

Faculty Senate Minutes
October 16, 2009

Attendance: Anderson, Bantell, Benibo, Bhattacharya, Changchit, Davis, Etheridge, Garrett, Katangur, Katz, Keys, Loveland, Lucero, Mahdy, Mehrubeoglu, Moury, Paciotti, Pfeifer, Rogers, Sefcik

Ex Officio: Babbili, Billeaux, Nelsen, Silliman

Guests: Richard Bell, Swint Friday, Tom Fitzpatrick

1. Speaker Lucero called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM.
2. Minutes of the September 18, 2009 Senate meeting were approved as corrected (Benibo moved to accept, Mahdy seconded).
3. Speaker's Report
 - 3.1. Report from Provost's Council – talked about the MGT report. MGT is a needs assessment to provide the groundwork for the development of new programs. Nelsen noted that some recommendations are very broad while others are specific and include anticipated numbers of jobs. Other chapters analyze what other universities are offering, community college offerings, and high school projections. The entire report is available on the President's Web page (Assessment Needs Survey by MGT America).
 - 3.2. TCFS – Katz and Lucero will attend the conference next Friday. Lucero asked senators to email any questions or issues they would like to have discussed at the meeting.
 - 3.3. Senate packet pick-up – there is still a problem getting the senate packets to senators in a timely manner. Lucero asked that if any senators would prefer to pick up their packets at the senate office to please let Christine know so she can hold them for pick up instead of mailing them.
4. Intercollegiate Athletics – Swint Friday and Timothy Fitzpatrick
 - 4.1. Swint Friday, Faculty Athletic Director, introduced himself as one of the points of contact for faculty with questions or concerns about the athletic program.
 - 4.2. Friday introduced Timothy Fitzpatrick, the new Athletic director and provided a brief biography.
 - 4.3. Fitzpatrick briefly discussed his background and personal philosophies. He then elaborated on his four priorities for athletics: (1) follow the rules, (2) academic achievement, (3) athletic excellence, and (4) integration with the rest of the university community (transparency).

- 4.3.1. Four priorities given to coaches: (1) recruit well (balance academic and athletic potential), (2) be good instructors/teachers, (3) lead from the front (set a positive example), and (4) attain competitive success.
 - 4.3.2. A senator commented that several of her student athletes had problems in her classes due to the schedule of practices and games and asked if the AD was planning to address scheduling of games to address these problems. Fitzpatrick noted that about 2/3 of the schedule is not within our control. Nelsen noted that traveling student have been supplied with aircards to provide Internet access while they are on the road. He also noted the students who have been identified as having problems are receiving one-on-one assistance. He also noted that 90 of our student athletes made the dean's honor roll last term. Friday related a story about a student athlete who was suspended for one game after a professor reported a problem with the student texting in class.
 - 4.3.3. A senator commented that she had seen an obvious change in students reported as "have a concern". She asked if they could add a new choice "borderline" to the choices a professor can select when providing progress reports for athletes.
5. Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center – Richard Bell (director) provided an overview of the center. He briefly outlined the current and future staffing plans for the institution. Permanent center location funded by donation of \$5.5 million and the city provided another \$1.5 million in funds for development. He reported that the center currently has seven permanent clients.
 - 5.1. Nelsen noted that we are hoping the faculty will participate in consulting projects with the businesses served by the center. Bell added that in addition to consulting opportunities, 15 to 20 percent of the clients are going to be faculty who want to commercialize their research.
 - 5.1.1. Senator asked about the cost to clients. Bell noted that the state provided funding. Price to client depends on their ability to pay and the job-creation potential of their idea. Clients remain in the program three years (five for FDA-related products).
 - 5.1.2. Please email Richard.bell@tamucc.edu if you have any questions or suggestions.
6. Retiree Benefits – Robert Nelsen reported that faculty/staff access to library, wellness center and other university resources are cut off when faculty retires until/unless they receive emeritus status. The President and Provost are open to changing this procedure. He provided a list of the existing retiree benefits and asked for volunteers from the senate to work with the staff council to create a proposal to improve and extend benefits available to retired faculty/staff.
 - 6.1. Lucero reported that Shupala (library director) is responsive to this suggestion. The problem is that the licenses for most of the databases don't allow retired faculty to access them from home. She will need to renegotiate with each provider as the licenses come up for renewal. Nelsen added that some will be cost prohibitive.
 - 6.2. Lucero also reported that she will be meeting with J. Nelsen in a couple of weeks to discuss these issues including email access and security issues related to retirees.

7. Bank Contract – Elizabeth Sefcik – reported that the RFP proposals have been received and that a decision hasn't been included. She noted that free accounts for faculty and staff were included in the RFP. Issue should be settled this month and Sefcik will report then.

8. Committees

8.1. Academic Affairs Committee – Nikki Changchit & Elizabeth Sefcik – still working on quality of incoming students. Currently gathering data on SAT, incoming GPA and scholarship information. Beginning to explore methods to improve quality of students and assist existing students become better prepared. Sefcik added that the committee would appreciate any feedback about student quality issues.

8.2. ABE Committee – Bilaye Benibo – committee meeting next week to review nominees for Piper Professor award. Committee will discuss and prioritize other charges at that meeting. He noted that the committee would like to see more applications for these awards and asked senators to encourage their colleagues to nominate themselves or others.

8.3. Budget Committee- Michael Moody – Etheridge reporting. Briefly reviewed committee charges. The committee has created a plan to address several issues and collect more data related to compression. One issue is tuition reimbursement for families of faculty. State law allows such benefits only for nursing faculty. He also noted that the committee is trying to obtain a copy of the last salary compression report. Babbili reported that he had not seen the report yet.

8.4. Committee on Committees – Nancy Rogers – committee has met once since the last senate meeting. We prioritized the charges and assigned tasks to each committee to

8.5. Faculty Affairs Committee – Mark Pfeifer – see handout

8.5.1. Nomination of Dr Mead for emeritus status – Committee approved the request.

8.5.2. Committee has prepared a report about turnitin.com after reviewing Moody's report to the senate submitted last spring. Committee recommendations:

8.5.2.1. Used for two purposes: tool for detecting plagiarism, and self-evaluation tool for students to review their own papers for scholarly referencing.

8.5.2.2. Originality reports need to be assessed with an educated and discerning eye and that the originality index should not be used as the sole measure of plagiarism.

8.5.2.3. Students should be given the option to submit their work.

8.5.2.4. A senator expressed concerns about the first recommendation. Specifically, she noted that faculty may have been looking for a stronger statement related to recent decisions to "require" its use for theses or dissertations.

8.5.2.5. Another senator suggested that the recommendations were written more as comments on the use of turnitin rather than specific recommendations.

8.5.2.6. Lucero recommended sending the report back to the committee. Bantell requested assistance with wording to clearly distinguish rationale from recommendations.

9. Other issues –

9.1. Benibo noted that the bylaws don't say anything about the procedure for ABE committee members applying for awards. Two options are to have the member recuse themselves from voting on the award...the other is to prohibit ABE members from applying. A senator noted that the first might appear to be unethical. Lucero asked senators to comment in turn and the consensus was that committee members should not be allowed to apply for any awards .

9.2. Another senator asked if it was possible for parents to have access to midterm grades. Are parents aware that midterm grades are now being given to students. Nelsen noted that the midterm grading policy needs to appear in catalog.

9.2.1. Another senator asked if we had the data we requested about outcomes yet.

Babbili noted that the information was being collected. Billeaux noted that there is evidence of process...the grades are being used to notify students but that the data was still being collected...may take a few semesters to compile enough data and it will be difficult to isolate impact of midterm grading from other retention efforts.

9.2.1.1. Babbili noted that midterm grading is an expectation at many other institutions.

10. Provost Comments

10.1. Billeaux – requested faculty notify student affairs when students report missing class due to H1N1 virus. Reported that cases are gradually increasing each week and concern remains high. A nursing faculty member reported that testing for H1N1 is no longer happening because of the high false negative rate and because it doesn't improve treatment.

10.1.1. Handout on Exec. Summary on first year program (QEP). This version is simplified.

10.2. Nelsen – SACS update. Please look at the "Blue Memo" reports on SACS available on the SACS web site (SACS.tamucc.edu). We will probably be "hit" on a dozen or so areas including faculty credentialing. We should have the report back in December and then we will have the ability to respond prior to site visit in March.

10.2.1. HB 2504 -- we are looking at a piece of software called "digital measures" that allows standardization of faculty CV and editing of standard syllabi. Deans will be able to run a report that summarizes individual faculty data and syllabi information. We still haven't decided where this information will be located. Law requires that the information be no more than three clicks deep...still working on that. Other difficulty is course evaluations. Senate needs to get involved quickly. Bill does not say whether they put up the entire evaluation, parts of the evaluation or some standardized set of questions. We need to have a plan. Digital Measures has online course evaluation process (will provide online demo of system later).

Coordinating board needs to set a deadline...we are hoping for next fall but could be earlier.

10.3. Babbili –

10.3.1. J. Nelsen and Funk-Baxter will do a brief “Q&A” on HEF funding at the next meeting.

10.3.2. Two external audits on two colleges. Reports have been given to Provost and to CFO. Common issues is that growth in resources has not kept pace with enrollment increases and that we are still finding SSNs in file cabinets.

10.3.3. Inconsistent workload issues, supplemental pay issues, and others. Created a task force with senate representative to review workload issues. Knull will chair. Will be launched soon...recommendation will be due in April. Faculty will have ample time for feedback.

10.3.4. Distance education task force has been formed. Nelsen is chairing. Charged with reviewing current status and identifying potential areas for expansion of opportunities.

10.3.5. Summer enrollment task force has been formed. Has already met with the Dean of Education and formulated some plans.

10.3.6. Study Group on class distribution will be formed to study class time distribution. Most classes scheduled 11 to 2:30; creates problems for students and for classroom scheduling. Study group is looking for solutions. Will examine across departments to see if some are dominating times.

10.3.7. Piper award call has gone out...only one nomination. Babbili noted that his office needs to be proactive in encouraging more competition for such awards. He would like to see more participation in external award programs.

10.3.8. Space allocation is a major issue. Nursing and Business buildings should free up some space in the next few years. There will be a new process for space allocation that includes a form (newly approved by President’s Council).

10.3.9. Billeaux’s office is working on developing centralized advising for first year program. Will involve faculty advisors from each college to staff advising center.

11. Speaker Lucero adjourned the meeting at 4:15. Rogers moved, Benibo seconds.

Respectfully submitted, Karen A. Loveland, Senate Secretary.