Texas Tech University Faculty Senate
Meeting # 308, October 12, 2011

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, October 12, 2011 in the Senate Room of the Student Union Building, with Faculty Senate President Daniel Nathan presiding.

Senators in attendance were: Ballou, Kvashny, Ajlouni, Davis, Perl, Cristina Bradatan, Durband, Fallwell, Held, Lee, Lodhi, McFadden, Mosher, Nathan, Stodden, Surles, Weinberg, Wilde, Wong, Bremer, Boal, Buchheit, Coward, Janisch, Todd, Valle, Awal, Watson, Youn, Costica Bradatan, Collier, Fowler, Ross, Callender, Janisch, Todd, Awal, Darwish, Watson, Wang, Youn, Fowler, Loewy, Ross, Dodds, Heinz, Monroe, Syma, River, Whitfield, Bradley, Chambers, Chansky, Marks, Tate and Wood. Senators excused were: Kucera, Mills, Perry, Louden, Biglaiser, Borshuk, Boros, Rice, Schmidt, Valle, Bayne, Simonton, Costica Bradatan, Gilliam, Callender, Duffy and Martin. Senators unexcused were: Rahnama and Leslie.

I. Call to Order:
Daniel Nathan, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at 3:18 PM.

II. Recognition of Guests:
Faculty Senate President Nathan recognized our guests: From the Provost office: Gary Elbow and today’s speaker Valerie Paton. Other visitors were Amy Mondt, from Vietnam Archive; Nathaneal Haddox from HR Relationship Management and also in attendance was Past FS President Richard Meek, representing TTU AAUP Chapter, and Professor John Howe as the Faculty Senate Parliamentarian.

III. Approval of Minutes:
Faculty Senate President Nathan called for any corrections or changes to the minutes of meeting #307 held on September 14, 2011 minutes were approved with minor corrections.

IV. Speaker- Dr. Valerie Paton, Vice Provost presented a report on (1) SACS, (2) Course Evaluations, and (3) the Board’s review of all degree programs in the state.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: The 5-year Interim Report reviewed 20 criteria, while the 10-year report includes all 60 criteria. In December 2008 TTU was removed from probation and on the 5-year report TTU received a perfect score on the 20 criteria. However the report stated “we still have room for improvement” on page 63 of 65. SACS requires continuous improvement as a standard which in turn requires TTU to restate “we have met bench marks” as recommended by the President of SACS. A new report begins summer 2013 for the ten-year report. Two of seven criteria were inconclusive. TTU will prepare a monitoring report to respond to the two criteria which were inconclusive with respect to section 3.5.1 dealing with Core Curriculum.

Course Evaluations: HB 2504 requires evaluations of all undergraduate organized courses each semester except for non-credit labs, self-directed or independent studies. TTU has not been requiring evaluations for summer courses, but this will have to change. Online evaluations for all summer courses were tested the summer of 2011. The University chose not to purchase an online software tool, but used an in-house tool sent to students via email. A good online response rate (50% to 55%) is lower than in-class evaluations (82% - 83%). The format of future evaluations is yet to be determined. VP Paton noted that only questions #1 and #11 are summative ones. Consequently, the reports of numerical averages on annual faculty reviews should be limited to those two items.

The current OP does not meet the standard set by HB 2405 as the OP only requires evaluations once during the academic year (OP32.32 C). Further OP32.01, “Attachment Dossier Requirements” does not state each semester instead states, “Summary evidence of teaching effectiveness prepared by the unit head in consultation with the applicant. Peer and student evaluation summaries are to be included.” VP Paton requested that a Senate Committee be assigned to review OP 32.32 to consider how to bring it into compliance with HB 2504. President Nathan assigned the task to the Faculty Status & Welfare Committee.

Coordinating Board: The Higher Education Efficiencies Committee is trying to eliminate “degree bloat” by reviewing all programs based on degree production. At Texas Tech, this was implemented first by eliminating all degree programs which had not offered courses in ten years. The Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2009 set new productivity standards for degree programs, raising the number of graduates completing programs within a 5-year period to 25 undergraduates, 15 master
graduates, and 10 doctoral graduates every five-year period. At Tech in response to the new standards changes were made through consolidation, deletions, and phase-outs of programs. The State Coordination Board granted temporary exemptions of Tech’s 24 programs, all of which were required to prepare an appeal stating the rationale regarding the need to continue the programs. Of those 24 programs, all but one prepared an appeal. Six subject to deletion were allowed to admit students for the fall semester. Three were then appealed, one consolidated with another program. The remainder was deleted. TTU voluntarily deleted 81 programs; however, many of the programs were already inactive and could profitably either be dropped or combined with other programs under a new name or re-identified as a concentration instead of a separate degree programs. Two of the three were recommended for deletion by an internal committee of the Coordinating Board. Only one was recommended for continuation. On October 27th, the Provost will meet to challenge the deletions with the Higher Education Efficiencies Committee.

V. Reports from University Councils/Committees & Liaisons.


The Research Advisory Council met once in August before the semester began and will meet again Friday, October 14, 2011. The Council met for an hour to discuss the Red Book, which is sent to the state legislature as part of our materials to consider for funding, and the university’s plan to update the book for this year’s requests. In reviewing the Red Book materials, the Council recommended ensuring that the arts and humanities were included as a major contributor to the research, educational, and community agendas of Texas Tech. The Council also recommended Introducing a more dynamic approach to “marketing” Texas Tech as a leader in areas particularly attractive to governmental research (such as environmental and disaster studies, energy research, military and technological advances) in making Tech more appealing in a very competitive time for very limited resources. Dr. Michael San Francisco has contacted the original contributors highlighted in the Red Book to secure updates and gauge progress.

Senator Wong also reported on and solicited input regarding the number of Faculty Development Leaves available this year. The number of awards last year was reduced by 15 and, though the number of available awards this year has returned to previous levels (32-35), there was increased competition for awards as a consequence of the reapplication by persons denied last year. The request was made to take this question up with the Provost.

Administrator Evaluation Survey Committee Report-Senator Carrye Syma

The Committee does not have any changes to recommend. Mary Elkins, Section Coordinator, Institutional Research, has been contacted and the date for the survey to be distributed is November 1-18.

Report for Faculty Senate about Graduate Council-Senator Carrye Syma

The Arts and Humanities Conference will be held on October 21st and 22nd. Anastasia Coles is the contact person for the Conference.

The Graduate School graduated 101 doctoral and 335 master students during the August Graduation.

Dr. Miller announced that the enrollment numbers are down nationally but not for the Texas Tech University.

Proposal for revising Graduate Faculty Status:

We propose the following changes to the Graduate Faculty review process:
1) That a departmental or college recommendation for appointment to the Graduate Faculty membership no longer be subject to review in the Graduate School except as indicated below.

2) That the Graduate Faculty Committee be abolished and faculty review responsibilities specified below be assigned to the Academic Program Committee, which could be enlarged to accommodate new responsibilities.

3) Review of faculty credential for admission to the Graduate Faculty by the Academic Program Committee or a subcommittee thereof will be restricted to the following:

   A) Adjunct or Visiting Faculty, especially with respect to service on thesis and dissertation committees as member or chairperson.

   B) When Requested, cases where the outcome of the departmental evaluation is unclear, such as in a split vote on Graduate Faculty membership.

   C) Appeals by faculty who have received a negative vote in their department or college and who wish to appeal the decision.

4) That a department chairperson or dean may request that a faculty member or members may be placed in indefinite suspension from the Graduate Faculty. Such requests will be reviewed by the Academic Program Committee or a subcommittee thereof. The suspension will remain in effect until such time as the dean or department chair requests that the faculty member be reinstated as a member of the Graduate Faculty.

In discussion, members of the Faculty Senate raised questions about the last part of the proposed policy. As a consequence, the new policy (with special attention to part 4) was sent to the Faculty Status & Welfare Committee for review.

Complete minutes from the Graduate Council meetings may be found at: http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/facstaff/gcmembers.php

VI. Old Business:

Faculty Status & Welfare Committee-Senator Lewis Held reporting Committee recommendations.

OP 32.13: The Chancellor’s Council Distinguished Teaching Award

As was the case with the Distinguished Research Award, the proposed revisions increased the possible number of awards each year to four with two each in the two categories. The committee noted that Attachment B, which outlines the procedure by which recommendations for award recipients are made, contained language similar to that in 32.21 allowing the Chancellor to change the procedures outside the OP amendment process. Award recommendations are made by the Executive Council of the Teaching Academy, the Faculty Senate President, and a former award recipient. Senator Held contacted the Council’s chair, Audra Morse. She worked with the committee on extensive revisions to Attachment B, some of which reflect discussions that she had had with Senior Vice Provost Rob Stewart, and the Executive Council reviewed the attachment and made additional changes. The Executive Council strongly felt that awards should not be divided by categories because good teaching is not related to discipline and edited the document to reflect that. The ad hoc committee voted its approval of the new draft and sent it on to President Nathan with a request that Dr. Stewart be asked to respond to the draft as soon as possible, so that it might be presented to the Senate at its September meeting.

There was a single vote on OP 32.13 and all the other OPs revisions presented at the September meeting. All OPs have been posted for the last month on the Faculty Senate website for review.

OP 32.21: The Chancellor’s Council Distinguished Research Award
The charge of the Academic Program Committee was to provide a recommendation regarding the final exam schedule for the 2012-2013 academic calendar. The original 11-member Ad Hoc Committee on the Academic Calendar proposed four initial options. The Academic Program Committee addressed the charge via multiple email communications. Initial input from the committee indicated a 4 – 2 vote in favor of option #2, which would reduce final exam times from 150 minutes to 120 minutes and reduce the number of days for finals to four instead of five. Many universities in the Big 12 have finals of 120 minutes or less. Option #2 also would allow the School of Music to participate in the Carol of Lights festivities. The two remaining votes cast were for option #3, which would discontinue the individual study day and keep the 150 minute exam times for five days. This option also would allow the School of Music to participate in the Carol of Lights festivities.

Faculty Senator voiced several concerns about academic calendar changes including but not limited to the following issues:

- Adequate time for students to complete a final exam.
- The impact of eliminating the Day of Study.
- The impact of Carol of Lights on the academic mission of the University.
- The impact of this decision on all future semesters.
- The impact on students who would have to take more than 3 or more exams in one day.
- There were no further changes to votes or additional input from members of the committee. Thus, the final vote of the committee was 4 – 2 in favor of option #2.

There was considerable comment and discussion of the various calendar options. There was no consensus within the Senate as a whole in favor of the committee’s recommendation. A motion to table was made by Senator Todd Chambers and seconded by Senator Arnold Loewy. The Faculty Senate Academic Programs Committee will seek more information and clarification on the Academic Calendar options.

KTXT-FM radio’s request to broadcast Faculty Senate meetings.

President Nathan report the email response to the proposal to air Faculty Senate meetings was rejected by a 3:1 vote. Tally of the votes were: 21 against, 7 for, 8 abstentions. President Nathan, at the request of one of the Senators, agreed to speak with KTXT-FM Station Manager Clint Barrick about the possibility of addressing the Faculty Senate directly at a future meeting.

VII. New Business: None

VIII. Announcements: None

IX. Adjournment at 5:40PM.