

**Faculty Senate Meeting #378**  
**[This meeting was held online as a Skype meeting]**  
**October 14, 2020**

**Senators present were:** Arnall, Barnes, Bayne, Bishop, Boal, Blum, Borshuk, Brittsan, Buelinckx, Calamoneri, Callender, Cassidy, Collopy, Cox, Darwish, Decker, Donahue, Eko, Faris, Farmer, Gottlieb, Grair, Griffith, Hawley, He, Heinz, Held, Hope-Weeks, Huston, Jones, Klein, Kleinhans, Ladeira, Langford, Litsey, Lyford, Meyers, Murphy, Nathan, Niehuis, Novotny, Parameswaran, Perl, Pihlaja, Ramkumar, Ritchey, Sharma, Sheng, Taraban, Weiner and Zellinger.

**Senators not present:** Bradatan, Cook, Forrest, Garner, Louis and Shumway, Baker, Maccarone, Walter, Wang and Watts.

**Guests:** VPR Joseph Heppert, CIO Sam Segran, IT Staff Yung Ng, Chris Oglesby and Andrew Bevly. Dr. Alice Young, Dr. Abigail Swingen. TTUHSC Faculty Senate Dixon Santana, Ombuds Tara Stevens, IRB Liaison CassiDe Street, Provost Michael Galyean and Senior Vice Provost Rob Stewart, Staff Senate Dee Nguyen, Kevin Wass subbing for Garner.

**Call to order:** At 3:15PM, President Ram called the Faculty Senate Meeting #378 to order. This meeting was conducted online over Skype and a quorum was met. President Ram welcomed the guests and any unannounced guests.

**Approval of minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes from meeting #377 held on September 9, 2020 was made by Senator Perl and seconded by Senator Callender. The minutes were accepted as presented.

### **Guest Speakers**

**Joseph Heppert, Vice President for Research & Innovation:** Dr. Heppert spoke about support for faculty during Covid and also about federal-level changes (reporting changes, conflict of interest, etc.) that will impact research endeavors. His office understands the impact this situation has had on research. Faculty were “very tolerant” of the situation of having to be away from campus during Covid shutdown phases. Most feel we couldn’t have done more, or more quickly, than how we acted. The situation is not over and is not necessarily diminished. The situation might not be resolved for some time; the same challenges will continue balancing work-life, home-life, and ongoing discussion of productivity. There are going to have to be accommodations relating to tenure and other topics that the administration will have continued dialogue about. With this continued inability to travel internationally, research will continue to be significantly impacted (working with foreign person or accessing scholarly materials).

Some of the Washington issues that could impact academic endeavors such as limitations on visa requirements. Diversity programs also affected by current administration. Upper administration working to push back through conversations with professional organizations.

**Question from the faculty:** How can faculty get support or compensation for loss of months to a year on data? Especially for untenured faculty.

**Joe Heppert:** That dialogue has been on going with lead program officers and directors of federal agencies. They don’t have the resources to totally erase the loss of research, but they can’t decide to do that unilaterally, the resources would come out of future funding. We also lost resources because students weren’t on campus, so there were losses of revenue for operation of the university. To our admin’s credit: we put employment as a top priority. We were able to mitigate even worse outcomes of longer-term damaging impact on graduate programs. One of the slight positives is a significant increase in our graduate enrollment because we continued to recruit even as other institutions did not.

**Senator Taraban:** I think what the upper administration has done is admirable, but my concern is how many faculty actually know about this? We should find ways to broadcast this to faculty and graduate students. The awareness seems limited.

**Joe Heppert:** One of the things we felt is important is trying to get on meetings such as Faculty Senate here or Dean's Council to talk about these things.

**Sam Segran, Chief Information Officer** – Wants to thank all the faculty members for being patient with IT during this time. Texas Tech has gone from 200 to over 2000 Zoom licenses and worked with Blackboard and Microsoft to upscale licenses. CIO communications are being kept online and are being posted so IT tips and updates can be accessed and sent out easily. CIO Segran has asked faculty to please not carry data on USB drives, use OneDrive to transfer data. When connecting from home, use remote desktop or VPN. If using Zoom or MS Teams, Skype, Blackboard Collaborate, make sure the link is only sent to those that need it, use the meeting room function, mute function, etc. The TTU Covid 19 Tracking System has been used to track the health data from physicians and city health offices. Earlier in the year, IT met with Student Senate, leading to expanded wifi within buildings and throughout external locations on campus. EDUROAM allows you to access wifi at a remote location using your erailer (at other universities, for example). A survey will be sent out shortly asking what IT needs have been met and which have not. Accessibility and dictation software might be examples for improvement. Phishing attacks have dramatically increased, by nearly double, and are sophisticated in being masked with Covid language to take advantage of the situation. CIO Segran urges all faculty to be aware of these attempts.

**Senator Huston:** Is there an "approved" list of third-party software to assist teaching?

**CIO Segran:** Nothing official, but we are working with Justin Louder and individual faculty as needed.

**Senator Eko:** Does E-learning do tech support for Blackboard?

**CIO Segran:** Yes, it does.

**Senator Held:** Are we trying to increase capacity of Blackboard space per course?

**CIO Segran:** Yes, trying to work on that with faculty as needed. Included a comment that Zoom wasn't quite a mature software when it was first being used, but it has been continuously adding features.

**Rob Stewart, Senior Vice Provost** – Provided an update on academic matters related to Covid protocols during this semester, with an eye to the spring and summer semesters. It is important to clarify that the last three classes of the semester and through finals is to be remote after Thanksgiving. With regard to final exams, the schedule has not changed. For spring – the administration is in the final steps of getting schedules completed, and are working with the largest classes, historically, first to determine classroom space. The six-foot social distancing rule will be in effect for classrooms, not just a blanket half-occupancy capacity. Requests for classes are about 28% online, the rest are face-to-face or hybrid. Summer 2021 is just now starting to be talked about. Summer scheduling will start soon, Administration is looking at possibly offering more online during the summer. Faculty Success Taskforce conversations continue, as Dr. Heppert explained.

**Michael Galyean, Provost** – The Faculty Success Taskforce has a report that will be shared to announce the work and details from that group.

**Senators Kleinhans and Buelinckx** – Any details regarding study abroad for summer/spring semesters?

**Provost Galyean:** Not sure yet, it is a case-by-case basis on which locations are available. They want to open the gates a bit.

**Senator Meyers:** Any information about December commencement?

**Provost Galyean:** That decision is resting for the President, indication is that it will be virtual. The date has yet to be determined.

**FS President Ram:** Could you please ask Chairs Council to share information, some faculty would not hear this information otherwise.

**SVP Stewart:** I can ask, and I think the chairs know that the topics we discuss are to take back to their faculty so that information should be disseminated.

**Senator Huston:** Is there a central location where we can find capacity for classrooms?

**Provost Galyean/SVP Stewart:** You can contact Brandon Hennington or Registrar's Office.

### **Reports and Updates:**

**Administrator Evaluation Survey Committee:** Senator Callender provided a quick update that the committee was recently in touch with Carrie Ford and the Administration survey should be going out soon, no later than 2 weeks. Deadline to return is in January.

### **New Business:**

**Faculty Status and Welfare Committee:** Senator Held presented for the committee. The committee reviewed OP 70.02 Retirement, which does not require a formal review. OP 61.02 Use of University Grounds, Facilities, and Application Equipment had only a consequential change dealing with making certain offices in West Hall available as classroom. The committee had no concerns with the changes and it was approved by the Faculty Senate as presented. OP 61.41 Use of University Classrooms and Facilities for Events had a change only relating to the clearinghouse used for room scheduling. The change was approved as presented.

**Academic Programs Committee:** Senator Buelinckx presented for the committee, which reviewed OP 36.01 Adding, Changing and Deleting Courses and Changing Method of Delivery. Upon reviewing the OP, the biggest change has to do with routing. This would give tenure/tenure-track faculty a voice in adding, deleting, and changing courses. As a motion from the committee, the revision was put to Faculty Senate for discussion. The OP was accepted as presented.

### **Announcements:**

**FS President Ram:** A document detailing the changes in reporting and requirements for the National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health has been provided by the Office of Research and Innovation and Alice Young.

### **Adjournment.**

A motion to adjourn at 4:46 was made by Senator Buelinckx and seconded by Senator Decker. The meeting was adjourned.