

TCU Faculty Senate Meeting  
Sept 29, 2005  
Justin Board Room, Kelly Alumni Center

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## Minutes

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**Senators present:** Joan Aker, Arnie Barkman, Donelle Barnes, David Bedford, Bonnie Blackwell, Art Busbey, Dennis Cheek, Alan Dettlaff, Sharon Fairchild, Blaise Ferrandino, Juan Floyd-Thomas, Andy Fort, Sally Fortenberry, Elizabeth Gillaspy, David Grant, Charles Hannon, Jack Hill, Jack Jones, Paul King, Nadia Lahutsky, Steve Levering, Suzy Lockwood, John Lovett, Ed McNertney, Joel Mitchell, Linda Moore, Helen Morrison, Sheri Neill, Dianna Newbern, Don Nichols, C. A. Quarles, Dick Rinewalt, Mags Rittby, Becky Taylor, Carol Thompson, David Vanderwerken, T. J. Walsh, Molly Weinburgh, Keith Whitworth, Dan Williams, Stuart Youngblood

**Senators excused:** Carolyn Cagle, Rob Garnett, Bob Neilson

**Senators absent:** Joe Butler, Lyn Dart, Jennifer Engler, Chuck LaMendola, Greg Stephens, Ranae Stetson

**Guests:**

Jim Atwood (Admissions Office), Ross Bateman (TCU Skiff Reporter), Victor Boschini (Chancellor), Melissa Canady (Director - Assessment), Nowell Donovan (Provost), Danny Morrison (Athletic Director), Catherine Wehlburg (Director – CTE)

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Chair Andy Fort called the meeting to order at 3:33. He welcomed guests.

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### Approval of minutes

The minutes of the 01 September, 2005 Senate meeting were approved after corrections.

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### Reports

Senator Ed McNertney reminded the Senate about upcoming core curriculum advising core workshops. He also stated that “faculty learning communities” are being established to help with core advising.

Senator Keith Whitworth reported that there will be a Joint Assembly on October 11th regarding retention. He handed out a flyer with more information on the Joint Assembly.

Chair Andy Fort reported that there will be a Faculty Assembly concerning plus/minus grading on October 19th.

## Old Business

1. Update on plus/minus grading (David Grant)

Senator Grant addressed the Senate regarding the status of the plus/minus grading proposal. He reported that he and Chair Andy Fort attended the first student Government house meeting of the semester. Chair Andy Fort reported that student government is planning a student forum.

Senator Grant stated that the Academic Excellence committee will soon finish collecting data on grading systems at “peer” institutions.

Senator Grant has met with 2 Deans and is scheduled to meet with the other deans regarding plus/minus grading.

Chair Andy Fort reminded the Senate of the Faculty Assembly concerning plus/minus grading on Wed. October 19th.

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## New Business

1. Report from Admissions Office (Jim Atwood)

Jim Atwood addressed the Senate regarding this year’s freshman class and retention. The number of applications received, acceptance rates, percentage of new students who are minorities, SAT and ACT scores, etc. were discussed.

2. Report on COIA (Linda Moore)

Senator Linda Moore briefly described what COIA (Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics) is and what it does. Among proposals discussed by the COIA are making all athletic scholarships guaranteed for up to 5 years subject to academic performance and participation in the sport. The COIA proposal also calls for a school’s provost, not its athletic department, to be the arbitrator.

Other issues COIA is examining include the general level and competitiveness of athletic spending, and commercialization/sponsorship in college athletics.

3. Remarks by Athletic Director Danny Morrison

Mr. Morrison addressed the Senate regarding athletic programs at TCU. He gave an overview of the academic achievements of TCU athletes. He discussed the NCAA’s change of policy to allow incoming freshman athletes to take summer classes prior to their freshman year. Mr. Morrison briefly discussed TCU’s response to NCAA violations regarding the track team.

Mr. Morrison commented on the “Rice Report” by the MacKenzie group. Mr. Morrison stated that the report found that, even with its small student body, athletics

was a financially good decision for Rice. The report also concluded that athletics at Rice was a positive experience for the student athletes.

Mr. Morrison was asked about the level of awareness most athletic directors had regarding COIA. He replied that COIA was well known and respected as a source of constructive and practical input.

**4. Presentation by Catherine Wehlburg on Successful Graduation**

Catherine Wehlburg presented highlights of a TCU report regarding retention at TCU. She stressed that retention is not an end goal in and of itself. Instead, retention, especially retention of academically successful students, is a by-product of good practices and a good learning environment.

The groups (sub-committees) operating under the Successful Graduation Committee were shown. Catherine Wehlburg asked that any interested faculty contact her regarding participating in one of these groups.

Ms. Wehlburg pointed out a trend at TCU of greater selectivity being correlated with higher retention rates. This fits existing theories and empirical evidence.

Ms. Wehlburg talked of students' need for both academic integration and social integration. The NSSE report, a self-report from students conducted at many schools every few years, indicates that TCU increased its level of academic challenge, as perceived by students, from 2002 to 2004. However, TCU students report less interaction with faculty, and less enriching engagement at the freshman and sophomore levels than might be desired.

Questions were asked of Ms. Wehlburg regarding differences in retention rates of commuters versus residential students. The question of retention rates of fraternity and sorority students versus non-Greek students was asked. Ms. Wehlburg was also asked if she had any data on freshman interaction with full-time versus part-time faculty.

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**Announcements**

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The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lovett