

Texas Tech University
Minutes -- # 211 Faculty Senate
December 13, 2000

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, December 5, 2000 in the Senate Room in the University Center with President Charlotte Dunham presiding. Senators present were Elam, Thorvilson, Donahue, Drager, Hartwell, Held, Lewis, Lucas, Meek, Perez, Reeves, Schaller, Walker, Weinberg, Boal, Hein, Malone, Hartmeister, Thomas, Lakhani, Mann, Norville, Khan, Bradley, Carr, Cooper, Marbley, Smith, Swafford, Willis-Aarnio, Becker and Trost. Senators excused were Lodhi, Blum, Iber and Cardenas-Garcia. Senators not excused were Kieth, Giaccardo, Buelinckx, Lee, Murray, Reeder, Zhang, Spallholz, and Cochran.

- I. Call to Order** was announced by President Charlotte Dunham at 3:20 pm.
- II. Recognition of Guests:** Immediate Past-President of the Faculty Senate Nancy Reed, TTU President David Schmidly, Provost John Burns, Vice Provost Jim Brink, Assistant Provost Liz Hall, Faculty Senate Parliamentarian Brian McGee, Vice President for Operations Gene West, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Michael Shonrock, Interim Vice President for Informational Technology Gary Wiggins, Interim Vice President for Fiscal Affairs Mike Wilson, Interim Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Robert Sweazy, and various media representatives.
- III. Approval of Minutes** for meeting # 209, November 8, 2000, were unanimously approved with several minor changes regarding attendance.
- IV. Remarks from Invited Guests:**

President David Schmidly addressed the Senate for the first time since assuming the presidency in August, 2000. He acknowledged the upcoming holiday break and introduced members of his administrative team in attendance as guests. Noting that he would need to leave to catch a flight to El Paso for a Board of Regents meeting, he provided wide ranging remarks covering university athletic endeavors, the improving trend in student retention rates, favorable growth at the undergraduate level, and declines in graduate enrollment.

Following his introductory comments, President Schmidly expounded on several topics in greater detail. First, he highlighted Texas Tech's Tier III status and its new ranking as a Doctoral Research Extensive university. On the basis of a recent study conducted by the University of Florida, he mentioned that Tech is presently ranked among the top 100 institutions in the nation on seven out of ten criteria. Included among the positive efforts are eight federally-funded projects totaling \$12.1 million, an economic development initiative from which Tech will receive \$100,000/year for 25 years, and various attempts to improve communications on campus.

Next, President Schmidly noted the hiring of several new administrators. Noel Parker has been hired as Director of the TTU Press. Robert Hickerson has been hired to work at the Junction campus and to increase Tech's profile with the rapid growth opportunities in the Texas Hill Country. He also mentioned the six on-going vice presidential searches, with the prospect of inviting finalist candidates to campus beginning in January. Along these lines, he noted that several of the positions have generated a strong group of minority applicants.

President Schmidly spent several minutes summarizing the fiscal picture in the Athletics Department. He stated that many institutions are fighting similar battles involving millions of dollars in expenditures and the task of coping with budgetary shortfalls. He acknowledged that Tech operated its Athletics Department with a negative fund balance during 1999, and he blamed the lingering impact of recent NCAA penalties for a portion of the shortfall. The University is targeting improvements on behalf of the football program to assist with helping all of the other athletic programs on campus. President Schmidly stated that he will make every effort to avoid needing to move funds from student instruction to cover shortfalls in athletics. On a positive note, he concluded his comments relating to athletics by noting that the institution employs nine full-time academic advisors for student athletes, that Tech will receive approximately \$250,000 in football bowl game revenues, and that Tech's student athletes are doing much better in the classroom.

Finally, President Schmidly concluded his remarks by noting the upcoming announcement of a \$25 million gift to the College of Business Administration. He sought the involvement of the Faculty Senate in the University's on-going strategic planning efforts, including the town hall meetings that are going to be held in the spring. He closed by commenting that the upcoming legislative session in Austin appears modestly promising. Tech is seeking \$9 million in new funding to provide 5% faculty salary increases and support the hiring of 50 new positions in addition to the 105 positions for which searches are on-going or anticipated.

Following President Schmidly's formal remarks, he entertained questions. Senator Held inquired about a hiring freeze. President Schmidly responded that any appearance of a freeze is merely a reflection of the University's need to prioritize the timing for searches over a two-year period due primarily to declines in graduate enrollment and increases in utility costs.

Senator Trost asked about faculty diversity, to which President Schmidly responded that we face lots of competition to attract and retain faculty of color.

Senator Held questioned President Schmidly about institutional accreditation problems. In response, the President noted concerns about the College of Business Administration and facilities for the Art department. Senator Held asked about the priority relationship between athletics and the searches for faculty. President Schmidly assured the Senate that the University's top priority is to protect the integrity of the academic program. He added that there is no money being spent on the Jones Stadium refurbishment that could otherwise be used to solve the Art department's facility problems. He also stated that he spends more time worrying about the budget for athletics than anything else he does, and he noted that we expect to have another deficit during the current academic year.

Senator Boal asked about what it will take for Texas Tech to reach the top 50 among the nation's higher education institutions. The President responded that Tech must do three things: (1) continue improving the undergraduate student body; (2) rebuild graduate enrollment; and (3) build the best faculty that can be built. He is optimistic that all three expectations can, and will, be met.

Senator Held concluded the question-and-answer session by inquiring about the rumor of an expectation that faculty must chair doctoral committees in order to be successful in the tenure and promotion process. President Schmidly indicated that the rumor lacks merit, in part because not all programs on the Tech campus even have graduate students, and further because tenure decisions are vested in individual academic programs, deans and provosts. As president, Dr. Schmidly does not expect to be very involved in individual tenure and promotion decision making.

V. Committee Reports:

Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching Evaluations

Since she was the only member of the ad hoc committee who was present, President Dunham turned over the gavel to Vice President Walt Schaller so that she could provide the committee's report. On behalf of the committee, President Dunham presented two resolutions for the Senate's consideration. Following discussion surrounding post tenure review, comparisons among professors who teach different sections of the same course, the evaluation form's use of "expected grade" in a particular class, and the minimum number of evaluations necessary for reliability and validity, both resolutions passed unanimously.

President Dunham thanked the committee for its efforts, student government for its on-going involvement, and Vice Provost Brink for providing financial support to assist with the committee's research efforts.

VI. Old Business: There was no old business.

VII. New Business: There was no new business.

VIII. Announcements:

The Senate was reminded of the upcoming Inauguration for President Schmidly that is scheduled for January 27, 2001.

President Dunham announced that she had received a copy of a resolution from the University of New Mexico that details and denounces the criminal prosecution of a political science professor in Austria. President Dunham queried whether our Faculty Senate should embrace this issue and, if so, asked that interested senators contact her for additional information.

Encouraging faculty involvement, Vice Provost Brink mentioned that there would be two different speakers at the university-wide commencement exercises scheduled for December 16, 2000.

IX. Adjournment: Since there was no other business, President Dunham declared the 210th meeting of the Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Fred Hartmeister
Secretary, Faculty Senate