

TCU Faculty Senate Meeting
March 30, 2006
Justin Board Room, Kelly Alumni Center

Minutes

Senators present

Arnie Barkman, Donelle Barnes, David Bedford, Art Busbey, Joe Butler, Dennis Cheek, Andy Fort, Sally Fortenberry, David Grant, Jack Hill, Jack Jones, Nadia Lahutsky, Chuck LaMendola, Suzy Lockwood, John Lovett, Linda Moore, Helen Morrison, Bob Neilson, Dianna Newbern, Don Nichols, C. A. Quarles, Dick Rinewalt, Greg Stephens, Ranae Stetson, Molly Weinburgh, Keith Whitworth, Stuart Youngblood

Senators excused

Joan Aker, Bonnie Blackwell (sabbatical), Carolyn Cagle, Lyn Dart, Sharon Fairchild (sabbatical), Blaise Ferrandino, Elizabeth Gillaspay, Ed McNertney, Mags Rittby, Carol Thompson (sabbatical), David Vanderwerken, T. J. Walsh

Senators absent

Jennifer Engler, Juan Floyd-Thomas, Charles Hannon, Paul King, Steve Levering, Joel Mitchell, Sheri Neill, Becky Taylor, Dan Williams, Melissa Young

Guests

Victor Boschini (Chancellor), Nowell Donovan (Provost), Pat Miller (Registrar), Talia Sampson (TCU Skiff), John Wood (TCU undergraduate)

Chair Andy Fort called the meeting to order at 3:48. He welcomed guests.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the 02 March 2006 Senate meeting were approved.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

1. Motion from the Academic Excellence Committee to endorse and forward a request for plus/minus grading (David Grant)

Senator Grant overviewed the proposed definitions and grading scheme. Included in the proposed grading scheme is wording defining a “C-“ as a passing grade. This is designed to make the new system compatible with normal transfer policies.

Senator Moore asked Senator Grant for information regarding the recent TCU Student House vote on plus/minus. Chair Andy Fort stated that the recent change in delegates in the student house, and the fact that Senator Grant was away on other business that day, played a key role. Senator Grant stated he spoke with Kim Appel, the advisor to the student House who was at the house session. In her opinion, the vote was based on the new House members wanting more information, rather than them being against plus/minus.

Senator Rinewalt spoke against the motion. He stated that studies indicate individual GPA’s are seldom changed by plus-minus. Therefore plus/minus will not appreciably affect the student’s overall GPA and prospects for the future. Senator Grant stated that there are individual changes, although there is little change in the aggregate.

Senator Bedford stated that he would be troubled if he assigned a student an “A-“ and it cost that student a 4.0. Senator Barkman spoke in favor of plus-minus. Senator Joe Butler spoke in favor based on experience at other institutions. Senator Jack Jones spoke in favor of plus-minus based on experience with it in the MBA program.

The Senate voted on the motion. The motion passed 16 votes to 5 with some abstentions. The motion is below and on the following three pages (pp 3 – 5).

Motion from the Academic Excellence Committee:

We move that the Senate approve the change to plus-minus grading as it is described on the Undergraduate Council Change of Program form that is attached the agenda, and that the Executive committee of the Senate be commissioned to work with the Provost to shepherd this action through the curriculum approval process.

Passed 30 March, 2006

2. Motion to endorse the University Compensation Advisory Committee (Andy Fort)

Because Senator Ferrandino was away, Chair Andy Fort introduced this motion. He gave a brief history of the University Compensation Advisory Committee (UCAC). Chancellor Boschini briefly took the floor. He stated that his motivation in forming the committee, at the instigation of both the Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly Executive Committees, was that all elements of compensation should be considered together, not in isolation.

Senator Fortenberry stated that the members appointed to the RIB Committee were “rolled over” into the current UCAC members. Senator Nichols stated he supported the broader charge.

The motion (shown below) passed by a show of hands.

Motion to endorse the creation of the University Compensation Advisory Committee (UCAC)

“The FSEC moves that the TCU Faculty Senate endorse the creation of a University Advisory Committee (UCAC) which would operate as follows:

UCAC Charge, Structure, and Operation:

Charge:

This committee would review university compensation initiatives and provide guidance and advice to the administration in light of the university’s compensation philosophy. This review and guidance would include ongoing evaluation of market data for salaries, progress toward meeting comprehensive compensation plans, and current and future policies and procedures relating to retirement, insurance and other faculty/staff benefits.

Structure and Operation:

The committee will be composed of appropriate representation of faculty and staff and be co-chaired by a faculty and staff member. The UCAC will consist of 15 voting members (two of whom will function as co-chairs), 3 advisory liaisons from Human Resources: and 2 people providing administrative oversight.

The voting members will be as follows: 6 members of the faculty, 6 members of the staff (each serving five year terms), the past chair of the Staff Assembly, the past chair of the

Faculty Senate (each serving one year terms), and a TCU retiree (serving a three years term). One staff member and one faculty member will function together as co-chairs.

The Chancellor will appoint chairs on an annual basis. The Chancellor will appoint committee members for designated terms. Members will include the most recent past chairs of the Staff Assembly and the Faculty Senate.

The committee will require a quorum in order to vote on recommendations and advance passed recommendations to the university's administration. For purposes of this committee, a quorum is defined as three faculty, three staff and two additional members.

The advisory liaisons from Human Resources will be: The Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources; the Director of Compensation; and the Director of Employee relations. The Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration will provide administrative oversight.”

3/30/06

Passed 30 March, 2006

3. Motion, “trailer” to above motion, to dissolve the Retirement, Insurance, and Benefits Committee (Andy Fort)

Chair Andy Fort presented this motion in place of Senator Ferrandino. The Retirement, Insurance, and Benefits Committee is no longer needed because the UCAC supersedes its functions. Further, its membership is being “rolled over” into the UCAC. The motion (below) passed by a show of hands.

Motion to decommission the Retirement, Insurance, and Benefit Committee (RIB)

(This is a “trailer” motion to be put forward and considered only if the Senate approves the motion endorsing the creation of the UCAC)

“The FSEC moves that the TCU Faculty Senate endorse a recommendation that the Retirement, Insurance, and benefit Committee be decommissioned if, and at such time that, the University Compensation Advisory Committee (UCAC) is fully approved and in operation.”

3/30/06

Passed 30 March, 2006

4. Student Relations Committee report (Keith Whitworth)

Keith Whitworth addressed the Senate. The Student Relations Committee's (SRC) main charge this year was to evaluate the 1st year experience and explore ways to increase academic exposure. Senator Whitworth distributed a handout describing the current summer orientation schedule.

Members of the Student Relations Committee met with Carrie Zimmerman (Student Development). Ms. Zimmerman expressed a desire for greater faculty involvement in the 1st year experience. Possible roadblocks include a lack of rewards to faculty for their involvement. A second roadblock is that most of the 1st year events take place during the summer. Ms. Zimmerman also expressed a desire to have a formal induction ceremony; something to match the later commencement ceremony. Ms. Zimmerman wants more interaction with Deans and faculty regarding ways to: 1) better integrate academics into the 1st year experience, and 2) better incentivize faculty to participate.

5. Report on Service and Advising by the Tenure Promotion and Grievance Committee (C. A. Quarles)

Senator Quarles addressed the Senate regarding the Tenure Promotion and Grievance Committee's (TPG) work on service and advising. The committee gathered data on how different academic units at TCU address service and advising in their handbooks and other documents. There are considerable differences between units.

Senator Barkman asked if TPG's intent is to achieve uniformity among the units. Senator Quarles stated that this is not a goal at this time. The first step is to gather data and analyze where TCU is and where it needs to go.

Senator Fortenberry stated that lack of service expectations and rewards might explain why Student Services is having difficulty getting faculty participation in the first year experience. Senator Moore concurred, stating that there appeared to be a general lack of rewards for service. Senator Youngblood stated that one ultimate goal is a system in which what is written about service and the actual rewards for service match. A critical first step, however, is information gathering.

New Business

1. Senate Leadership Nominations (Andy Fort)

Chair Andy Fort asked Senators to contact the Executive Committee if they, or another Senator are interested in Chair-elect or Secretary.

2. Update on Common Reading program (Andy Fort)

Dick Light of the Harvard Education School visited with the planning committee. Harvard has a booklet for its common reading that it distributes to its incoming freshman. TCU may adopt this as a model. The goal is to discuss and share a continuum of perspectives rather than have a polarized debate. A common theme, around which readings could be organized around, is desired. "*What does it mean to be an American?*" is one possibility. Other issues include the tradeoff between a single reading and several smaller readings.

3. Chancellor's Staff Award (Andy Fort)

Chair Andy Fort reminded faculty that nominations for Chancellor's Staff Awards are due soon.

4. Searchlight Symposium (John Wood)

John Wood, a TCU undergraduate student, addressed the Senate regarding a program called Searchlight Symposium. This student initiated series is built around various themes. One symposium per semester is planned. The first symposium will address "*What does it mean to be an ethical leader.*" Three faculty members, with slightly different viewpoints on the topic, will speak. Goals include greater interdisciplinary action and student/faculty interaction outside the classroom.

The first symposium will be held at the Kelly Center on 13 April, from 5:45 to approximately 8:00.

5. Brief Remarks by Provost Donovan

Provost Donovan addressed the Senate. He stated that the Searchlight Symposium is an exciting example of a student led movement to move TCU in an exciting direction. It is, coincidentally, the same direction faculty and the administration want to take the University.

A committee to investigate phased retirement is being formed. TCU's web page is also being updated and it appears that the common calendar may become a reality.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 pm.

John Lovett
Secretary
TCU Faculty Senate