

Faculty Senate Minutes
Senate Room in the SUB Matador Room
September 10, 2014
Meeting #334

Senators present were: Senators present were: Brashears, Cox, Farmer, Buelinckx, Canas, Cargill Cook, Carter, Grair, Hawkins, Held, Juan, Milam, Morgan, Morales, Nite, Qualin, Ramkumar, Shi, Skidmore, Smith, Surliuga, Swingen, Ritchey, Koricich, Patrick, Richman, Colette Taylor, Bayne, Dallas, Ghebrab, Matis, Morse, Caswell, McGinley, Blum, Gilliam, Spallholz, Yuan, Cochran, James, Metze, Becker, Cassidy, Heinz, Hidalgo, Weiner, Ortiz, Peaslee, Brookes, Donahue, Meek, McKoin, Ankrum and Tate. Senators excused were: Chris Taylor, Batra, Hom, Arnett, Pongratz, Rahamamoghadam, Soliman and Lastrapes.

- I. **Call to Order** at 3:16 p.m. – Dr. Michael Farmer, Faculty Senate President
- II. **Recognition of guests:** University President, Duane Nellis, Provost Lawrence Schovanec and Senior Vice Provost Rob Stewart, Ben Montecillo from the Staff Senate, AAUP President Diane Warner and Faculty Senate Parliamentarian Allison Whitney.
- III. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes for FS meeting #333 on May 13, 2014 were approved as recorded. New senators stood and were recognized.
- IV. **Speakers:** **Dr. Duane Nellis, TTU University President**, reported recent University milestones. He congratulated the faculty for its role in attracting and graduating students: a record enrollment is close to 35,000; there is increased graduate enrollment; and 7000 students graduated last academic year. Enhanced research profiles: record research expenditures at approximately \$140 million, including \$46 million in restricted research dollars. The perception of quality at TTU is increasing, according to *US News & World Report* rankings. He voiced support for the Ombudsperson position search and the progress on a University Child Care Center (both Faculty Senate initiatives). Upcoming business includes a SACS on-site visit in February, the QEP theme of “communication in a global society,” and working with legislators to obtain an increase in HEAF funding, TRIP matching funding, and the funding of the Experimental Science Building Phase 2. Dr. Nellis solicits help in nominating students and faculty for major awards, and suggests cultivating promising students early in their careers. Dr. Nellis is saddened by the recent deaths of seven TTU students and asks for increased awareness and counsel regarding safe use of alcohol. He indicates that he will be pleased to interact with Chancellor Duncan and voices his interest in hearing the voice of the faculty. Questions included the process by which indirect costs from external funding awards are given back to faculty PIs. Response: We let Deans decide. Is there an interest in greater consistency? Is there a way to use the 40% to assist with start-up costs?

Dr. Lawrence Schovanec, TTU Provost, spoke about changing personnel in the Provost’s Office. Genevieve Durham replaces Gary Elbow; Darrel James replaces Peggy Miller; Melanie Park replaces Valerie Paton. There is discussion regarding a new Center for the Humanities at TTU. The Provost’s Office is tracking data from Digital Measures and Web of Science to provide a more complete report on the full scope of scholarship at the University. Efforts to improve student retention include

engaging an educational advisory board. He discussed the addition of new faculty positions over the past three years – approximately 100 new lines have been added and the student-faculty ratio is about 20: 1. On a somber note, Dr. Schovanec noted that Professor of Mathematics, Mara Neusel, took her life last week. He asked how the University can create an environment so that people won't feel so lost. Questions included a concern about whether greater enrollment numbers suggests that we are lowering admission standards. Senators Held and Spallholtz mentioned a concern regarding a potential relationship between retention efforts and pressure on faculty to inflate grades. Dr. Schovanec responded that "There should not be any kind of pressure to influence professors' grading habits." He mentioned the new form by which students will evaluate faculty, with only 4 questions. This was drafted by the Faculty Senate and approved last year. The Provost said his office would send that out to all faculty soon.

V. Old Business:

President Farmer reviewed the charges and functions of the standing committees so that all members could determine where they might be most effectively engaged.

There was extended discussion of the Administrator Evaluation surveys that are coordinated by a Faculty Senate committee. In the past, Chairs, Deans, Provost, and President were evaluated; this year the committee aims to include associate deans. Senator Richman asked how the administration uses the results. Dr. Schovanec said that while there is no official policy on their use at this time. Those reviewed see their own reviews and the Provost can discuss results with Deans. He offered to ask Deans how they use the reviews. FS president Farmer mentioned that Deans can look at the reviews of their chairs. Senator Spallholtz asked for a summary regarding the percentage of eligible faculty who submit evaluations for each position. President Farmer offered to go over how the results are reported in the October meeting.

Senator Ramkumar moved that the committee structure be accepted as presented, which was seconded by Senator Taylor. The motion was approved.

VI. New Business: 1) A Resolution to Welcome Chancellor Robert Duncan:

To the original text, Senator Spallholtz proposed a friendly amendment, which was approved so that the resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS the Texas Tech University Faculty Senate extends a warm welcome to Robert Duncan as the new Chancellor of the Texas Tech University System, and

WHEREAS the Texas Tech University campus faculty is striving toward greater national and international recognition for our research, entrepreneurial, and creative endeavor, and

WHEREAS we the faculty look forward to working with you, through our campus administration, to realize a new level of excellence that leads to a shared pride of achievement in scholarship, creativity, superior student education and vigorous community engagement, and

WHEREAS we invite your support for our efforts, and we hope you find this an exciting time to serve as Chancellor of the Texas Tech University System;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate passes this resolution welcoming Robert Duncan as our new Chancellor at our meeting on September 10, 2014.

Senator Ramkumar moved that the resolution be approved and Senator Taylor seconded. The resolution was approved.

- 2) President Farmer said that his goal for year is to continue the process of moving Faculty Senate toward being a governing body rather than a petitioning body.

President Michael Farmer outlined new Ad Hoc committees for special projects:

A) Funded Research Committee Working Group to focus on those with small grants with a large burden of reporting. Contact Michael Farmer or Phil Smith.

B) Poll of Tenured Faculty Women Leaving Tech. President Farmer asks for volunteers to call two such women, based on lists compiled from records of the president, provost, and chairs. Drs. Nellis and Schovanec suggested expanding the scope to study work-life balance.

C) Pedestrian Safety. Last year, a committee chaired by Abby Swingen compiled a report and contacted Michael Molina but was unable to arrange a meeting. Plans for this year include getting student input to pedestrian and small-wheels concerns, and contacting Noelle Sloane regarding further steps to clarify who has the right of way and to create better signage and pedestrian flow through and into campus. Those interested should contact Carolyn Tate.

D) President Farmer wants a faculty member to serve on the Ad Hoc University Committee on Sexual Harassment.

E) President Farmer asks for a faculty member to serve on a Blackboard service advisory team. Contact Justin Louder, Kelli Cargile Cook.

- 3) The SACS review of faculty governance suggested three new OPs.

A) OP 32.22. Selection and Removal of Endowed Chairs and Professorships

B) OP 74.14 concerns the Senate role in institutes and centers and its involvement in making faculty appointments. Do we need to look at the processes by which centers have been and will be created?

C) Elected Faculty on Administrator Search Committees and Senate liaisons on all TTU committees affecting faculty.

4) Report on the Ombudsperson Search: Twelve applicants as of today. The committee (Gretchen Adams, Shane Blum, Carolyn Tate, Mark Wallace, Rob Stewart) aims to forward a ranked list of three to the Provost in October.

- VI. **Announcements:** OP 64.01 Admission to Graduate School was signed and approved.

Vice-President Meek reports that TTU and the Medical School have agreed to fund a feasibility study by Horizons Workforce Consulting, which should report in January.

Vice-President Meek reports that a statue honoring former TTU student Timothy Cole, who died after serving 14 years in prison after a wrongful conviction of rape, will be inaugurated on September 17 at 2 pm at 19th and University.

Senator Held welcomed Gary Elbow back to the Faculty Senate.

President Farmer thanked President Nellis for providing a reception for this first meeting of the year.

- VII. **Adjournment at 5:10 pm.**