

Texas Tech University  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
Meeting #231  
February 12, 2003

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, February 12, 2003 in the Lankford Laboratory in the Electrical Engineering Annex with President Shane Blum presiding. Senators present were Kvashny, Aranha, Gray, Harter, Held, Howe, James, Kuriyama, Reed, Roberts, Steinhart, Watts, Dunham, Dukes, Jones, Duemer, Halsey, Johnson, Bai, Frailey, Mann, Russ, Shriver, Floyd, Camp, Marshall, Quinn, Dolter, Stinespring, Willis-Aarnio, Bradley, Curry, Hoo, Marks, Soonpaa, Spallholz and Tacon. Senators excused were Alford, Byerly, Donahue, Baker, Sherif and Lucas. Senators unexcused were Blanton, Wilde, Buelinckx D'Amico, Lee, Williams, Yang, Reeder and Hsiang.

**I. Call to Order.** President Shane Blum announced the Call to Order at 3:24pm. President Blum then asked for a brief moment of silence in memory of the Space Shuttle Columbia Astronauts.

**II. Recognition of Guests in Attendance.** President Blum introduced the guests in attendance: Provost William Marcy, Vice Provosts Jim Brink and Liz Hall, University Daily photographer Jenny Hansen, University Daily reporter Kelly McAlister, Student Government Association President Kelli Stumbo, Staff Senate President Maurice Welch, Student Government Association Internal Vice President Jeremy Brown, Interim President Donald Haragan and Graduate Student Senate representative Jason Lester.

**III. Approval of the Minutes for Meeting #230.** It was pointed out that Robert's Rules of Order do not allow for a vocal vote to be recorded senator by senator, therefore only the outcome of the vote should be recorded. It was also pointed out that Senator Stinespring was in attendance even though he was listed as unexcused in the minutes. The minutes of meeting #230 were approved with these corrections.

**IV. Invited Guest.** President Blum introduced our invited guest, Dr. Donald Haragan, Interim President of TTU. President Haragan began his comments by stating that he will make a commitment to the Senate: which is to always listen to what we have to say and always respond. He went on to say that when he does not respond in the way we want he will always tell us why. The President stated that he has a great deal of respect for the Faculty Senate and what we do, and he appreciates it. Dr. Haragan commented that as an advisory group we are very important to him and he wants to work with us and not against us. He went on to say that he hopes we have the same feelings, because the only way we are going to get anything done in the difficult times ahead is to work together. The President commented that the state of the University is a difficult thing right now because it is a two-sided coin. He went on to say that if you look at any of the numbers that we have you would conclude that the state of the University is excellent: all of our numbers reflect improvement. Dr. Haragan reported that since 1986 when admission standards were put in place the quality of the freshman class has improved every year. The President stated that decisions on placing controls on enrollment have not been made at this point, and if we do that it will be by increasing admission standards for students in the review category. He went on to report that we look good based on the numbers: we are recruiting the best students we have ever had, SAT scores are at an all time high for entering freshman, the graduation rate is at an all time high, the retention rate for freshman is at an all time high, our research is at an all time high. The President commented that everything looks good, but we know that we are facing a difficult situation that will require our best minds to solve. He stated that he does not think it is a doom and gloom situation that we can't pull through and come out of on the other end looking good. Dr. Haragan commented that many of the things we may be forced to do are things we probably should have been doing anyway. He stated that he has three guidelines: to protect the academic mission at all costs. The president commented that he is not in favor of across the board cuts or a hiring freeze. He stated that he thinks it is important to review every position that comes open and decide if the position is a priority position that needs to be filled, rather than imposing an across the board hiring freeze. Dr Haragan went on to say that he feels we should do the best we can to protect our priorities and then look outside of these for cuts that can be made, such as identifying programs that we can do without. He stated that you can't do this without impacting people and he is very sensitive to anything we do that impacts people, but we have to accept the fact that this might be something that is going to occur in the next biennium. The president commented that we are facing a two-barreled problem: the problem with this budget year, in which we had to reduce 7% of general revenue appropriation, which is essentially a give back in the middle of the year, which is really a 14% give back when you consider that it happened in the middle of the year; and then we have to consider what is going to happen in the next biennium. Dr. Haragan explained that we really do not have all the data that we need because we are only beginning to talk to the legislature. We know we are going to have to take some big hits, but we don't know yet what flexibility we will have to deal with those. He commented that he and the Provost are not assuming that this is a temporary thing; he doesn't believe this for a minute. The President went on to say our legislature collects the taxes, but a high percentage of that is designated, they don't have any choice as to where to put it: it goes automatically by law into certain pools. Higher education is not one of these pools; we fall into the discretionary category. He went on to explain that not many of the people in that discretionary category have the wear-with-all to raise money like higher education does: we can charge students more, and he can promise us this will

happen. President Haragan stated that he does not like the idea of raising tuition because it could very quickly deny access to a lot of students in Texas. He commented that there is a balance and a trade off and we are going to have to find out where Texas Tech fits in that trade off. Dr. Haragan went on to say that we are going to have to do this without worrying about what the University of Texas is going to do because UT is a different institution than TTU. We stated that we need to think very carefully about how we are going to impact access of undergraduates to TTU, and if we have the flexibility to adjust our tuition we need to be very careful to the level of where we are going to adjust that tuition and insure that we make every effort to raise scholarship money to offset the burden placed on students. President Haragan explained that the current proposal made by UT would allow tuition to float completely. He stated that UT would probably raise tuition much more than TTU if this proposal is approved. Dr. Haragan commented that he feels deregulation probably will be approved, but with a cap on the increase. He stated that this would give us the flexibility we need to balance the revenue side with the other side of the budget. President Haragan reported that the letter by Provost Marcy addressing the budget is now posted on the TTU web site. He commented that he hopes everyone will come to the general faculty meeting on Thursday and bring good suggestions for working out the plan. Dr. Haragan went on to say that it is unfortunate that at this time we do not know exactly what the legislature will do. He stated that we are still going to ask for special funding for the increased growth we have had, but he is not sure whether we will get the funding or not. President Haragan commented that we have a 10 billion dollar deficit that we somehow must live with and higher education will be a part of satisfying that deficit, so we are going to have to make some hard decisions as to cuts we are going to make and balance that with revenue projections from tuition and fees. He stated that we are talking about cuts in programmatic areas, hopefully outside of academics. However, the President said that there are also some things we can do in academics, such as looking very carefully at low productivity courses and programs, and focusing more of our teaching effort on the core of the curriculum. He mentioned that everything is on the table. President Haragan stated that at the meeting tomorrow he will make some general remarks, and then Provost Marcy will go over his letter with the faculty and get input from the faculty. The President then entertained questions from the Senators.

**Senator Held** asked if we have any cushion of reserves from money raised during the Horizon Campaign to help us through this period. **President Haragan** replied that there is very little reserve to help us through and we have some concerns about how much of the reserve we want to spend without knowing what the future will bring. He went on to explain that much of the money raised in the Horizon Campaign was through deferred gifts, and this money will trickle in over the years as people die: there was very little cash raised. The President commented that we got a late start in the fund raising game, but we are in it now and we are going to be immediately going into another campaign: we can't afford not to because private funds are very important to us. He stated that he hopes the entire focus of the next campaign will be on scholarships and professorships, and not on monuments and buildings.

**Senator Roberts** asked if additional tuition and fees might not cause students to increase the amount of hours they work which will cause them to stay longer, which is counter to the proposal by Dr. Marcy of trying to graduate students in less time. **President Haragan** commented that he would let Dr. Marcy address this issue. **Provost Marcy** replied that our average undergraduate student only takes 13 credit hours per semester, and if they increase this to 15 or 16 hours per semester they can graduate at least a semester early, which would save them almost \$30,000 in tuition, fees and lost income. If tuition and fees do increase they would be even better off in the long run if they borrow more money, take more hours and graduate sooner. He stated that if we can graduate student quicker we could handle more students. **Senator Spallholz** asked if we should increase the minimum hours for fulltime status to 15. **Provost Marcy** replied that most of the degree plans are based on 16 to 18 hours per semester, so he feels that we should do this to bring hours enrolled more in line with the degree plans. He went on to say that the state wants us to graduate people in a timely manner and not keep them here forever.

**Senator Held** asked why are we growing next year if it is not a counting year. **President Haragan** replied that we are going to try to get funding for this growth. We have some momentum in attracting some really good students that we don't want to lose. He went on to say that he understands what the Senator is saying and at some time we may have to address this issue. **Provost Marcy** added must grow at least as fast as our sister institutions because we don't get funded at 100 percent of the formula: what they do is take student credit hours generated and divide up the pot of money for higher education in proportion to the ratio of student credit hours. Therefore, if we don't grow as fast as UNT for example they will get a bigger share of the pot than us. We could get ourselves in a situation of having more students and less money because we are not maintaining market share. The Provost stated that it is a catch 22 situation: if you don't grow you lose money and if you grow too fast you don't have enough money, so somewhere in the middle is a balance where you minimize the pain.

**Senator Spallholz** asked if the proceeds from the bookstore operations are still going to athletics. **President Haragan** answered that he is not sure, but he thinks this has been eliminated.

**Senator Shriver** asked if TTU has explored the possibility of setting a credit hour limit above which no additional tuition and fees are assessed as a mechanism to encourage students to take more hours and graduate faster. **Provost**

**Marcy** replied that even though we may not get local fees and tuition it builds our formula funding, so unless the state catches on we can do that and probably build state funding at the same time giving students a break. **President Haragan** added that he doesn't think the state would object, and it is something we need to consider.

**Senator Gray** asked if the liberal drop policy at TTU has a negative effect on student's time to completion. **President Haragan** replied that he thinks it may, and this is something the faculty can change. He added that we should also explore setting limits on the number of times a student can repeat a course. **Senator Dukes** asked if we are encouraging students to repeat courses by allowing them to replace grades. **President Haragan** replied that the drop policy is such that students wait long enough until have a WF and they drop before they get their F, and many of them think a WF is better than an F. He stated that he would like to see a drop policy that would not encourage people to drop and repeat courses.

**Senator Held** asked if the number of students keeps ratcheting up and approach those of UT do we not destroy one of our selling points for recruitment: contact with professors, smaller classes, intimacy. **President Haragan** replied that he does not think the question is not whether our enrollment should continue to increase and approach UT, the question is whether we need to control enrollment now. He went on to say that we have a physical plant, but perhaps not a faculty at this time, that could accommodate 30,000 students, but we are certainly not looking to grow beyond our capacity to teach students. The President commented that we need to look at technology as a way to aid us in accommodating students, and we probably have an opportunity to offer more courses online. **Kelli Stumbo** responded that she thinks it is a good idea to offer course in both forms to accommodate students with differing learning styles.

**Senator Dunham** asked if the issue of compression in faculty salaries is a priority to deal with. **President Haragan** replied that it is a priority and a real concern; we need to talk about adjustments to account for the compression factor in addition to whatever merit raises that would be given. He went on to say that it will be difficult to address any faculty salary issues at this time, but it is at the top of his list.

**Senator Held** asked in the President has the sense that athletics is draining any of the resources from academics, or is there enough of a firewall to protect us. **President Haragan** responded that there was a time when we did not subsidize athletics at all, and state law prevents us from using E&G funds to subsidize athletics. He went on to say that we do subsidize athletics to a limited extent from other funds, but the amount of the subsidy has decreased for the last three years and it will decrease again this year. Dr. Haragan stated that the athletic department has been told that they will need to increase revenues to offset this decline in contributions from the University.

**V. Old Business.** There was no old business.

**VI. New Business.** President Blum announced that the Faculty Welfare and Status Committee would evaluate procedures in Op.30.15 concerning review of department chairs and report at the next Faculty Senate meeting. **Senator Mann** asked if in principal input from faculty is relevant and important to the procedure. **President Blum** replied that the OP doesn't state anything to that effect; it simply says that department chairs will be evaluated annually and they may use attachment A, which is part of the OP. **Senator Mann** followed up by stating that he wants to know if the administration considers faculty input to be important. **Provost Marcy** responded that as a matter a principal every department chair deserves a written evaluation every year and input from faculty, alumni, students and all the stakeholders is important.

**Senator Spallholz** asked about the output: what happens to these evaluations once they are completed? **Provost Marcy** replied that the deans use these evaluations to make the decision on whether or not a department chairs continues in the position, and there have been a few chairs replaced as a result of these evaluations. **President Blum** commented that we would have the committee look at what the deans are doing in the way of evaluations, which will help us determine in the OP is being followed.

**Senator Steinhart** introduced the candidates for President, Vice President and Secretary of the Faculty Senate on behalf of the Nominating Committee. The nominee for President is Nancy Reed, nominees for Vice President are Alon Kvashny and Brent Shriver, and the nominees for Secretary are John Howe and Brian Quinn. President Blum mentioned that some information on each of the candidates will be included in the next mailing of the minutes, and the election will take place at the March 12<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate Meeting.

**President Blum** mentioned that there is an Enrollment Management resolution attached to the minutes from the last Faculty Senate Meeting. **Senator Steinhart** introduced the resolution on behalf of the AAUP. **The resolution reads** **"Whereas: Increasing student enrollment without adequate funding to maintain sufficient full-time faculty will adversely affect the quality of teaching, research, and service to our students and community, Therefore be it resolved that: The Faculty Senate urges the administration to reconsider its plans for increasing student enrollment."** **Senator Held** seconded the resolution. **Senators Held, Howe, Harter, Floyd and Spallholz** made comments or statements in support of the resolution, as did **Student Government Association President Kelli**

**Stumbo. Senator Steinhart** expressed concern that if we cap enrollment we might hurt ourselves because it could result in the loss of formula funds. **Senator Mann** proposed a friendly amendment to impose the cap unless there are resources to support the enrollment. **Senator Steinhart** responded that he thinks this is already addressed in the resolution. **Senator Steinhart** called for the question. The resolution passed.

**Senator Dunham** introduced a resolution on behalf of the AAUP supporting the rights of Dr. Dini, Associate Professor of Biology, to set criteria for writing letters of recommendations for students. **The resolution reads “We, The Faculty Senate of Texas Tech University, affirm our support for Dr. Michael Dini and his right to set policies regarding letters of recommendation. A letter of recommendation from a faculty member for a student is a privilege not a right, and any faculty member may refuse to provide one if she/he believes that the student has failed to demonstrate either academic competency on the basis of reasonable criteria (that is, criteria that are generally accepted as reasonable by the majority of the academic community), personal integrity, or classroom deportment. Furthermore, we also believe that Dr. Dini retains the right to state general criteria refusing to recommend a student and we commend his integrity for clearly stating the circumstances under which he would not be able in good conscience to write a recommendation letter.”** **Senator Johnson** seconded the resolution. **Senator Howe** commented that the language of the resolution is much improved over what he heard before, and is not technically a resolution of support for the exact content of Dr. Dini’s web site, but rather a resolution of support for the right of faculty members to set professional criteria for letters of recommendation. **Senator Held** proposed **a friendly amendment to the resolution that would delete the portion of the resolution contained within the parenthesis (that is, criteria that are generally accepted as reasonable by the majority of the academic community).** **Senator Steinhart** seconded the amendment. **Senator Dunham** accepted the friendly amendment. **Senator Held** expressed his appreciation for the support that the administration has given to Dr. Dini. **Senator Floyd** joined him in this, and stressed that the resolution is really about academic freedom. **Student Government President Kelli Stumbo** also expressed support for the resolution. **Senator Kvashny** called for the question on the amended resolution. The amended resolution passed.

**Jason Lester** from the Graduate Student Senate addressed the Faculty Senate to discuss the fact that the GSS would like the administration to make the athletic fee optional for graduate students and to express the support of the GSS for the enrollment cap resolution passed by the Faculty Senate. **Senator Held** made a motion for the Faculty Senate to support the Graduate Student Senate in its attempt to make the athletic fee optional for graduate students. **Senator Marks** seconded the motion. **Senator Howe** called for the question. The motion passed.

**VII. Announcements.** **President Blum** requested that all the committees meet if they have not done so already so they can make their reports at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. He also announced that Faculty Senate offices would definitely be moving to rooms 301 through 304 in the administration building. **President Blum** stated that **Max Hinojosa** would be the invited speaker at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. He also encouraged members of the Faculty Senate to attend the budget meeting that will be held tomorrow from 3:30 to 5:00PM in room 49 of the chemistry building. **Senator Held** announced that the Budget Study Committee would meet immediately following today’s Faculty Senate meeting.

**VIII. Adjournment.** **President Blum** adjourned the meeting at 4:53pm.

Respectfully submitted  
Brent J. Shriver  
Secretary, Faculty Senate