

## **TCU FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**October 7, 2010**

**3:30-5:00**

**The Chambers, The Brown Lupton University Union, Room 3004**

### **Senators Present**

Bob Akin, Ron Anderson, Onofrio Annunziata, Julie Baker, Arnie Barkman, David Bedford, Martin Blessinger, Jon Burgess, Tony Burgess, Art Busbey, Jodi Campbell, Jesus Castro-Balbi, Richard Estes, Billy Farmer, Greg Friedman, Sarah Fuentes, Misha Galaganov, Diane Hawley, Cara Jacocks, Ted Legatski, Carrie Leverenz, Suzy Lockwood, Steve Mann, Dianna McFarland, Ed McNertney, Till Meyn, Daren Middleton, Artemis Moon, Joddy Murray, Sheri Neill, Hylida Nugent, Julie O'Neil, Jan Quesada, Ranga Ramasesh, David Sandell, Claire Sanders, Michael Sawey, Marie-L. Schein, Paul Schrodtt, Melissa Sherrod, Alan Shorter, Michael Skinner, Loren Spice, Gregory Stephens, Kay Stevens, David Vanderwerken, Dan Williams, Scott Williams.

### **Senators Excused**

Chip Burns, Rebecca Dority, Lynn Flahive, Linda Moore.

### **Senators Absent**

Jason Clark-Miller, Steve Palko, Magnus Rittby, Chris Sawyer, Gloria Solomon.

#### **I. Call to Order and Welcome Guests**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM.

Guests included Chancellor Victor Boschini, Provost Nowell Donovan, Catherine Wehlburg, Director of the Office for Assessment and Quality Enhancement, and Cathy Coghlan, Director of Institutional Research.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes**

The September 2 Faculty Senate minutes were approved as submitted.

#### **III. Open Issues**

The Open Issues Forum was devoted to the discussion of the eSpots Evaluations.

#### **IV. New Business**

- A. Ken Morgan, Director of the School of Geology, Energy and The Environment & TCU Energy Institute.

Dr. Morgan showcased the very exciting programs housed in the School of Geology, Energy and the Environment and the TCU Energy Institute. In his presentation, Dr. Morgan underlined that the "cooperative spirit" that characterizes TCU and the long-time collaboration of all the faculty in the various energy and technology departments have been instrumental in bringing to fruition the ideal of the new school and the Institute. Dr. Morgan recognized the work of Dr. Art Busbey

and Dr. Nowell Donovan as key to the reputation and wonderful history of the Geology program.

Dr. Morgan unveiled the cutting edge research that is fueling the work of faculty and students alike. The one-of-a-kind *Oscar E. Monning Meteorite Gallery* offers a collection of nearly 1500 meteorites. The *Institute for Environmental Studies* has received a \$3 million wind grant, the largest ever offered, to study the impact of wind turbines on the environment, particularly its devastating impact on bird migratory paths. The *Energy Institute* and its new Reservoirs Core lab offers state-of-the-art research facilities and storage capabilities to enable students and faculty to study resources and determine which ones we should be using. The *Center for GIS and Remote Sensing*, established in 1981, is the leader in geographic mapping and analysis in search of energy and environmental solutions. The *Environmental Lab* focuses on water and soil research and is currently engaged in a study of mercury contamination. The *Resource Management Program* concentrates on courses that teach students how to map and help manage the land, air, and water resources in the US at a time when indicators point out that the country is about to “go domestic” in energy. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Morgan shared that the exciting research and direction in the study of energy and technology at TCU has gained the interest and support of several universities in the region, including the University of Oklahoma, the University of Texas, and SMU as well as more than sixty major corporations that are now supporting the various research projects at TCU. More and more students are attracted to the programs, including more than three hundred minors who represent all schools and colleges at TCU.

TCU has created the first Energy Academy for 9<sup>th</sup> graders at Southwest High School. Other innovations visible on campus include the natural gas vehicle that navigates across the campus, the focus on hydrogen energy, and the development of an electric car that might soon race at the Texas Motor Speedway.

Dr. Morgan attributes the enormous success of the study of energy and technology to the fact that “TCU lets you nurture an idea.”

#### B. Mr. Ray Brown, Dean of Admissions

Dean Brown came to Senate, bearing gifts. First, he offered us the very exciting, and in the dean’s estimation, quite “edgy” *View Book*, a pictorial story of TCU that aims at getting the attention of our prospective students and driving them to the website. The second gift was the Year End Demographic Report, a very important publication that provides an academic perspective of TCU.

Dean Brown shared key statistics regarding our pool of applicants and enrollment figures. In 2010, 14, 079 prospective students applied to TCU, an increase over the 11,900 who applied in 2009. This 20% increase in the number of applicants was mirrored by an increase in the number of students who were granted admission. This year, 7400 students were admitted, a 5.5 to 6% increase over 2009.

The number of freshmen admitted this year equaled that of 2009 and topped at 1821.

Standardized test scores presented by applicants showed the highest increase in TCU’s history with SAT scores of 1760 and ACT scores of 27.06, a new high.

With a 52% admit rate, reflecting the number of offered admissions, and consistently rising tests scores, TCU is positioned to be elevated nationally to the ranks of schools known for their selectivity.

Finally, Mr. Brown reported that more students are coming to TCU from California. In 2008, 98 students came from California whereas 148 were enrolled this year. He attributed this increase to two factors: 1) TCU has hired an area representative in California who is doing a great job recruiting, and 2) California is still experiencing an economic downturn and a lingering angst about the economic future of the state. California is the number 2 state for recruitment.

Dean Brown regretted that this very good report still shows a low rate of admission of non-Caucasian students. Only 326 were enrolled in 2010, thirty-one fewer than in 2009. Mr. Brown stressed that TCU is working to up the trajectory in years to come. Only 30% of the students admitted to TCU are non-Caucasian, primarily because most non-Caucasian applicants fail to complete their applications. Dean Brown also remarked that TCU does not yet provide great financial aid to those students who need a lot of help, although 70% of students receive some type of aid. However, he expressed his enthusiasm about Chancellor Boschini's pledge to raise \$100 million in scholarships and hopes to see the matriculation ratio of non-Caucasian students increase in the future.

After Dean Brown's presentation, a discussion followed that brought to light additional statistics and observations. We learned that the historical jump in the number of admissions in 2009 reflected the school's aggressive recruiting campaign to offset the potential impact of the recession. The projection of applications received so far in 2010 shows a 60% increase over 2009 with 2685 applicants to date. Finally, Dean Brown informed the Senate that a small proportion of children of faculty and staff attend TCU but that 20% of the freshman class consists of legacy students.

In his closing remarks, Dean Brown announced that he will host the December Faculty Senate meeting in the new Mary Wright Admission Center. He presented a few slides of the new facilities and invited us to stop by for a visit. (A Power Point presentation that features eighteen different views of the Center during construction and after completion is available upon request.)

#### C. Shari Barnes, TCU Employee Relations

Shari Barnes presented an overview of the process in place that offers faculty and staff the right to express a grievance and seek a resolution. Once a complaint is filed, mediation begins and a panel of 12 to 15 peer reviewers work to bring the issue to a resolution. At the end of this process, the reviewers submit their recommendation to the chancellor.

Ms. Barnes underlined the present critical need of peer reviewers and invited the senators to consider serving. Provost Donovan supported Ms. Barnes' call for peer reviewers and interjected that the conflict resolution process in place at TCU is very important and works very well.

#### D. Senate Committees Update

a) Alan Shorter: Tenure, Promotion, and Grievance (TPG)

Alan Shorter reported that TPG has met once with the Senate liaison and twice with Provost Donovan. The committee continues to monitor the implementation of the promotion of Professors of Professional and Clinical Practice as well as Instructors, paying particular attention to the varying practices of different departments. In addition, the committee is investigating the role of service in the process of evaluation, promotion and tenure and working to define what service is.

b) Ted Legatski: Student Relations (SRC)

Ted Legatski reported that his committee met last month with officers of the Student Government Association (SGA) to discuss the Student Honor Code. SRC is working in close collaboration with Greg Friedman and the Academic Excellence Committee and with Caroline Wiersgalla, Chair of the Student Academic Affairs Committee. In addition, one member of the SRC committee attended the SGA House meeting to discuss the code. Finally, the committee will meet with a representative from Admissions. Negotiations are on track, and SRC is close to submitting a proposal to Provost Donovan before the end of the semester.

c) Suzy Lockwood: Faculty Governance (FG)

Suzy Lockwood reported that all the committee members are on task and evaluating the standing charges of all committees.

d) Arnie Barkman: Committee on Committee (COC)

Arnie Barkman reported that the COC held its annual Orientation for new university committees. Seven of the eight new chairs attended the meeting.

e) Greg Friedman: Academic Excellence (AEC)

Greg Friedman reported that AEC met with the Senate liaison and Caroline Wiersgalla, Chair of the Student Academic Affairs Committee to discuss the Honor Code.

AEC continues to collaborate with Judy Groulx to monitor the development of the new eSPOTS evaluations. AEC is also preparing a motion that will be submitted to the Faculty Senate very soon. The motion will stipulate that eSPOTS evaluation should not be the only measure of teaching quality or the only instrument considered in the evaluation, promotion and tenure of faculty.

E. Provost Donovan: Faculty Feedback on the eSPOTS

Faculty Senate Chair, Dianna McFarland invited Provost Donovan to provide the history behind the decision to adopt an online evaluation system. Provost Donovan confirmed that five years ago, he began a discussion with the Faculty Senate and presented the results of a pilot that had failed because of problems with the software. Three years ago, *Class Climate*, a better software package with promises of better results was identified. Dr. Donovan underlined that discussion of a different SPOTS evaluation system stemmed from the faculty and continued in the Senate. Furthermore, and in light of our current discussion of the proposed new eSPOTS, Provost Donovan reiterated his sentiment that the Faculty

Senate is going to be an integral part of disseminating information to their constituents. Senators must assume their role in the shared governance of TCU, consult with their constituents and empower them to participate. He made clear that when senators adopt a more aggressive stance on the issues at stake, their role in the TCU community will be recognized.

Dianna McFarland supported Dr. Donovan's remarks and encouraged all the senators to seek every opportunity to speak at their faculty meetings to share information regarding the eSPOTS evaluations and all other issues that impact our profession.

The general Senate discussion of the eSPOTS began with a review of faculty feedback via emails as well as observations from several senators. A number of concerns that had been voiced at the September 2nd meeting took center stage again. It is clear that many faculty are concerned about the quality of the feedback generated in eSPOTS. In addition, they want to be certain that the same students enrolled in their classes are also the ones completing the evaluations, and they are worried that the eSPOTS evaluations will continue to be the sole measure of their teaching ability, a factor that could impact promotion and tenure decisions.

New questions and concerns arose from the general discussion regarding the environment within which students will be asked to complete the evaluations and also about the evaluation of lab courses and courses taught by Graduate Assistants. Several senators have already asked their students to share their views on the current evaluation system and the proposed online system. Many students have voiced their regret that too often they are rushed to complete the paper evaluations at the end of a class. They would prefer to have the opportunity to evaluate their teachers earlier in the semester.

Finally, Senator Darren Middleton suggested that a new pilot should be set up before TCU fully commits to the eSPOTS evaluations.

V. The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 PM.