

**TCU Faculty Senate Meeting**  
**December 5, 2013**  
**3:30 – 5:00 PM**  
**Faculty Senate Chambers**

**Minutes**

**Senators Present**

**Senators Excused**

**Senators Absent**

**Guests Present**

**Call to Order**

1. Faculty Senate Chair Chris Sawyer called the meeting to order at 3:40 PM, following a few minutes of refreshments and socializing,
2. Due to weather-related absences, the Senate did not have a quorum present (fewer than 20 Senators were able to attend the meeting. Therefore, the minutes of the November 7, 2013 meeting of the Faculty Senate were not submitted for vote of approval. For the same reason, neither was attendance taken.

**Old Business**

1. N/A

**New Business**

1. SGA President Cody Westphal and Tierney Johnson made a brief presentation on the SGA's QPR initiative. They invited the members of the Senate to join them in obtaining training for suicide prevention. The objective is to educate people about the associated warning signs, and ways to raise the issue in conversation and to encourage those contemplating suicide to obtain needed help. They are proposing a joint training session for SGA and the Faculty Senate. SGA will set two dates for the training so as to accommodate faculty or students who may not be able to make one or the other.
2. Jacque Lambiase gave a presentation regarding the ePortfolio initiative (*Frogfolios*) for the University. The presentation is attached.

- a. The initiative is being beta-tested this year with 205 students from various areas.
  - b. The ePortfolios include such things as photos, a personal introduction, goals and progress, learning experiences, "habits of mind," the students' resume, contact information, and so forth.
  - c. The ePortfolios can be customized, just as can be done with Facebook pages.
  - d. Non-standard tabs can be added at the students' discretion. For example, some have added a "mentors" tab, to recognize and document their involvement with multiple mentors.
  - e. Larger pilot tests are coming in Spring and Fall 2014, with pre-and post-testing.
  - f. Professional development for staff and faculty who wish to be involved will be offered in the summer.
  - g. Much Q & A discussion ensued about how to use the ePortfolios, whether there should be an "opt-out" option for faculty or programs for which ePortfolios do not add much value, learning goals for students, and so forth.
3. Provost Donovan gave a brief presentation, and then facilitated a discussion and Q & A on The Academy of Tomorrow.
- a. The AOT is not a place, it is more of a philosophical concept, a way of thinking.
  - b. We are responding to this need with brick and mortar...the Intellectual Commons, the library renovations, Rees-Jones Hall, an incubator lab, etc. The goal is to create space that fosters the imagination.
  - c. He discussed the "real hockey stick," of the rapidly growing world population and its impact on sustainability.
  - d. He reviewed the role of the QEP in helping us to address some of the big problems the world is facing. A town hall meeting on January 24th will be devoted to discussing the QEP. Watch for the announcement.
  - e. Upcoming academic years will be devoted to four great themes - water, energy, food, and time - and a town hall meeting to discuss these theme years will be held on January 21st. Operational factors to consider for these theme years were presented.
  - f. He offered an example of a possible liberal arts "great theme" course regarding the Nile River.
  - g. Provost Donovan then invited Q & A. Brief discussion ensued regarding:

- i. The relative need for STEM skills (especially math) versus greater emphasis on the arts.
- ii. The need for interdisciplinary co-teaching to make the themed courses successful.
- iii. The needed structure for an interdisciplinary major in, for example, sustainable development.
- iv. In numerous other ways, the devil is in the details...where these kinds of initiatives seem to get bogged down all too often.

With the roads already icing over, and sleet falling steadily, the Senate adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Stephens  
Faculty Senate Secretary