

Texas Tech University
Minutes --#216 Faculty Senate
May 9,2001

The Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, May 9, 2001 in the Senate Room in the University Center with President Charlotte Dunham presiding. Senators present were Thorvilson, Giaccardo, Donahue, Held, Lee, Lewis, Meek, Reeves, Schaller, Weinberg, Hein, Malone, Hartmeister, Thomas, Lakhani, Mann, Cochran, Carr, Cooper, Marbley, Becker and Trost.

Unexcused Senators were Elam, Kieth, Buelinckx, Drager, Hartwell, Iber, Lodhi, Lucas, Perez, Tuman, Walker, Boal, Murray, Norville, Reeder, Zhang, Blum, Khan, Spallholz, Bradley, Cardenas-Garcia, Smith, Swafford and Willis-Aarnio.

Newly elected Senators as guests were Kvashny, Hoo, Quinn, Song and Stinespring.

- I.** Call to Order was announced by President Charlotte Dunham at 3:15 pm.
- II.** Recognition of Guests: Provost John Bums, Vice Provost Jim Brink, Assistant Provost Liz Hall, Parliamentarian Gary Elbow, and a number of new Faculty Senators elected for 2001-2002 (those in attendance indicated their presence by raising their hands).
- III.** Approval of Minutes for meeting #215, April 11, 2001, were approved as mailed
- IV.** Remarks from Invited Guests: President Dunham indicated that invited guest Vice President for Informational Technology Gary Wiggins was unable to make his remarks at the beginning of the meeting due to his conducting a training session for members of the TTU Board of Regents. It was agreed to have Dr. Wiggins speak to the Senate once he arrived later in the meeting.
- V. Old Business:**

Committee on Committees. On behalf of the committee, Senator Hein led a discussion about the size of the University's Tenure Advisory Committee. A problem arises because the five-member committee, comprised of members serving 5-year terms, is occasionally left short-handed due to committee members being on leave, moving into administrative roles, and for various other reasons. The committee presented two prospective options to address the issue: (1) to provide for alternates elected to serve in the event of a regular committee member's absence, or (2) to increase the size of the committee's voting membership. The Committee on Committee recognized the existence of the problem but declined to make a specific recommendation with regard to either option.

Senator Held moved that the size of the Tenure Advisory Committee be increased to nine. The motion was seconded after Senator Held added to his motion that each college should be able to have no more than three elected members. These changes would be incorporated into corresponding changes in the relevant O.P. Assistant Provost Hall commented that it becomes more difficult to coordinate meeting schedules when committees have more members. Other comments raised questions about the viability of using alternates rather than increasing the size of the committee as well as the ultimate role that the committee's recommendations play in tenure decision making. The motion passed unanimously. President Dunham delegated to the Committee on Committees responsibility in the fall, 2001 for looking further into how the

corresponding O.P. language should be reworded in order to incorporate the expanded size of the Tenure Advisory Committee.

Academic Programs Committee. Senator Donahue provided a report from the committee in Senator Lucas' absence. The committee raised several questions about a recommended proposal arising from a group of staff members affiliated with the Dean of Students Office who are suggesting the implementation of a honor code. As noted by Senator Donahue, many questions need to be resolved before a formal implementation could occur, including whether the honor would apply to both graduate and undergraduate students. Senator Donahue encouraged the Senate to stay involved as future discussions take place. Because of the significance of this issue, Vice Provost Brink suggested that all faculty be made aware of the honor code proposal.

Study Committee C. Senator Carr presented the committee's report on two diverse issues dealing with the proposed golf course and revisions being made in the University's student evaluation forms for courses and professors. Senator Carr mentioned that most of the land use problems involving the range use management and biology programs that arose several years ago appear to have been resolved. He stressed some of the research opportunities that the golf course may provide. The committee did not have a formal recommendation pertaining to the golf course, and the report was intended to be informational in nature. Provost Bums added that when negotiations were taking place with a the developer of a five-star hotel being planned in conjunction with the golf course development, he was encouraged by the developer's assurance that the new facility will have a top notch faculty club on the premises.

With regard to website issues involving course/instructor evaluations, Senator Carr suggested that Dr. Wiggins would be addressing that topic in his remarks to follow. Consequently, Senator Carr emphasized different types of course and instructor evaluations, many of which are addressed in a recent study conducted by the University's Teaching Academy. Senator Donahue inquired about whether the Faculty Senate had ever taken a formal vote on the use of teaching evaluations as presently implemented. The general consensus was that such a vote had not occurred. General discussion then ensued focusing on the Pick-a-Prof website and what types of information is generally made available via that outlet.

At this point, Gary Wiggins presented his remarks about the University's various options for providing access to course/instructor evaluation information. He compared the private sector, for-profit nature of web-based outlets like Pick-a-Prof with the University's official website approach for providing such information. The University plans to provide both course evaluation and grade range information on its website, but there will not be the opportunity for anecdotal comments about particular classes or instructors. Discussion centered on potential problems with how students may use -- or misuse -- this kind of public record information.

Next, Dr. Wiggins spoke about the University's creation of the informational technology (if) program shortly after President David Schmidly assumed office in August 2000. Dr. Wiggins mentioned the strategic management and coordination of campus IT resources ensuring more favorable access for those who need information about students, grants and research projects. One of the IT program's accomplishments has been the elimination of preexisting differences between administrative and academic computing. Technology support has and will continue to improve. Dr. Wiggins suggested that, over time, the "administrative and paperwork overhead" with which faculty must deal will be reduced in the foreseeable future. Other matters that were discussed included the acquisition of e-mail alias addresses for faculty, administrator access to an individual faculty member's individual e-mail messages, and how faculty use the student information system for posting grades.

At the conclusion of Dr. Wiggins' remarks, the meeting resumed with Senator Carr urging Senators to review the Teaching Academy's course/instructor evaluation report.

Ad Hoc Committee on Post Tenure Review. Before presenting his committee's report, Senator Held inquired about whether the Senate still had a quorum present. Because a quorum was not present, President Dunham indicated that no action could be taken with regard to the ad hoc committee's proposed resolution.

Study Committee B. On behalf of Study Committee B, Senator Cochran provided a verbal summary of the report that was mailed in advance of the meeting to all senators. He updated the Senate about several favorable changes that the administration agreed to make concerning language in the TTU system's proposed intellectual property policy. Among the changes were the inclusion of a formal process for faculty to filing grievances under the new Board of Regents policy.

Ad Hoc Committee on Post Tenure Review (continued). Despite the absence of a quorum, Senator Held nevertheless made a presentation detailing his committee's recent efforts to investigate the current status of the University's post tenure review process. In addition, he discussed the relationship between academic freedom, post tenure review (comprehensive performance evaluation, O.P. 32.31) and other related O.P.s dealing with grievances (O.P. 32.05) and annual reviews (O.P. 32.32). Specifically, Senator Held addressed changes that had been made last year in O.P. 32.05 which, in effect, deleted language requiring the University President to provide written reasons if his decision differs from that of the faculty Grievance Committee. The committee urges the reinsertion of the deleted language.

A second issue focused on O.P. 32.31; specifically, the ad hoc committee took exception to terminology involving the selection of "mutually agreed upon" outside reviewers in contested post tenure review cases involving questions of alleged incompetence. Working with Assistant Provost Hall, the committee developed language governing a process for selecting three independent outside reviewers when the faculty member and his/her administrator are unable to mutually agree upon particular panel members.

A third issue involved O.P. 32.32 and annual reviews. The committee took exception to the notion of developing a "written program of development" by the chairperson and faculty member in contested cases of alleged incompetence. Without going into details of an ongoing case in which the parties could not agree upon a development plan, it became obvious that a process needs to be integrated in the existing O.P. for initiating the faculty grievance procedure (O.P. 32.05) in an effort to move things forward. Senator Held complimented Assistant Provost Hall for her efforts and cooperation in working with the ad hoc committee. However, Dr. Hall noted some reluctance in mixing provisions from different O.P.s in decidedly different contexts.

Senator Held requested that a straw vote be taken to ascertain the Senate's general approval of the recommended changes to each of the O.P.s. Without the benefit of having a quorum to take formal action, it was then suggested by Senator Thomas that the O.P. issue be placed on the agenda for the first Senate meeting during the fall, 2001. Though it was impossible to approve a formal motion commending Senator Held and other members of the ad hoc committee for their efforts in addressing the O.P. issues, a general consensus of appreciation was voiced.

VI. New Business:

Despite the continued absence of a quorum, Senator Cochran presented a resolution for the Senate's approval. The resolution read as follows:

Senator Cochran presented the following resolution: Whereas, The 2000-2001 officers of the Texas Tech University Faculty Senate were Charlotte Dunham, President; Walt Schaller, Vice President; and Fred Hartmeister Secretary; and Whereas, These officers worked diligently to shape the agenda of the Faculty Senate during the 2000-2001 academic year; and Whereas, These officers ably represented the faculty of Texas Tech University in meetings with the various constituencies of the university; therefore be it Resolved, That the Texas Tech University Faculty Senate appreciates and commends the service of the 2000-2001 Faculty Senate officers. The resolution passed unanimously.

Senator Cochran's reading of the resolution was followed by applause from those in attendance.

VII. Announcements:

In her closing remarks, President Dunham thanked the Senators for their collective investment of time and energy during the past year. She also thanked the Agenda Committee for its efforts as well as the chairs of the Senate's various committees. Before President Dunham's last official act of passing the gavel to incoming President Giaccardo, Provost Bums stated that he wanted to thank President Dunham for her leadership and cooperation during the previous year. In response, President Dunham thanked the Provost's office for providing the Senate with its new office space the previous fall.

President Giaccardo closed the meeting with several brief comments about the transition process as the new Senate officers assume their leadership roles. He also expressed his excitement about the coming year and acknowledged the amount of work that remains to be accomplished.

VIII. Adjournment: Since there was no other business, President Giaccardo declared the 216th meeting of the Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Fred Hartmeister
Secretary, Faculty Senate