Faculty Senate Meeting
Friday, February 17, 2006
Minutes


Absent: Hill, Oliver, Pohan, Wingfield

Guests: Canales, Cheneaux, King, Quiroz, Sefcik

I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m., and Ivy introduced our guests.

II. Approval of the Minutes of the January 20 meeting (attachment)
Ivy requested we table the approval of the minutes until next meeting.

III. Committee Reports
A. Executive Committee – Ivy & Guest, Anthony Quiroz
   1. Action Item: Center for Mexican American Studies (attachment)
      Quiroz explained to the Senate that there were a few changes from the
      previous proposal that Senate saw last month. The main change was a
      name change to the Center for Mexican American Research (CMAR).
      Some of Senate’s suggestions were incorporated in the revised
      proposal. A Senator asked if it was ethical to write a letter of support
      for the Center. Ivy explained that if Senate approved the proposal,
      there was nothing unethical about writing a letter of support. Quiroz
      added that he would be seeking letters of support from various faculty
      to send with the proposal to System and the Board of Regents. Carroll
      added that if faculty are or have done research in this area, it would be
      valuable to contribute citations of work to Quiroz, to demonstrate the
      broad range of topics and people involved. It was moved and seconded
      to approve the proposal for CMAR. The Senate approved the motion
      with one abstention.

   2. Discussion Item: Evaluation Cycle for Deans, Vice-Presidents, &
      President – The first suggestion retrieved from the Faculty Suggestion
      Box was a suggestion that Deans and other administrators be evaluated
      annually. Ivy explained the history of this issue, and the written
      explanation is on the Senate website. Ledbetter highly recommends a
      system of continuous improvement. Questions were raised about
      evaluating Associate or Assistant Deans. There was no information
      regarding Associate Deans being evaluated by anyone other than the
      Dean of the College. Winston noted that the questionnaire to evaluate
the Deans and Chairs are the same across all colleges. There has not been a questionnaire developed for evaluating Associate Deans. Ledbetter remarked that several things with high impact for the College of Nursing were in the hands of some of the Vice-Presidents. She asked about how to include faculty’s voice in these decisions. Ivy recommends asking the Faculty Affairs Committee to look at this issue. Winston will send Ivy the “academic cycle” policy and other information on administrative evaluation.

B. Academic Affairs Committee – Waheed

1. Discussion/Action Items: Catalog Copy (attachments) – The College of Nursing and College of Business undergraduate catalog copy was reviewed by the Committee, who found minor errors. It was moved and seconded to approve the proposed changes to catalog copy. Senate approved the copy. Included in the approved copy was a section on the College of Business providing a minor in Human Relations.

2. Action Item: Incapacitation of Death of a Student rule (attachment) – The Committee suggested 2 changes to the proposed rule: to insert “asked for a recommendation” instead of “consulted”, in Section 1.1; and adding “The procedure mentioned in 1.1 will be followed in these cases also,” after the “W” in Section 1.2. A friendly amendment was accepted by the Committee Chair to change the wording from “mentioned” to “stated”. It was moved and seconded to approve the changes to the proposed rule.

A discussion ensued regarding changing the process for approving catalog copy, as Senate requested that we only approve “substantive changes”. Winston explained that it was difficult to judge what was substantive, and the colleges were making that judgment as they send the copy to her. Waheed explained the process the Committee is using to meet the deadlines, and said that by the March meeting, the Senate should have all the catalog copy it needs to approve. The Committee is still struggling with the process and how to present it to Senate for approval. Winston will attend the next meeting of the Committee to work on the process.

C. Awards/Bylaws/Election Committee – Buck

1. Update on awards details and timelines – Buck explained that the Committee has been meeting via email. Nominations for awards for the University’s Teaching, Service, and Scholarly/Creative Awards for faculty had a Monday, Feb. 13 deadline for the colleges, and a Wednesday, Feb. 22 deadline for submission to Senate. The Committee will review the nominations.

2. Anticipating nominations/election of senators (attachment) – Senators received a handout of the schedule for nominations and
elections for Faculty Senate. The Committee will collect nominations the week of March 1-6, and elections will be held after Spring Break. Absentee voting will be held from March 22 – 24, with the official Election Day to be March 29. This will allow the new Senators to be seated at the April 28 meeting. Ivy pointed out to Senators the list of Senators completing 2 or 4 year terms. As Ledbetter will be leaving the University this spring, Ivy requests a recommendation from the Nursing Senators to appoint a replacement for Ledbetter for the March meeting only.

Garcia asked about having the Speaker be elected from Senators holding office the previous year. Ivy said that topic comes up later on the agenda.

D. Budget Committee – Friday

1. **Action Items: recommendations regarding salary increases**
   (attachment) – The Committee has requested CUPA data from 04/05; 05/06 data is not on the Institutional Effectiveness website. Using these comparative statistics will give us a better idea of where faculty salaries fall among other universities. It was moved and seconded to pass the action items presented by the Budget Committee. The three items passed unanimously.

E. Committee on Committees – Ledbetter

1. **Faculty Interest Survey** (attachment) – The Faculty Interest Survey was sent to all Faculty by paper and email. It is due back to the Faculty Senate office by March 6. Buck said that his constituents asked him about this survey. They fill it out, year after year, but never get a response (not appointed to any committees). Ivy explained the process, which has to do with which faculty members are rotating off committees. A committee may not have an opening for a person from A&H, but need a SciTech representative. Ivy said that every person who responded to the survey was put on a committee. A question was raised if Librarians received this survey. Ivy did not know if the process for appointing Librarians to committees was the same as for faculty. She would look into it. Sefcik recommended that people add a comment to further explain their situation, i.e., not served on University committee for 5 years. Ivy invited any faculty with issues about the process to contact her; she appreciates all comments on this process.

F. Faculty Affairs – Garcia

1. **Discussion Items: Changes to 4 University rules** (attachments)
   Garcia explained that he had given copies of the proposed rule changes on Promotion and Tenure to faculty who had served on this committee previously and were familiar with the document. Bala, Zebda, and
Tanzagaga gave the Committee further feedback with questions and minor changes. Other questions were more philosophical in nature. The handout details the sections in the proposed rule changes and the changes recommended by the Committee.

**a. Tenure**

1. In Section 2.4, the Committee inquired as to what some of the "variations from this rule" might be. Their recommendation is to delete this phrase.

2. In Section 4.2.3, the Committee recommends re-wording the phrase to "All faculty members who are granted tenure are expected to HAVE ACHIEVED competency in teaching, scholarship, and service at a level that is consistent with DEPARTMENTAL CRITERIA FOR FACULTY IN THE DISCIPLINE."

A question was asked about what is the number of papers/publications required to be awarded tenure. The Department and Colleges are to determine that. Waheed suggested a friendly amendment to say "Departmental/College criteria." This was accepted by the Committee. Talley mentioned that the University P&T Committee and higher levels of review do not use this criteria for judgement. Hartlaub expressed the Committee's view that "widely accepted" was too general, and they wanted to narrow the definition a bit. Ivy explained that we are only looking at the language of the rule, not how it plays out in reality. Another question was posed about the similarity of standards across Departments, Colleges and the University. Friday explained that this needs to be left to the departments and colleges, and that we should examine some of our aspiration institutions. Kirby explained that no University policy specifies what is in the departmental level. Carroll brought up the fact that scholarly/creative activity is used in one instance and that creative activity should be added whenever "scholarly" is used. He also asked if the Provost receives all the documentation from the Departmental P&T Committee as well as the Dean’s recommendation. He thought that only the Dean’s recommendation was brought forward.

3. In Section 4.4.1, the Committee recommends removing the statement regarding faculty members who are candidates for tenure not serving on the Promotion and Tenure committee. This is inconsistent with a previous statement.

4. Also in Section 4.4.1, the Committee recommends a change from "must" to "may" in the statement: "The committee must ask for assessment from all tenured colleagues in the programmatic department and/or area." Friday suggested using the term "should" instead of "may." Other Senators explained that if all tenured
colleagues in the programmatic area were consulted in SciTech, for example, it would be a lot of people.

5. In Section 4.6.3, the committee recommends removal of the statement, “The committee shall avoid consideration of irrelevant and extraneous information.” Thomas suggested this information should go to the tenure candidates who are preparing their portfolio. Carroll suggested adding, “Only information on activities relating to professional expertise.”

6. Under the Appeals Procedure, the Committee recommends the rule read, “On request, the faculty member who is not recommended for tenure will be provided an opportunity to meet with the College and/or Departmental P & T committee, and/or the College Dean.” Carroll wondered why the whole committee would be helpful, as opposed to the Dean or Chair. Others responded that anyone who didn’t have a positive relationship with the Dean/Chair might find that uncomfortable or intimidating.

Ivy then commented that she and Kirby went over this document and had some suggestions for the Committee to consider. Kirby explained that in the tenure timeline, there is no provision to alter the timeline. System policy was changed last year; he suggested we change our policy to be able to stop the tenure clock. A draft document was given to Ivy; she will forward to the Committee.

In 3.2, the section about notification and certification by the Dean, Ivy said that if a faculty member is not certified ready for tenure by the Dean, the appeal goes straight to the Provost. After some discussion, the language should be clarified to read if the Dean denies certification or fails to certify. This will be forwarded to the Committee as well.

Faculty Affairs will clarify Section 3.2 in Committee meetings; Senate will revisit this issue.

Ivy also questioned if packets go all the way to the President. Now, if the Dean or Provost says no, the process stops. One approach could be that everything that clears the College P&T Committee goes to the President. Carroll reiterated his question: what documentation is forwarded in the process? He understands that the Provost sees only the Dean’s recommendation and nothing else. Ivy will contact Killebrew to see how the process works. This issue will also go to the Faculty Affairs Committee. Newly added language in 4.6.1 explains that all materials are sent to the Provost.
Friday mentioned that the Chancellor of the System thought that work or applied experience should be counted in tenure/promotion decisions, but a former Senator was unable to go up for Promotion due to his sabbatical. 4.3.1 might be a good place to include that information. Thomas suggested a general mechanism for situations like this, to stop the clock or keep it running.

b. Evaluation & Promotion of Full-Time Faculty Members
1. In Section 3.2.4, Hartlaub took over the discussion for the Committee. They would like to recommend that the language suggest that an annual review may or may not be required by the faculty member’s respective unit. It may have relevance to merit increases. Cook suggested substituting “when” for “if” in the final sentence of this section.

2. In Section 3.4.2, the Committee recommended rewording the statement to: “Members should not serve simultaneously on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee and Departmental or College Promotion and Tenure Committees.”

3. In Section 3.4.3, the Committee recommends removal of the statement: “The committee shall avoid consideration of irrelevant and extraneous information.”

c. Academic Rank Descriptors
1. In Section 2.4 – Scholarship, the Committee recommends changing the statement to: “Begin to establish an agenda in scholarly or creative activity beyond instructional assignments.”

2. In Section 3.4 – Scholarship, the Committee recommends changing to “Continues an agenda of inquiry….” Waheed stated no numbers should be prescribed at the University level. Ivy added that in Section 3.2.1 (p.58 of the Senate packet), we need to use the same language that is used in the tenure section in the promotion section (failure to certify). She also recommends changing tenure-line to tenure-track in all instances. On page 63, she recommends adding “creative activity” to “scholarship.” On page 64, item 2, Experience, Ivy would like to add, “at least 5 years.”

At this point the Senate moved to the Interim Provost’s report due to time constraints.

IV. Interim Provost’s Report
A. Regarding last month’s discussion on Dr. Maroney’s request to rotate off as the Faculty Athletic Representative, he has been asked to stay on through until
Fall Semester. At that time, a new Provost will have been hired, and that person will make the appointment. According to Ivy, the process of appointing a new representative would not go forward until the Fall semester anyway, but she will forward names of interested faculty to Kirby and Maroney.

B. The President would like to hold a “State of the University” address on Reading Day, May 3. He asked the Provost to see if this day was a reasonable day for faculty to attend this address. Senators explained that faculty is heavily involved in grading at this time, and might be difficult for faculty to attend. There was a mixed response, so it was put to a vote. Eleven were okay with the address on Reading Day; 2 were opposed; 3 abstained.

C. The President will be presenting his programmatic budget review on March 6 to the Chancellor and on March 27 to the Board of Regents. He will be highlighting the University’s opportunities, successes and challenges. Kirby remarked that we have come a long way in the 14 years we have been a 4-year institution.

Kirby asked Dr. Chenaux, Vice-President for Student Affairs, to talk about the upcoming student referendum. Chenaux reported that the President held a hearing with students about tuition and revenue for next year. He proposed a $15 per credit hour increase, which brings tuition to $81 per credit hour. Out of that $15 increase will come a 3% merit raise for faculty and staff (cost = $1 million). $3 of the $15 increase will go to a $600,000 shortfall in energy costs. Other issues include unfunded state mandates which will cost about $200,000, and the funding of summer school and adjunct pay. An alternative is to increase student fees, but not increase tuition. The proposal includes a $2 energy fee, which can go down or be eliminated if energy costs are reduced; a $4 increase in the athletic fee, which will fund the athletic program almost completely; and a third fee of designated tuition increase of $8/credit hour. They are attempting to reduce the fee proposal to $13 or less. The students will vote on this March 1-2. If students don’t vote for the fee increase, then tuition will go up $15/credit hour.

The Senate resumed discussion of the proposed Promotion and Tenure rules.

Hartlaub clarified that on p. 45, Section 3.4, the Assistant Professor “begins to” create an agenda, and the Associate Professor “continues” the agenda.

d. Descriptions of Teaching, Scholarship and Service

1. In Section 2, Teaching/Learning, the Committee recommends changing the wording to “which assures that teaching and learning expected outcomes are achieved.” A suggestion was made that “expected” be deleted from “expected outcomes.” Thomas strenuously objected to being held responsible for student learning.
2. In Section 3.2, the Committee recommends adding “and engagement” after “Teaching, scholarship of application.” This provides consistent language in the section.

Melrose asked if it is possible to request that an objectionable member of one’s college level P&T committee be removed. Carroll noted that the committee is elected by peers. People might asked to be recused from a committee, depending on the circumstances. Garcia asked if we could not have a “champion” to assist the tenure-seeking person through the process. Sefcik noted that sometimes, there are not too many tenured professors in a given unit.

Garcia asked for comments. He asked that Ivy reassign other items that may come to Faculty Affairs to another committee, as they will be very busy with this document. Yellen asked if the document for Clinical Faculty is going to be reviewed. Winston said that that document has not completed the process to go to Faculty Senate. She said it is coming.

IV. Speaker’s Report

A. End-of-semester course evaluations – There is some discussion across campus about the deadlines for completing course evaluations. The Testing Center is requesting time to complete the processing. Problems with the time frame include doing the evaluation during Finals week, or earlier in the semester, when you may only be evaluating 9 weeks instead of 16. Waheed asked about evaluations during Maymester or Summer School. Ivy will find out how those evaluations are handled.

B. New Faculty Orientation sessions – feedback from constituents – Ivy will compile responses from new faculty. Please ask them to send her suggestions or comments regarding their perceptions of the value of the Orientation sessions.

C. First suggestion in suggestion box – response on website

D. Harper’s response to anonymous questions from 04-05 (attachment) – Harper addressed 6 questions from last spring. Ivy had questions about the response to question #6 – about College Handbooks, and that they could be re-written without faculty vote. This happened in the College of Education, policies changed, and it may have been done with little faculty input. Thomas explained that it is good to allow people input, but wages, hours and working conditions are the administration’s purview and don’t have to be negotiated. Carroll was concerned about question #5, hiring faculty without terminal degrees. He said it may have been meant to allow for clinical faculty, but in some instances, an instructor has been forced on an area and kept on for years. There is no allowance for peer review in hiring or retention. Ivy will draft a resolution on #6; Carroll will draft a resolution on #5.

E. Linda Cook represented Senate at interviews with bookstore companies.

F. Nominations/Election of Senate Officers

1. Discussion Item: Bylaws change regarding eligibility to run for Speaker – Ivy said it would be difficult to have a Speaker who “came in
without the context of being a Senator." It would be hard on the past Speaker to bring someone up to speed if they hadn’t ever served on Senate. Waheed said this is a transition time for the University, with no Provost, and a new President. We need an experienced Speaker. Yellen proposed we do a Bylaws change, but did not think it could be done in time for this year’s election. We could put it for discussion at the March meeting and vote in April. We could put it into effect for this year. Friday expressed concern that a Bylaws change wasn’t needed, that the Senate should be trusted to elect an experienced Speaker. He also noted that a Speaker who was not a member of the Senate could continue to be elected Speaker, year after year.

V. Other Business/Announcements/Adjournment
There was no other business or announcements. The Senate was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sally Beckley, Secretary