

MINUTES #140, FACULTY SENATE
February 10, 1993

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, February 10, 1993, at 3:15 p.m. in the Senate Room of the University Center with Benjamin H. Newcomb presiding. Senators present were Aranha, Benson, Bliese, Bradley, Burnett, Cismaru, Couch, Curzer, Daghistany, Dragga, Dunn, Dvoracek, Elbow, Freeman, Goebel, Green, Haigler, Henry, Hensley, Higdon, Hopkins, Huffman, Jonish, Kiecker, Miller, Perl, Roy, Shroyer, Stoune, Strawderman, Trost, Urban, Wagner, Zanglein, and Zartman. Senators Coulter, Fedler, Meek, Morrow, Payne, Troub and Weber were absent because of University business. Senator Dunne was absent with notification. Senators D. Mason, J. Mason, and Mitra were absent.

I. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Newcomb called the meeting to order at 3:20 and welcomed the following guests: Virginia Sowell, Associate Vice President; Donald Haragan, Executive Vice President and Provost; Len Ainsworth, Vice Provost; Robert Sweazy, Vice Provost for Research; Denise Jackson, Office of Development; David Proctor, Library; Sandra Pulley, University Daily; and Bill Orr, Avalanche Journal.

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

II. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 20 January 1993 were approved as distributed.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Weber, who chairs the committee considering athletics, requests that faculty comments and questions be submitted to him by 19 February 1993 so that the committee can reconsider its earlier report.

Senator Dunne is soliciting nominees for university committees. Senators need to help recruit faculty to serve in these positions; senators going off the Senate might volunteer to participate in this responsibility of academic governance.

IV. COMMENTS OF PROVOST HARAGAN

Provost Haragan was asked to respond to earlier Senate resolutions on the grade replacement policy and on the proposal on Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression. Haragan has recommended adoption of a grade replacement policy that would allow students to replace any grade with a better grade earned later. He rejected the Senate's recommendation that grade replacement be limited to 12 credit hours because he personally did not like the cap. The grade replacement policy is now back before the Academic Council. Haragan was queried to reconcile this very liberal policy with efforts to improve academic standards. He answered that the only real issue involved in letting students repeat courses was the cost this imposed on the state. He pointed to the current effort in the legislature to limit to 158 the number of undergraduate hours a student might take at instate tuition rates at any Texas state institution. Such a policy would harm programs like architecture, which require more hours to complete, as well as students taking double majors.

Haragan reported that the Senate's proposed academic bankruptcy policy is now being studied by the Academic Council. Haragan felt that the Senate-

recommended policy was unlike traditional academic bankruptcy policies. Traditional academic bankruptcy permits students who had a bad start early in their college career to start over; the Senate policy allows a student to discard a selected semester.

The policy on Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression was unanimously approved by the Provost's Council. It is now in the process of becoming official operating policy of the academic affairs office. It will not be submitted to the Board of Regents at this time.

V. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Provost Council--Benjamin H. Newcomb (report distributed to Senators and on file in Senate office)

Senator Newcomb asked Provost Haragan to comment on the current budget situation. Haragan noted that current appropriations bills included performance measures that are not good for TTU. In Haragan's opinion, these measures set up new formulas that redistribute funds according to non-performance based criteria. A large portion of what is called performance-based funding would be determined by actual minority enrollment, not by performance at meeting goals of improving minority enrollment; this would redirect funds away from schools like TTU and into institutions in the valley and border areas. The bills before the legislature also will force cutbacks to pay for the state-mandated 3% raise. Money for this raise is included in funding for the first year of the biennium, but not for the second. State ORP contributions are also reduced and will have to be made up by the university itself.

When questioned about how TTU expected to respond to projected budget cuts and about the role of strategic planning in this, Haragan stated that he did not want to embark on short-term solutions that made problems worse. Strategic planning was going on, and the major impact of the currently projected budget cuts would not come until the second year of the biennium, leaving time for faculty participation. When questioned he stated that there probably would not be across the board cuts of non-tenured faculty but might instead be programatic cuts, possibly including tenured faculty.

Provost Haragan also proposed that parking fees for faculty, staff, and students be increased. Displaying a set of figures on a transparency, Haragan noted that TTU's parking fees were lower than those at UT-Austin and Texas A&M and set forth a series of annual increases to bring TTU's parking fees to comparable levels. Haragan asked for a quick Senate response so that the proposal could be presented to the Regent's at their March meeting. The fee increases were necessary, he argued, to meet maintenance costs on roads and parking lots. Senator Perl asked if parking fees also paid for campus police services. Haragan said he was not certain about this but thought that most fees went to maintenance. Senator Newcomb noted that the proposed increases would raise parking fees by 10%, while salaries had not gone up this much, especially for minimum wage staff. The proposal will be submitted to a committee for study and discussion at the March Senate meeting.

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

Graduate Council--M. Catherine Miller (report distributed to Senators and on file in Senate office)

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

Student Senate--Leon Higdon

The Student Senate met twice since the last Senate meeting. The most heated discussions concerned budget deadlines for student organizations.

VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES OF FACULTY SENATE

Nominating Committee--Paul Goebel

The nominating committee met and spoke with candidates for Senate office for next year. After the report was delivered, the floor was opened for further nominations; none was raised. the nominees for Senate office in 93/94 are as follows:

Secretary: John Bliese, Marvin J. Dvoracek and Jayne Zanglein

Vice President: Oliver Hensley, Leon Higdon and Richard Zartman

President: John H. Burnett and Sue Couch

The Senate will elect new offices at the 10 March 1993 meeting.

Study Committee A--John Bliese reported on the requirements for provisionally admitted students. The committee recommended that the Senate endorse the policy suggested by Provost Haragan on 17 November 1992. Provisionally admitted students would be required to take a minimum of 9 hours of course work, 6 of which might be remedial, or 6 hours if only one course were remedial. Senator Haigler noted that UT-Austin and Texas A&M require that provisional students take courses off a prescribed list. She suggested that TTU might establish a similar requirement. The requirements at those schools are also more rigorous than those proposed for TTU; Bliese noted that Texas A&M severely limits the number who can participate in its program of provisional admissions. Haigler proposed an amendment to the committee report to require that provisionally admitted students take at least one 3-hour course from the list General Education requirements. The amendment carried. The committee's recommendation as amended was approved by the Senate.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was raised.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Provost Haragan was asked to report on the administration's efforts to address Senate and student concerns about advising. Haragan commented that a number of models of advising had been discussed and submitted to the recruitment and admissions committee for examination. The committee should report before the end of the spring semester, with deliberations on proposed changes taking place in the next academic year.

A suggestion that Athletic Director T Jones be invited to the Senate meeting at which the Athletic Department reported on the academic progress of athletes was approved.

A question was raised about the dates on which final grades are due. In some semesters grades are due the Monday after commencement; in others the Friday before. It was suggested that this date should be consistent, preferably the Monday following commencement to allow adequate time to evaluate examinations. This issue will be referred to committee for recommendation.

A concern was raised that the Senate might need to address the growing racial tension on campus. Discussion of this issue was fairly brief, with Haragan noting that some "positive things" were happening to resolve the issue. Senators who expressed opinions on the issue urged caution and a focus on the long-term consequences of any action that might be taken.

Senator Hensley introduced a proposal to improve the Faculty Senate's role as the governing body of the university. He argued that currently the Senate merely reacted to the administration rather than leading the university. He proposed three changes in the structure of the Senate in order to transform it from a reactive to a proactive governing body. First, that the Senate's committee structure be revamped and permanent Senate committees on research, teaching, and service be created. Second, that the Faculty Senate call a convocation at the beginning of each academic year to set an agenda for the university for the year. Third, that the Senate initiate its own strategic planning committee composed of faculty members to both monitor and direct this process. The problem Hensley hoped to address was the relationship between the administration and the faculty. Currently, he argued, university committees dealing with issues of importance to the faculty are dominated by deans and administrators of various sorts; the faculty needed an alternative structure of governance to set a faculty agenda for the direction of the university. Other senators commented that they supported the sentiments, if not the particulars, of the proposal. The committee structure that exists was established in 1979 or 1980. This proposal will be referred to the appropriate committee for study.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The Senate adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Catherine Miller

M. Catherine Miller
Secretary 1992-93