

Minutes #174

MINUTES #174 - FACULTY SENATE

December 4, 1996

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, December 4, 1996 at 3:15 p.m. in the Senate Room of the University Center with John Howe, President, presiding. Senators present were Bremer, Casadonte, Coulter, DeBell, Dowell, Dunham, Dunne, Durland, Elbow, Fedler, Floyd, Fortney, Fox, P. Goebel, U. Goebel, Held, Hensley, Herring, Hufford, Jackson, Khan, Lan, Liman, Mann, Meek, Miller, Morrow, Myers, Nguyen, Olivarez, Opp, Rainger, Reckner, River, Schaller, Stinespring, Stout, L. Thompson, V. Thompson, Tock, Urban and Whisnant. Senator Corbett is on leave from the University. Senators Couch, Dornier, George and Robert were absent because of University business. Senators Coombs, Sarkar and Welton were absent.

I. President Howe called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and recognized the following guests: Virginia Sowell, Associate Provost; Sharen Hart, Office of Development; Margaret "Peg" Wilson, Professor from HPER; Kristin Ketcham, Internal Vice President, Student Association; and Matt Henry, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal.

II. Minutes of the November 13, 1996 meeting were approved with the following corrections: The statement, "...not only the immanence of God but also..." was removed from the reception announcement on page 3. "Tenure Form Discussion" heading on page 4 was corrected to Tenure Forum Discussion".

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Big 12 Conference of Senate Presidents - President Howe reported on the provosts' and senate presidents' conference held on December 1-2. Provost Burns co-hosted the event. A similar meeting will be held in June 1997, attended by President Howe's successor. Topics covered at the September 1996 meeting included senate structures, electronic communication, faculty development, and post-tenure review.

Suggestions on Committee and Liaison Reports - Oral reports from Committee

chairmen and liaisons are welcome, but try to notify the Senate president at least four working days prior to the Senate meeting so that the report can be included on the agenda. Written reports can be left at the door in lieu of oral reports. If possible, provide the President with an e-mail or disc copy of the report to facilitate placement on the web page.

Reception for Senators, Spouses and Guests - President Howe reminded Senators of the "end-of-the-semester" reception at President Howe's home immediately following the December 4, 1996 Senate meeting.

Commencement Ceremonies - President Howe encouraged senators to attend commencement ceremonies.

IV. ELECTION OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE - Senator Dunne, as Chair of the

Committee on Committees, conducted an election to select three individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee. This committee will report to the Senate at the February 12, 1997 meeting with at least two candidates for each Senate office (president, vice-president and secretary). Senators Couch, Held, and DeBell were elected.

V. AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

The proposed amendments to the bylaws distributed at the meeting of the Senate are included in these minutes as Appendix A and are on file in the Faculty Senate Office. The amendments were submitted by the Agenda Committee of the Senate and were intended: 1) to delineate clearly who serves on the Agenda Committee; 2) to implement a new system for naming Senate liaisons on university committees and councils; 3) to eliminate non-existent university councils from the Bylaws; 4) to allow the Senate to disestablish standing and ad hoc committees as appropriate; and 5) to allow the Senate to vote to submit proposed Bylaws changes to the full Senate by means of a mail ballot which would be overseen by the Agenda Committee. 38 Senators unanimously approved the proposed amendments, exceeding the 36 affirmative vote total required by amendment procedures.

In a related issue, some senators have expressed a desire be able to vote

for Senate officers using a mail ballot, rather than voting for the officers at a Senate meeting. President Howe indicated that the procedures for officer elections are specified in the Constitution and not the Bylaws. This issue of constitutional amendment to allow for mail ballot voting for Senate officers has been assigned to Study Committee C, chaired by Senator Mann.

VI. COMMITTEE, COUNCIL AND LIAISON REPORTS

Agenda Committee Report on Senate Liaisons - The following names of liaisons to serve on various university councils and committees, and two special appointments, were submitted for Senate approval by the Agenda Committee. COUNCILS: Academic, Gary Elbow; Development, Jim Reckner; Graduate, Leslie Thompson; International Affairs, Ulrich Goebel; Provost, John Howe; Research, Clifford Fedler. COMMITTEES: Affirmative Action, Andy Herring; Chancellor's Development, Paul Goebel; Faculty/Staff Scholarship Fund, Charlotte Dunham; General Education, John Howe; Gloria Lyerla Library Memorial Fund, Ed George; Intellectual Property Rights, Uzi Mann;

Recruitment, Admissions and Retention, Arturo Olivarez; Teaching, Learning and Technology, Don Durland; University Center Board, Leslie Thompson. SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS: Senate Parliamentarian, Clarke Cochran; Faculty Senate Representative to Student Senate, Lewis Held. The Senate unanimously approved these liaison appointments by voting to accept the report of the Agenda Committee.

Report of Budget Study Committee - Senator Held presented the following resolution from the Budget Committee: "The Faculty Senate requests that the Administration consult the faculty and students involved and the Faculty Senate before closing or reorganizing any academic unit on the TTU campus." The committee accepted friendly amendments to the resolution so that it reads "The Faculty Senate requests the Administration reach an understanding with the faculty and students involved and the Faculty Senate before closing or reorganizing any academic unit on campus." The Senate accepted the resolution as amended with one dissenting vote.

Faculty Performance Study Committee Report - Senator Schaller provided written copies of the Faculty Performance Study Committee report. Another report by the Committee in 1994 is on the Senate web site. A summary of the responses from various colleges and departments to the 1994 report will follow soon. The Ad Hoc Senate Committee on Faculty Service, chaired by Senator Rainger, will take note of this report and use the information in its studies.

Provost Sowell reported that the legislators and public do not understand what faculty do and how hard they work. Faculty on the average work about 54 hours a week. It has been her observation that the upper administration has never been dissatisfied with the performance of TTU faculty.

Senator Hensley indicated this report is a progress report. The Senate had requested it so information could be used in current Senate discussions. Senator Tock pointed out that the report has strong conclusions on the need for local assessment of faculty, the lack of uniformity of existing procedures, and the extreme difficulty inherent in any attempt to quantify faculty productivity. The report was unanimously accepted by the Senate and will be sent as an addendum to all who received the 1994 committee report.

Teaching, Learning and Technology Advisory Committee Report - Senator Durland submitted a written report on the November 26, 1996 meeting of the committee, which is on file in the Faculty Senate office. The meeting focused on campus networking plans and computer courses to be offered to the faculty in the Spring of 1997.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Senate Action on Tenure "Housekeeping" - The DeBell Senate resolution adopted at the November 13, 1996 meeting asked Senators to examine the policies in the Faculty Handbook and OP 32.32 regarding the evaluation of tenured faculty and to discuss the issue at the December meeting. President Howe re-opened the issue as mandated by the resolution.

Senator Elbow summarized the history and status of the post-tenure review

question. In October, Senator Elbow attended a conference on tenure at the University of Houston sponsored by their faculty senate. Several prominent speakers on the tenure issue were highlighted, including Dr. Richard Chait (Professor of Education at Harvard University) and State Senator Armbrister (who served on the Texas State Education Committee). Senator Armbrister summarized the Legislature's perspective on the post-tenure review issue. Other speakers focused on the current status of post-tenure review, pros and cons of post-tenure review, faculty performance, and the evaluation of faculty performance. Senator Elbow felt that conducting this sort of conference at Texas Tech might be beneficial as well. A primary motivation for suggesting a forum at Texas Tech, similar to that held at Houston, was to take advantage of the fact that Teel Bivins, Texas Senator from Amarillo, will be incoming chairman of the Texas Senate Education Committee. By inviting Senator Bivins to attend and speak at the forum, faculty and administrators at Texas Tech could learn from him the current perceptions of the Legislature regarding tenure and post-tenure review, as well as gain an opportunity for Texas Tech to educate the senator on policies already in place at TTU. Provost Burns and Chancellor Montford agreed to the forum. Senator Bivins was contacted about attending, but after much effort an acceptable date could not be agreed upon. He did agree, however, to send a representative if such a forum was held in 1997. The forum idea in this form was shelved.

After talking with several faculty about having some type of forum for the

Texas Tech community, Vice-president Elbow found many supporters of such an idea. Peg Wilson suggested that an open forum be held to discuss the history of tenure at Texas Tech and other related issues (such as OP 32.32 on post-tenure review) since many faculty have arrived at Texas Tech since the last tenure battle occurred in 1984- 1986. Senator Elbow was interested in polling the Senate to ascertain whether the Senate was interested in holding such a forum. He clarified that the issue was faculty evaluation, especially as it related to post-tenure review. Neither he nor the Agenda Committee wanted to open, re-evaluate or suggest revisions to current Texas Tech tenure policies.

President Howe explained how the Agenda committee had become involved

in

the attempt to organize a forum. Committee A in May of 1996 had recommended that open forums be held with community involvement on issues important in education. The Senate had recommended that the Agenda Committee be responsible for the implementation of such forums. The Agenda Committee decided that these could be held on an ad hoc basis as relevant and important issues arose.

Senator DeBell explained a handout she had provided which included OP 32.32, Vol. 1 (March 28, 1996) on performance evaluation of faculty, and pages 66-69 of the 1992 Faculty Handbook describing grounds for termination and termination procedures. Copies of the handout with her notations are on file in the Senate Office. Senator DeBell's main observations included: 1) The Texas Tech OP does call for periodic and continuous review of faculty performance to make decisions concerning tenure, promotion, merit salary increases, research support, development leaves and teaching and research awards, 2) Faculty do submit annual reports to their departmental administrators which are used as a data base for evaluation, 3) Student evaluations are to be conducted at least once per academic year using a standard University form, 4) If a faculty member's dean and chairperson agree that his or her performance is not acceptable, then a developmental program to improve faculty performance will be implemented. Failure to improve performance can result in the initiation of termination procedures. The burden of proof in such procedures lies with the University.

President Howe pointed out that the senate presidents at their Big 12 conference spent a considerable amount of time discussing post-tenure review. Eleven of the 12 schools have an annual review. Three of the schools are considering implementation of cycles of "post-tenure review" in addition to annual reviews, at time periods ranging from 3 to 6 years. Unfortunately, some of the processes seem to be shifting the burden of proof from the university to the individual. In other words, rather than the university showing just cause for remediation or termination, faculty members are put in the position of having to defend their performance and activities.

Senator Dunne brought up the issue of the three-question University-wide

student evaluation forms currently used; he expressed his displeasure with the instrument as a performance indicator. He indicated that the Student Senate is interested in developing its own faculty-evaluation instrument and publishing the results of the evaluations. President Howe granted the floor to the Student Senate representative, Kristin Ketcham. The Student Senate Committee on Academics is interested in publishing a summary of student evaluations of Texas Tech faculty. The Student Senate wants to use a fair instrument, take a student's course grade into consideration before using the data, and publish the results in the library or other suitable location.

President Howe indicated that in the Big 12 proposals the responsibility for setting performance standards is being left to the individual units or departments. The departments may or may not use student evaluations as performance criteria. Vice-president Elbow pointed out, however, that the current three-item University form could be required in such evaluations at some point in time. It would be advisable to have a valid, more reasonable instrument. President Howe reminded the Senate that Provost Burns had expressed his concerns about the instrument, when he suggested that evaluation and revision of this instrument might be a topic for a newly formed Teaching Academy.

Vice-president Elbow offered the following motion which was seconded by Senator Dunne: Assign to a committee the issue of improving OP 32.32 and faculty performance measures in general, asking for a report back to the Senate before the end of the Spring semester, with some sort of open forum or meeting to be held to discuss results. Senator Miller requested separation of the motion into two parts: one part pertaining to the committee charge and report; the second part pertaining to the forum. Vice-president Elbow clarified that the forum envisioned in the motion would pertain specifically to the report of the committee and the Senate's discussion on OP 32.32 and faculty performance. This forum would not cover broader topics such as history of tenure, tenure policies or other tenure issues.

Senator DeBell questioned Vice-president Elbow as to the purpose of examining OP 32.32. Elbow responded that the OP needs to have more due process for the faculty, more faculty participation and more opportunity for inclusion of peer-evaluation. President Howe pointed out that this issue has an impact on the Faculty Handbook as well.

Senator Fortney suggested broadening the charge of the committee to examine the entire issue of post-tenure review which would include OP 32.32. VP Elbow countered that the objectives were to make OP 32.32 better, not to create a new policy on post-tenure review. Texas Tech already has a post-tenure review policy.

President Howe yielded the chair. Howe indicated that Texas Tech can respond to the Legislature's post-tenure review concerns by arguing that TTU does have and has had post-tenure review; that this case becomes stronger if the University has re-examined its policy and strengthened it. The Senate moved to cease the discussion.

The motion originally proposed by Vice-President Elbow passed with a majority vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Academics and Athletics - Senator Dunne expressed his concern about academics at Texas Tech University as related to athletics. Dunne indicated that he was aware of football players not attending classes, the negative press that Texas Tech Athletic Department had received recently, and the on-going NCAA investigation. He had no problems with any other group of athletes. Dunne proposed a motion to invite Spike Dykes to the January 15, 1997 meeting of the Senate to address the aforementioned issues. The motion passed unanimously. President Howe noted that Coach Dykes had already indicated his willingness to address the Senate on athletic issues.

Appreciation for Clock Re-installation - Senator Coulter moved that the Senate express appreciation to Chancellor Montford for his efforts to place clocks back in classrooms. The motion, seconded by Senator Held, passed unanimously.

Presentation of Certificates of Service - Retiring Senator Durland and Parliamentarian Havens each were presented a Certificate of Appreciation from the Faculty Senate for their long-time, outstanding service to the Senate.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The Senate was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie D. Thompson