

Faculty Senate Meeting
Sept. 20, 2013
OCNR 363

Present: Senators Crane, Spencer, Larkin, Baldwin, Chambers, Griffith, Anderson, Araiza, Brown, Engelhardt, Kar, Klaus, Concannon, Wines, Zimmer, Bowden, Keys, Moreno

Ex Officio: Provost Markwood, Vice-Provost Meyer, Assoc. Associate VP Billeaux, Tiffany Hearne (Academic Affairs Office), Lionel Cassin (Information Technology)

Absent: Senators Friday, Giraldo, Miller, Tejada-Delgado

- 1) Call to order – 2:01 pm
- 2) Klaus moved to approve agenda, Griffith seconded. Passed unanimously.
- 3) Ex Officio members were introduced
- 4) Speaker's report:
 - a) New Faculty Orientation: Approximately 47 new faculty attended. Feedback was very favorable. A post-orientation meeting with Debra Cortinas (HR director) will be held soon to help prepare for next year.
 - b) First Year Islander Convocation: Record number and percentage of student attendees this year. Pre-convocation activities appeared to have been helpful for this level of attendance.
 - c) Dinner for New Faculty: Record number of faculty this year (67) with 15 filling new lines.
 - d) Survey regarding local tuition remission for dependents update: survey has ended. Data analysis to begin soon.
 - e) Study of last year's compensation model: survey has been sent out again to faculty and will end soon.
 - f) News regarding this year's compensation increases: Provost Markwood reports no new information but is hopeful there will be something. Enrollment figures are positive in this regard.
- 5) Deputy Speaker report on Academic Calendar:
 - a) Larkin reported on proposed changes to Academic Calendar, beginning Fall 2014. Major proposed changes include:
 - i) Returning start date of fall semester to traditional last Wednesday in August
 - ii) Splitting Janmester into two, one-week segments. The first week would occur immediately after the end of fall finals and end shortly before Christmas. The second week would begin shortly after the New Year.

(1) Considerable discussion ensued. Meyer stated that Janmester was split to accommodate earlier Spring semester start dates beginning 2015. Chambers asked if teaching faculty had been consulted regarding the odd scheduling. Meyer/Markwood replied they had not outside of the Academic Calendar Committee. Spencer noted that only one faculty member sits on this committee. Ariaza questioned whether such a semester structure is conducive to college-level instruction. Chambers, Klaus and Larkin replied that the Senates' ad hoc Janmester Committee (2012-13 Senate) reviewed this concern and found that some courses can be appropriate for this format, but certainly not all. Moreno raised concern that Janmester format is not optimal, and that some faculty may feel pressured to teach during this time because of financial considerations, perhaps unduly lending it credibility. Chambers raised the issue of compensation for teaching Janmester (currently adjunct rate). She advocated 1/12 (summer rate) pay, pointing out that there is pent-up demand for Janmester instruction, but that low pay and now odd scheduling may dissuade faculty from participating. Spencer made a recommendation that a faculty forum be held regarding the calendar and related Janmester issues. Griffith suggested issue be referred to Academic Affairs, with intent of forming an ad hoc committee to further address the issue.

6) Committee Reports

- a) Academic Affairs Committee (AAC). Griffith reported on the status of members of AAC being assigned to appropriate university committees and councils that deal primarily with curricula: Undergraduate Council, Graduate Council, Core Curriculum Committee, Honors Council.
- b) Awards, Bylaws & Elections (ABE) Committee. Baldwin distributed draft Faculty Awards Calendar for 2013-14. The list includes new awards for Teaching Innovation and Creative Activity. ABE is in process of exploring two-tier track for teaching, service, and creative activity/scholarship awards; one for tenure-track faculty and one for non-tenure-track faculty. Senate endorsed this proposal. Baldwin also requested that senators or non-senate faculty to join an ad hoc committee to help create definitions for the new award categories, as current committee's expertise does not extend to all colleges. ABE is also in process of exploring the possibility of the involvement of the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) taking over marketing of awards and collection of applications, though evaluation would still reside with the Senate.
- c) Budget Analysis Committee. Chambers reported that the committee had requested and received a copy of the University's budget for fiscal year 2014. It appears sound. The budget for faculty salaries is up approximately 5%, though this also includes salaries for new faculty lines. The non-faculty salary total appears similar to last year's amount. General discussion ensued regarding the extent of university outsourcing of operations such as food

services, bookstore, grounds, custodial and perhaps future plans for IT and some administrative functions. This is a system, not a university, initiative. Provost Markwood explained this is a primary system strategy for cutting costs.

Chambers also expressed gratitude for recent faculty salary adjustments, noting that minimum faculty pay for those whose work was deemed satisfactory is now 81.8% of the median value for our peer institutions. She expressed the committee's recommendation to continue efforts to bring faculty even closer to the median. Chambers also noted that University received a one-time reimbursement of \$803,000 from the state for expenses related to Hazelwood exemptions. The committee recommends that funds go towards summer school scholarships, to help make up for reduced Pell grants. The provost stated that approximately half will be dedicated to summer school and half to regular terms. Griffith asked if some of these funds would be available to graduate students. The provost affirmed that they would.

- d) Committee on Committees (COC). Crane reported that the committee is working on getting university committee slots filled. One new committee will be the *Student Endowment Scholarship* committee, which is responsible for distributing funds generated from a student-approved fee. The fund now has substantial enough resources to begin making awards. The COC is also evaluating the list of current university committees. Vice Provost Meyer reported that some of these were no longer functioning and could be eliminated.
- e) Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC). Bowden reported that applications for emeritus status by two recently retired faculty members, Dr. Wes Tunnel (COSE) and Dr. David McKee (COSE) had been approved and will be forwarded to the provost's office for consideration. FAC is also currently working on (i) Professional Librarian status to align our documents with system policy, (ii) academic freedom issues related to online instruction, (iii) a shared governance document, and (iv) post-tenure review rules.

7) New Business.

- a) Dave Billeaux (VP Academic Affairs) distributed a document on High Impact Educational Practices (HIP), and discussed desire for university to incorporate more of these into the curriculum, including a possible requirement that students obtain at least 4 before they graduate. All students who begin their careers at TAMUCC already receive two: First Year Seminar and Learning Communities. Chambers asked how students would satisfy additional requirements. Billeaux replied that it could be done through a variety of means, including courses that have certified HIP components. Griffith asked if such practices would/could be incorporated at the graduate level. Billeaux replied that this was a possibility. Bowden asked about impact

on undergraduate transfer students. Billeaux replied they would not be held to the same requirements.

8) Provost's comments. The provost distributed updates and presentation notes regarding Academic Affairs priorities for 2013-14, including:

- (1) Increasing the number of new faculty lines
- (2) Increasing stipends for graduate assistants
- (3) Increasing the number of student workers and critical staff, especially those for graduate office, E-military program, and the writing center.
- (4) Distributing a faculty salary pool for raises if enrollment numbers are sufficient (numbers look good at this point)
- (5) Preparation for the SACS 5-year report
- (6) Filling critical vacancies: Director of Assessment, Library Director, Director of Academic Policy and Administration (Cely Smart replacement), Retention Coordinator
- (7) LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise)
- (8) Prior Learning Assessment – providing students with an opportunity to earn credit for non-collegiate learning experiences (Note: credit for learning, not experience)
- (9) Continue updating rules and procedures
- (10) Finalizing College Promotion and Tenure criteria
- (11) Initiating a Department Chair Development Program
- (12) Maximizing Funding Formula income
- (13) Studying space utilization and deciding on action to improve it
- (14) Finalizing the Academic Plan as part of university planning process
- (15) Collecting Emerging research metrics
- (16) Expanding discipline-related student organizations
- (17) Expanding Continuity of Learning (Hurricane closure) plans
- (18) Textbook ordering and costs – aligning with federal law
- (19) Expanding the Global Islanders program
- (20) Updating EmpowerU metrics
- (21) Preparing for the TAMUS administrative audit and system changes
- (22) Expanding and improving upon CFE programs (new faculty seminars, book clubs, travel grants, peer review programs)
- (23) Research, Commercialization and Outreach (panel grants, research development training)

- (24) Office of Distance Education (pedagogical workshops, peer review stipends)
- (25) The provost responded to several questions from Senators:
- (a) Question: What ownership rights to faculty have of lectures that are recorded by the University, under continuity of learning plan (ECHO 360, etc.)? Provost: Unsure. Will get answer from system legal.
- 9) Motion was made by Speaker Spencer to extend meeting to 4:30 pm. Larkin seconded. Motion passed.
- (b) Comment: Faculty would like more input regarding management of particular administrative units. There's been a history of incompetence and unresponsiveness with certain ones.
 - (c) Comment: With closure of Turtle lot, there is a need for additional handicapped spaces near Islander Hall.
 - (d) Question: Should 3rd year review policy be interpreted as to exclude deans and department chairs from serving on the department's 3rd year review committee? Provost: This is the intent. Will develop a provost's interpretation document.
 - (e) Question: Does 3rd year review process allow for termination of faculty member if report is unsatisfactory? Provost: Yes, such language was inserted by system attorneys. It is system policy.
- 10) May 3 meeting minutes were reviewed and corrections were made regarding attendees; Zimmer moved approval as amended, Griffith seconded. Motion passed.
- 11) August 29 Faculty Senate Retreat minutes were reviewed and approved, after corrections made regarding attendees; Bowden moved approval as amended, Zimmer seconded. Motion passed.
- 12) Meeting was adjourned at 4:23 pm

Respectfully submitted

Patrick Larkin (Deputy Speaker)