Faculty Senate Meeting  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
Minutes of February 21, 2003


Absent: Brendel, Cabrera, Friday, Melrose, Ricard

Guests: Drs. Mark Anderson, Dave Billeaux, David Blanke (?), JoAnn Canales, Pat Carol, Catherine Cox, David Leo, Javier Villarreal, and Robert Wooster.

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

The issue of visitors speaking was addressed first. Lewin moved that anyone in attendance who wanted to speak be allowed to do so. The motion carried, with 1 abstention.

I. Approval of January 24, 2003 Minutes

The Minutes were approved unanimously.

Crowley noted that a document becomes a Faculty Senate document only when it is approved by the Senate. Lewin indicated that he and other A&H Faculty had received a two-page budget document, without the source indicated, in their mailboxes. He said the document was questionable.

II. Standing Committee

A. Budget Analysis – Dr. Zebda began going over the twenty-five (25) items of the Faculty Senate Budget Analysis Committee Memo on “Budget Information” dated February 16, 2003.

1. Morvant stated that the Athletics shortfall was actually less than $300,000. It was a $250,000 shortfall.

2. Morvant then made a motion to end the oral report and to open discussion on it, with the idea that the report could be accepted, rejected, or referred back to committee. Six (6) were in favor of ending the oral report; three (3) were opposed; and three (3) abstained from voting.

3. Ivy asked to hear from the committee members.

4. Morvant, a committee member, said to the committee chair, upon reading the report, that he thought the tone of the document was poor. When asked what words he would change, Morvant indicated that it would be very difficult to change the tone of the document just by changing some words. Morvant then thanked the Provost for her written response to the document, dated February 19, 2003. He acknowledged that she didn’t have to respond, but did in a very thorough way, which obviously took a good deal of time. He also stated that the Special University Budget Committee, with all its subcommittees, was in the process of investigating much of what was included in the report. Morvant indicated that the work of the special committee had been as open as possible. He saw no problem with transparency. He was concerned about the timing and tone of the document and how those things would reflect on the Senate.
Bala asked if enough communication had gone on between the committee and Accounting. Zebda replied that many questions had been asked of Accounting.

Lewin, another committee member, said he saw the budget document on Tuesday prior to the Senate Meeting and that it was already being printed. But he also stated that there are a number of issues in the document to which the faculty should be alerted.

Middleton, Deputy Speaker who was chairing the meeting, said that the Executive Committee usually sees documents before they go into the Senate packets. But the Budget Report was late, so members did not see it during the meeting preceding the full Senate Meeting. Both Brendel and Middleton knew that it was coming, though.

It was pointed out that Friday, another committee member, was not present.

Ivy also stated that she was bothered by the tone of the report.

Crowley made a motion to refer the report back to committee and asked that the report be revised, in light of the Provost’s comments, with recommendations. The Senate needs motions, then we can have a more productive debate.

Wooster asked that we not throw the baby out with the bath water. He admitted that the tone of the document needs refining, but said there are serious issues raised by the report that should be considered.

Myer said that if the Senate is to be taken seriously, any information it puts out must be accurate.

Garcia thought that it was late for Morvant to be objecting to the document.

Cox thanked Zebda for the amount of time and effort that went into the report. She also mentioned the full professors discussions with the Provost of last summer. She thanked the Provost for the steps she has taken in making the budget process more transparent. Cox also felt that the Senate needed more time to study the document. She asked if comparative notes with other faculty salaries could be made to help us put things in perspective. She re-iterated that the faculty salary issue is a major concern.

Carol asked the committee to think about priorities. Save the head and heart first, then go after other things, the extremities.

Bala stated that factual content and normative comments need addressing.

A vote was taken on Crowley’s motion to refer the document back to committee. There were ten (10) in favor of doing so, one (1) opposed, and two (2) abstentions.

B. Committee on Committees
1. The Faculty Development Leave Policy, 12.99.01.C1, was discussed.
Drs. Blount and Wooster are two faculty members who did considerable work on the draft document. It was felt that leave should be based on merit on a university-wide level and that there should be a University Faculty Development Committee.

2. Section 4.3 of the draft policy, which deals with what information should be included in an application, has an addition—there should be statements from at least two professional peers.

3. Section 4.4 was added to the draft policy: A completed application, once endorsed by the College Dean, shall be submitted to the University Faculty Development Committee.

4. A vote was taken on the draft policy. There were eleven (11) votes in favor of the policy.

C. Awards/Bylaws/Election – Kownslar
1. Nominations have been received from two of the four colleges for the three Major university awards—those for teaching, research, and service. No nominations have been received from either the College of Education or the College of Science & Technology.

2. There are two more awards to be considered this year—the one for C.A.S.E. and the one for Regents’ Professor.

3. Faculty Senate elections will be held after Spring Break.

4. A vote was taken on the proposed revisions to the Senate Constitution. The vote was eleven (11) in favor of the proposed changes.

D. Academic Affairs – Bala
1. Catalog Revisions. It was noted that a vote on these revisions will have to take place at the next Senate Meeting.

2. Action items included a vote on the Oversight of Academic Scholarships (rule), 13.03.01.C2, Establishing Academic Scholarships (procedure), 13.03.01.C2.01, and Awarding Academic Scholarships (procedure), 13.03.01.C2.02. These items were accepted unanimously.

E. Faculty Affairs – Ivy
   The committee has received feedback from faculty and believes a middle ground can be reached in areas where differing opinions have been expressed.

2. Other committee business
   The committee has had to put aside other items on its agenda in order to deal with a workload grievance filed by two College of Education doctoral faculty against their dean. The grievance came to the committee because it involves a workload issue. The committee has spent a great deal of time interviewing involved parties and gathering information.
   Crowley asked if the grievances have to do with the new doctoral program in the College of Education. Ivy said “no,” not directly, but there are ramifications.

III. Provost’s Report
A. The Provost responded to the Budget Analysis Report. She talked about “anger,” “communication,” and “alliances.” She received the report at 3:00 p.m. on
Wednesday before the Senate Meeting. She sent out written comments, dated February 19, via e-mail to the Senate. She indicated that it would probably be the last time she would give her rationale on the matter.

The Provost asked what the intent of the document was? She noted that a document loaded with the kind of language in this report signaled a biased or slanted report. Unless one is careful about communication, one does, in fact, end up throwing the baby out with the bath water. The Provost stated that we are at a critical point. The Faculty Senate, and faculty, must decide what their relationship with the Provost is. She noted that we have a voting representative on the Provost’s Council.

She stated that words are important and tone is important. There is a difference between an individual making statements and a Faculty Senate Committee making a report. One becomes a “public person” when one becomes a senator. On the subject of alliances, she said that most of the time, one needs alliances. And it is important to think about how one treats people one needs as allies.

She suggested focusing on priority matters within the budget report. If the report underlines everything, nothing is important.

IV. Speaker’s Report/Discussion/Information Items – no report.

V. Other Business

Bala raised the issue of the plight of one of our colleagues, Jose Giraldo, who is being sent back to Colombia after 19 productive years in this country because the INS reversed a 1999 decision it had made. Now, a 2-year stay in his homeland is being required of Jose. He has hired a lawyer. The Provost has certified that the university would pick up Jose’s legal expenses if he could not do so.

A motion passed unanimously for the Faculty Senate to draft a letter in support of Jose. Denise will draft, with input from Bala.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m. **The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be Friday, March 14th.**

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Landry-Hyde, Secretary