

2014-2015 TCU Faculty Senate Year-end Report May 12, 2015

Throughout this year, the TCU Faculty Senate engaged in a variety of meaningful tasks related to representing faculty views & interests on university policies & practices, as well as seeking to enhance the overall academic excellence and well-being of the University.

- **The Academic Excellence Committee (AEC), under Greg Friedman’s leadership**, took seriously its charge to “explore university programs, policies, and institutions of a broad academic nature and of general faculty interest with a view towards proposing future Faculty Senate participation, assistance, and representation of faculty interests,” and had productive meetings with the leaders of **FrogFolio** (Daniel Terry) & **the Honors College** (Acting Dean Sarah Robbins) & **the Koehler Center for Teaching Excellence** (Romy Hughes). In response to a request by Dick Rinewalt, Associate Dean in the College of Science and Engineering, the AEC also thoroughly explored the issue of **TCU’s transfer credit policy**, polling associate deans from across the university and comparing transfer credit policy from peer and aspirant universities. The committee recommended that a task force be formed to further explore and resolve this issue. The AEC also revisited the Senate’s relationship with **COIA** (the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics), when the former COIA representative for TCU, Bob Akin, resigned from the Senate midyear, and Paul Schrodtt took his place as our COIA rep. After hearing about Schrodtt’s experience at the COIA meeting he attended in San Diego, the AEC agreed on the need to reflect strategically on TCU’s participation in this group of Faculty Senate representatives addressing academic interests as they intersect with NCAA athletics.
- **The Committee on Committees (COC), under the leadership of Jesus Castro-Balbi & Bill Meier**, fulfilled its principle task of assigning faculty members, who responded to a preference survey, to fill all of the openings among **University Committees**. Additionally, the *COC has devised a policy for faculty committees, when necessary, to operate outside of the 9 month contract period and to be compensated for this work*. This committee has also, at the recommendation of the **International Students Committee (ISC)**, recommended and seen to a successful vote on discontinuing the ISC, whose services are no longer needed.
- **The Educational Evaluation Committee (EEC), under Barbara Wood’s leadership**, had its inaugural year as a Senate committee. The EEC worked closely with the University Evaluation Committee and its chair, Carrie Leverenz, as well as with Cathan Coghlan, Director of TCU’s Office of Institutional Research, in order to monitor the ways in which **eSPOTs** are being used within departments and to discuss the feasibility of doing a Psychometric Analysis of eSPOTs. Such an analysis would determine the degree to which eSPOT scores correlate with student grades. Ultimately, this study was not conducted, as the committee determined, in conversation with the FS Executive Committee (FSEC), that the findings would not repay the time and effort it would involve. The EEC recommended a revision of the **Best Policies for Teaching Evaluation** to more clearly acknowledge the “student perception” dimension of eSPOTs. However, that recommendation did not receive a majority vote at the 4/30 FS meeting, and so the issue was tabled.
- **The Faculty Relations Committee (FRC), under Dianna McFarland’s leadership**, fulfilled its charge to monitor and report on the hiring, promotion, tenure, resigning, and retiring of TCU faculty, with attention to rank and college and gender. With the assistance of the Provost’s Office

in compiling the data, FRC noted the gender-equitable rate of hiring, promotion, resignations, and retirement, with the one exception of Neeley (which hired 2 women and 10 men). The FRC also explored ways to enhance the connections between the Board of Trustees & the Faculty Senate. Finally, a subcommittee of FRC, **led by Andrew Ledbetter**, took very seriously the charge to explore the **status of Adjunct Faculty at TCU** in order to propose ways to improve the situation for these part-time instructors, their students, and the university as a whole. Ledbetter produced a 20 page report on this matter, and gave a presentation to the Senate at the final meeting of the academic year (AY). Specific recommendations on the adjunct faculty issue will be forthcoming in the next AY.

- **The Governance Committee (GC), under Suzy Lockwood’s leadership**, has reflected on the meaning of shared governance, and has considered refining the calendar and process for vetting and nominating the slate of Faculty Senate officers. A formal recommendation on these items will be crafted in the next AY year.
- **The Student Relations Committee (SRC), under Hylda Nugent’s leadership**, cultivated its relationship with Student Government representatives by meeting several times with **SGA** officers and having SRC members attend numerous weekly SGA meetings. This committee also looked into the issue of **undergraduate graduation rates** by meeting with **Mike Scott**, Director of Financial Aid and *ex officio* member of the Undergraduate Admissions and Retention Committee, and determined that these rates are currently acceptable. The SRC also met with **VC Kathy Cavins Tull** for an extensive conversation about the many challenges and risks that TCU students face, and the many programs that Student Affairs has developed to help address them. The SRC also discussed **the Honor Code**—developed and passed by SGA and the Faculty Senate in 2009, but never implemented—and intends to streamline the proposed system over the summer in order to have an Honor Code ready for “trial” implementation in the Fall 2015 semester.
- Finally, the **Task Force on the TCU Promise, under Bob Vigeland’s leadership**, completed its work in late February, which has led to a reconsideration of the retiree benefits issue taken up by “**The Gang of 6**”—2 representatives from each of the “stakeholder” groups—retirees, current faculty & current staff. These 6—**Lynn Flahive, Mary Stanford, Robin Williamson, Jay Iorizzo, Kirk Downey, and Stan Hagadone**—had a very productive meeting on Monday, April 13th, with the Chancellor, Brian Gutierrez, Karen Baker & Trustee Nancy Richards. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for the Tuesday after graduation—May 12th. I will report on the proposals that may emerge from this ongoing conversation, as we address this retiree benefits matter jointly and in good faith.
- My year as FS Chair has been both demanding and exhilarating. My work began with **summer planning meetings**, and then included the formation of and participation in the work of the **Task Force on the TCU Promise**, remarks at the **Opening Luncheon**, weekly Senate-related committee meetings, helping lead the **United Way Campaign**, serving on the **Administrative Council**, participating in 3 successful **dean searches**, making two formal **presentations**—in November and in April—to the **Academic Affairs Committee of the TCU Board of Trustees**, presiding over 7 Faculty Senate meetings (the March one was snowed out!), organizing and facilitating a **Round Table** event for the general discussion of concerns related to the Task Force findings, reporting on the Task Force work to the **University Compensation Advisory Committee**, being a part of the platform party at the December and (x 2) May **graduation**

ceremonies, and representing the TCU faculty and Faculty Senate at numerous dedications and University events throughout the year.

- I want to express my special gratitude to **Provost Donovan**, who has been a wise and steady guide to me throughout this year, as well as to my department chair, **Nadia Lahutsky**, a former FS Chair and fellow Senator, who has given me sage advice, encouragement, and the lightened teaching load that has allowed me to manage my role as FS Chair.
- I want to also thank **Chancellor Boschini** for keeping the lines of communication open, for listening, & for being so responsive to faculty concerns and perspectives in my meetings with him this year. In addition to agreeing to host meetings between the Faculty/Staff/Retiree representatives and administration and board reps, he also included **5 faculty members and 5 of their students at the final luncheon of the April Board of Trustees meeting**, as a way of facilitating board member interaction with select TCU faculty and students.
- I have been so fortunate in my Executive Committee colleagues—**Chris Sawyer, Stathis Michaelides, Greg Stephens, Ted Legatski, & Billy Farmer**—who have been extremely organized & unfailingly engaged in Senate work throughout the year. They have had good and innovative ideas and insights in matters great and small.
- **Based on the many opportunities I have had this year to work with the Faculty Senate and with leaders from across the campus, I have come away with a deepened appreciation for the sterling quality of the people who make up TCU—faculty, staff, administration, and students. This is a very special place, and it has been a tremendous honor to represent you as Faculty Senate Chair this past year.**
- **Thank you for the opportunity.**
- In the coming academic year, the Faculty Senate will be in very capable hands with **Stathis Michaelides as the new chair**. He is a gentleman and a scholar.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Jaynes Quesada

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Instructor II, Religion

2014-15 Faculty Senate Chair