**Notes on the December 7, 2017 Faculty Senate meeting:**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 by **Chair Ted Legatski**.

**Kat Barger** was introduced (Asst. Prof. of Astronomy) as the newest Senator representing the College of Science and Engineering.

The minutes for the November meeting were approved as written.

Ted Legatski addressed the issue of the newly proposed revision to the **Final Exam schedule for Spring 2018**.

**Mary Kincannon, TCU’s Registrar**, emailed the Faculty Senate leadership with a recommended revised schedule and asked for Faculty Senate approval, which the Senate appreciates; however, due to our receiving the request late in the fall semester, there was not be time to appropriately consider the matter. The Academic Excellence Committee (AEC) wanted to discuss the revised schedule (11/27) rather than approve it electronically. After discussion with Provost Donovan on 11/30, the FS Executive Committee decided to approve the new schedule as a “beta test” for the spring and ask the AEC to consider the broader issue of exams and exam schedules during the spring.

Kincannon announced FS approval as she distributed the new schedule to faculty by email. But, Legatski noted that it is only a **provisional approval** in order to test of the new schedule.

**Dana Sweatman**, Chancellor’s office staff member working on Community Partnerships, introduced Mike Stallard and the **Center for Connection Culture**.

**Michael Lee (Mike) Stallard**, author of Connection Culture: The Competitive Advantage of Shared Identity, Empathy, and Understanding at Work, addressed the Senate to explain the origins of the work he has done on organizational culture and how it relates to TCU.  Stallard is a consultant whose work addresses the role of ‘culture’ in successful organizations. He was tapped in 2013 by Chancellor Boschini to partner with TCU and establish the first and only “Center for Connection Culture” in a university. The**TCU Center for Connection Culture**focuses on fostering relational support among students, staff and faculty. According to Stallard, “Culture is the predominant language, attitudes, and behaviors of a group.” These factors can either make the group’s people feel controlled, like they are regarded with indifference, or connected. The best cultures are “pro-social,” that is, they articulate a shared social mission and vision, they value people, and they give these people a voice. Vision/Value/Voice is the shorthand for his framework.

Stallard and Sweatman were asked about the Center’s involvement with the VIA Goal #3 group studying Campus Culture, and said that is in progress. When asked how departments access this program, the Senate was informed that S**heri Miller**, who was absent due to illness, has the decision-making role in Center and should be contacted by interested faculty groups. There was another comment about adjunct instructors and how to get them tapped in to “Connection Culture.” Goal for the Center to connect better to faculty & retirees. Dana and Sheri are working to communicate with faculty—suggestion from Pam Frable to offer to meet with departmental meetings; contact office if you are interested in meeting with them.

Next,**Provost Donovan** rose to speak, was questioned about # of adjuncts, and discussed the initiative he started several years ago to add 25 new ‘instructors’ as fulltime employees in order to significantly decrease TCU’s dependence on adjuncts in core courses.

He identified the challenge with growth in student population, and noted that he has asked for another 12 instructors for the coming year. His goal is to get classes, especially Core classes, covered with fulltime employees. He agrees that it’s not good to depend on adjuncts, even though many have been highly praised by parents of students. Current student:faculty ratio is 13:1—though it’s different across the schools/colleges. He also addressed the issue of adjunct pay and described the scale.

He then gave a brief presentation on AAUP Salaries and TCU’s ranking for tenured and tenure-track average salaries. When he arrived in 1986, TCU faculty salaries were at 40% percentile. TCU now ranks higher than 60% percentile in tenured and tenure-track salaries. He cited TCU’s improvement in faculty salaries overall over the last 15 years, and observed that we are getting better, on the whole.

He received a question about instructor data, and stated that it’s hard to get AAUP data on instructor salaries. He also got a comment from a senator as to how different this salary data is on a college by college basis, which he acknowledged.

Next, the Senate heard a presentation from**Bianca Newton, TCU’s Alcohol and Drug Education Manager**, who discussed the data from the most recent survey on student alcohol and drug use.

“**Core Alcohol and Drug Survey**, Spring 2017 (February is the best time to talk about “college norm”), is administered by the Core Institute from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and is the most widely used college AOD survey.

Online distribution—Feb. 2017—through a random sampling via student ID# (anonymous)—sent to just under 3000 students—just under 700 responses—statistically significant based on the number sampled—hard to get a higher yield, esp. if whole school population were surveyed; stratified across groups:  Freshmen & Greeks & Athletes (high risk groups); pretty even yield throughout. The incentive: $250 Visa Gift Cards (to 2 students).

Questions: alcohol use in past 30 days—75% v. national average of 68%; high risk groups—increase, esp. in Greek students (85%); 3x a week or more:  TCU is 5% above national average of 25%.

TCU Freshmen are below national average; Greeks well above national average; athletes below—improved over last 4 yrs.; behavior shifted after grant to change norms of behavior for student athletes.

Binge drinking (5 or more drinks in one sitting in the previous 2 weeks)—TCU again above national average by about 4%--48%. TCU is steadily climbing in risk groups, except among freshmen.

Beginning with Frog Camp and Freshmen Orientation groups, Ms. Newton’s office (staffed by 2 full time employees and one part time employee) provides tips and support for “abstainers.” She notes that 65% of students believe TCU culture promotes alcohol use (underage, even); use in residence hall since 2013 survey is up 13.3%;  question about majors of affected students—office is working on getting that information based on data for alcohol violations; reports will be out this summer; Greek v. independent students? Greeks are the biggest risk group.

Ms. Newton wants faculty all to be involved in prevention efforts—no classes or tests on Fridays contribute to the problem; no tests on Monday contribute as well. Students often have the perception that “what I do on the weekends doesn’t affect my GPA”; however, this is untrue. Students don’t understand that alcohol affects other parts of their life. For instance, 89% of reported sexual assault on campus involve alcohol.

When asked about her office’s participation in “Don’t Cancel that Class” she said, they do, and they will tailor their presentations to classes, if given sufficient notice.

They are currently working with Health Center to inform students of the statistics of campus alcohol and drug use.

Interested faculty—individuals and departments—should feel free to contact her:B.a.newton@tcu.edu

Please follow up with your constituents!

Next,**co-chairs Rachelle Blackwell & Greg Stephens**asked for input on**VIA Goal #4 on Workforce**, especially on issues of recruitment and retention. Stephens noted that not many faculty attended their group’s October forum. Their questions to the Senate included:

How is university doing, and what could be done better in retention? (Turnover rate is at 6%, which is very low)

“Succession planning” issue involves professional development for junior folks to prepare them for senior positions.

TCU is doing well in retention of faculty & staff. We have some “lifers.”

One senator asked, Is fear of the unknown an issue in discouraging retirement?

Now TCU has an HR Recruiter in house—esp. to assure a more diverse workforce

Another senator noted that it is rare to allow senior hires, and another issue is TCU’s practice of not bringing any faculty in with tenure.

A Neeley Senator noted that PPPs hard to find and hire, and for Neeley this difficulty is a money issue.

Regarding new faculty hiring challenges, another senator pointed out that TCU offers good salaries, but a dearth of perks such as graduate assistants, low teaching load; negotiations for summer salary and post-doc “off the table”; we need to do a better job of publicizing our academic strengths; C of TCU can cause problems, as can the “T,” for Texas.

Still another senator noted that more funding needed for graduate students/programs. For graduate study, TCU doesn’t have a national draw; need post docs and labs and more graduate students. The Board could address this issue:  “spend the money and create the strategic plan to achieve it.”

Finally, Ted Legatski presented a **Sense of the Senate Resolution—sent also to the Graduate Association—regarding the current Federal Tax Legislation**, with its numerous aspects and unintended consequences which will directly or indirectly harm institutions of higher education broadly and TCU in particular, with key concerns involving TCU’s endowment, our graduate students and their funding, and our tuition benefit, to name a few.

The final statement of the resolution is: “We also call upon the entire TCU community and all who value higher education to contact their Congressional representatives and the President and urge them to remove these issues from the final bill. Contact information for elected officials can be accessed at <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>.”

Legatski noted the need to express our opinion timely on this urgent matter.

There was a discussion of the issue and its wording—esp. taxing the endowment and treating tuition waivers as taxable income, which could affect faculty retention.

David Bedford moved & Loren Spice and seconded and the Senate voted to proceed as recommended: **this motion will be distributed and amended to be voted on electronically.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Jaynes Quesada, Secretary

TCU Faculty Senate​