services was willing to discuss the issue but had no money available to help those who had not planned on such expenses. One senator noted that the fact that TTU provided health insurance had helped in recruiting some graduate students. Haragan also reported that all classified personnel, even those at the top of a pay category, will get the 3% raise.

Student Senate--Leon Higdon

At 11 November meeting, the student senate planned a blood drive for February, reallocated budgets, and passed a resolution on the Dairy Barn. The 13 December meeting adopted a resolution on Martin Luther King Day and reminded members that organizational budget/funding period was forthcoming.

V. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee on Committees--Pat Dunne

The membership of the Senate Environmental Impact Committee was reported. Its five members include only two senators. These senators were volunteers, and other volunteers could be accommodated. The three other members represent interests that will be affected. The membership of the committee was accepted by the Senate.

Academic Programs Committee--Howard Curzer, chair (report distributed to Senators and on file in Senate office)

The Academic Programs Committee was charged with developing a grade replacement policy. Starting from the rationale that this policy should both help retain students and equalize TTU students in competition with those at universities that have such policies, the committee developed and presented two policies, a grade replacement policy and an academic bankruptcy policy, each addressing a different need. Senator Elbow moved to table the proposals since a bill mandating a grade replacement policy was before the state legislature. The motion to table was defeated. Instead the two issues were divided, and discussion proceeded first on the grade replacement policy.

Senator Goebel read a statement from a faculty member at the business school who opposed adoption of a grade replacement policy. Goebel's constituent argued that grade replacement was fundamentally an act of misrepresentation that should not be adopted by TTU. The policy moved in the wrong direction by not requiring enough of students, hurt good students in the guise of aiding poor students, and implied that employers were stupid enough to be deceived by the manipulation of student records. Such a policy could only harm TTU's credibility and reputation.

Senator Coulter expressed concern about the cost of such a policy to the taxpayer. Since student fees paid only 13-25% of the cost of a course, the cost of replacement courses could not be justified. (It was pointed out that if a student had to take even more courses to raise his/her GPA, lack of grade replacement policy might cost the taxpayers even more.) Others felt that limiting the replacement of grades to grades of "D" and "F" discriminated against good students who wished to boost their GPAs. Senator Elbow reported that a good student had asked him to speak against grade replacement, not because good students would not benefit, but because it encouraged a lack of responsibility among students. Proponents of grade adjustment responded that students generally did not desire to repeat courses although existing policy allowed them to retake courses as often as they wished. The proposal being discussed limited grade replacement to 12 hours of course work and affected the GPA not the transcript, which would

still indicate all courses taken. Because only 12 hours could be replaced, the policy would have only limited impact on the relative GPAs of students.

Endorsing the sentiments in the statement read by Senator Goebel, Senator Cismaru moved that the proposal be sent back to the committee to be "repolished or junked." The motion was defeated. With the defeat of the motion to reject the report, a series of amendments to the original proposal were offered. The provision that students get the consent of the instructor to retake a course was seen as complicated and potentially harmful to students; it was stricken from the proposal. An amendment was proposed that both an adjusted GPA (reflecting only the higher grade in a repeated course) and an unadjusted GPA (reflecting all grades earned) be included on a student's transcript. This motion was adopted with some dissenting votes. A second amendment was proposed to eliminate the restriction that allowed grade replacement only in instances of "D" and "F". Instead, students would be allowed to replace the existing grade with that of the repeated course. This amendment passed by a vote of 13 yes, 12 no. Senator Coulter proposed that students electing grade replacement pay the actual cost of repeated courses with the proceeds used for scholarships. The proposal was defeated for lack of a second. A clarification was adopted specifying that the grade adjustment policy applied only to undergraduates.

The following policy (as amended) was approved by a majority of the Senate:

GRADE REPLACEMENT POLICY

1. An undergraduate student may retake any course.
2. Both the original course and grade and the new course and grade shall appear on the transcript. The new course shall be identified as a repeated course.
3. Only one of these courses shall count toward graduation.
4. A student may choose to replace an existing grade with the grade earned in the repeated course. Only the higher grade will be factored into the student's GPA.
5. A student may replace grades for no more than 12 hours of course work or 4 courses.
6. Both adjusted and unadjusted GPA's shall remain on the transcript.

Discussion of the proposed Academic Bankruptcy Policy followed. The proposal would permit students to reject one or two semesters in their entirety. This policy proposed to replace the current academic bankruptcy policy, which Senator Huffman described as telling students who had a bad year to "go somewhere else." Senator Curzer described the purpose of the policy as one of helping students who may have done poorly during a semester because of family problems or who got a bad start and was returning several years later or who was in the wrong major. While grade replacement allowed particular changes in individual courses, the academic bankruptcy policy allowed a student to start over. At the same time since all grades and courses would remain on the transcript, there would be no deception. A motion to allow a student to reject only one semester was defeated. An amendment that the transcript include both an adjusted GPA (eliminating the rejected semesters) and an unadjusted GPA (reflecting all semesters attempted) passed. The following proposal was accepted by the Senate by a vote of 18 yes, 14 no:

ACADEMIC BANKRUPTCY POLICY:

1. A student may choose to reject up to 2 semesters during his or her college career.
2. All courses taken in the rejected semesters along with the grades earned in these courses shall appear on the transcript. These courses shall be identified as rejected courses.
3. These courses shall not count toward graduation.
4. The grades earned in these courses shall not be factored into the student's adjusted GPA.
5. A student may reject a semester only after 2 or more years have passed since the semester has ended or at the time of graduation.
6. Both adjusted and unadjusted GPA's shall remain on the transcript.

Study Committee A--Ruth Morrow

Study Committee A recommended that the Senate approve the document "Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression." The Senate approved this document unanimously and forwarded it to the president for consideration.

Study Committee B--Robert Weber

The committee has prepared a 12-page report on Athletics. The report was not available to be mailed out for discussion at this meeting. It will be included on the agenda of the next meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A suggestion had been raised to the agenda committee that the Senate invite Campus Police Chief Jay Parchman to address the Senate. Senator Dunne clarified that Parchman had mentioned that he had never met with the Senate and was available if desired or needed.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The Senate adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Catherine Miller