

TCU Faculty Senate
Minutes
Thursday, September 4, 2003

Members present: Arnie Barkman, Donelle Barnes, David Bedford, Art Busbey, Carolyn Cagle, Nowell Donovan, Sharon Fairchild, Blaise Ferrandino, Andy Fort, Sally Fortenberry, George Gilbert, Jack Hill, Jack Jones, Nadia Lahutsky, Suzy Lockwood, John Lovett, Ed McNertney, Ranga Ramasesh, Dick Rinewalt, Magnus Rittby, Bill Ryan, Mike Sacken, Gene Smith, Carol Thompson, Jeff Todd, Bill Vanderhoof, Peggy Watson, Molly Weinburgh, Melissa Young.

Members absent: Chuck Bamford*, David Cross, Lori Diel,* Rob Garnett,* Tom Guderjan, Steve Levering, Linda Moore*, Don Nichols, Ellen Page Shelton.*

*excused

Chair Nadia Lahutsky called the meeting to order at 3:30PM and welcomed guests: Ray Brown, Office of Admissions, David Grebel, Chair of Staff Assembly, Provost William Koehler, and Melissa Canady, Office of Assessment.

Chair Lahutsky explained that Chancellor Boschini was invited to the Senate meeting but was unable to come. She then welcomed the new senators and asked all senators to introduce themselves by name and department. She reminded all senators of their responsibility to take Senate business and information back to their units and to encourage discussion on the issues before the Senate among their colleagues.

Approval of minutes of May 1, 2003 meeting

The corrected version of the minutes of the May 1, 2003 meeting of the Faculty Senate was circulated. Senator Fort moved to accept the minutes. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Old business

Spring 2003 report of Faculty Governance Committee

The Spring 2003 report of the Faculty Governance Committee was distributed, via e-mail. Chair Lahutsky explained that the FGC had presented this report at the May meeting. At that time it was tabled because of time limitations during the meeting. The Executive Committee moved that this report be sent to the current Faculty Governance committee. The committee will be charged to continue the work of the report. The motion was passed unanimously.

New business

New Core curriculum

Chair Lahutsky described the work that was done over the summer by members of the Core Curriculum Committee and the members of the Senate Executive committee. The committee met daily during the month of May, working on the language for the outcomes of the Heritage, Mission, Vision and Values (HVM &V) portion of the proposed curriculum. The committee included as many people as possible in the discussions and invited discipline-specific experts to participate.

The Core HVM&V outcomes, distributed at the beginning of this meeting, are the result of this work. In addition to the development of these outcomes statements, a “Road Map” for the steps in implementing the new Core was developed and the decision was made to propose the establishment of the Core Implementation Committee (CIC). The Executive Committee put forth the motion that Ed McNertney be named chair of this committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Report on the Core Curriculum

Senator McNertney reported on the next steps to be taken. He recapped the various committees and work that was done in previous years to develop a new Core Curriculum, thanking all members of the preceding committees for their hard work. He acknowledged the extra efforts and service of Senator Nowell Donovan in coordinating the work of the committee.

Senator McNertney presented for discussion the charges and the structure of the new Curriculum Implementation Committee.

The Executive Committee moved that the Senate approve the charges to the CIC. Discussion concerning the charges to the CIC followed.

Senator Fort suggested that the Academic Excellence Committee would be interested in the item dealing with the marketing of the new core. Senator McNertney agreed to add this suggestion to proposed document.

Senator Rittby asked how often the committee would report back to the Senate.

Senator McNertney explained that the first two items would be brought back to Senate for approval before being presented to the faculty as a whole. He estimated that the committee would be able to bring something back to the Senate by November.

Discussion continued concerning the time-consuming work that the committee would entail. Senator Hill asked whether the CIC would eventually be the vetting committee for the HVM&V courses, and Senator McNertney explained that the HVM & V vetting committee would eventually assume the functions of the current UCAC. In response to Senator Todd’s question regarding size and make-up of the vetting committee, Chair Lahutsky confirmed that the charge to the committee is to decide on the structure and make-up of the subsequent vetting committee.

Senator Ferrandino explained that, by virtue of its work with the Deans in developing their specific course requirements, the committee would gain experience that will help them handle the vetting of courses.

The “Road Map” outlining the timetable for developing the Core, calls for the first report of the CIC to be in November, the Senate agreed that informal update reports can be made at other Senate meetings during the year.

The motion was made to approve the charges to the new CIC, with one change. The charges will include the suggestion that the CIC work with Academic Excellence Committee to monitor the marketing of the new core.

The motion passed unanimously.

CIC Committee:

Senator McNertney then presented the list of proposed committee members and explained how they were chosen. After discussion concerning the representation of the various colleges and units on the committee, Senator McNertney explained that he had some difficulty getting a faculty member from the School of Communications to serve on the committee. Senator Young suggested that surely someone from her department would be willing to serve and that she would let Senator McNertney know who that would be. In response to Senator Todd’s question concerning representation on the committee of someone from the area of literature, Senator Ferrandino explained that the committee has already been working with experts from the various fields on the development of the outcomes. The CIC will continue to operate by consulting with various experts from the academic units such as history, religion, and literature. Senator Fort stated that this openness and “welcoming” attitude should be continued. Senator Ferrandino further pointed out that courses in the HMV&V areas could be found not only in departments of a specific field, but may also come from other departments, that is, various disciplines can propose courses in all the HMV&V categories.

The motion was made to approve the committee members as presented by Senator McNertney, with the addition of a faculty member from the School of Communications. The motion was approved unanimously.

Words from invited guests

Ray Brown, Director of Admissions, reported to the Senate on the demographics of the entering freshman class, compared to the last three years. A summary of the statistics was distributed to the Senators.

According to these statistics, the entering freshman class this year should be the best class ever admitted, based on the high SAT scores of this year’s freshmen. This year’s average of the freshmen SAT scores is the highest on record (1168.95). Brown further explained that the number of applications increased by 25.2% over last year, reaching a total of 7,656. This is considered to be an extremely high increase in applications.

Brown also pointed out the increase in applications from various minority ethnic groups. TCU has moved up in ranking to 9th place in the percentage of students of color among the Southern Consortium of Universities.

Brown admitted that other universities have also had large increases in applications, however, TCU's percentage increase was much higher than other universities in the region. Brown believes that a number of factors have influenced this increase and that it cannot be attributed to one specific cause. TCU appears to be a popular institution in the state of Texas at the moment, even though many applications did come from outside the state. Brown pointed out that TCU purchases potential student names and addresses from the SEARCH service (a list of addresses of students taking the PSAT) and that changes made at TCU in the way we use this list resulted in a record number of responses. Brown explained that the target size of the entering freshman class was 1,525. This year's final count of entering freshmen is 1,595.

Discussion continued concerning the gender balance among students admitted. Brown stated that the gender balance in the freshman class is 37% male, 63% female. The balance at TCU has stayed about the same over the years. The range has been 37-40% male for the last 30 or 40 years. It was pointed out that the number of male students in universities nation wide has declined. Brown confirmed this phenomenon.

Chair Lahutsky asked that the Admissions office keep in touch with Ed McNertney and the new CIC as the new core curriculum is developed.

Tuition Assistance Policy

Chair Lahutsky brought up the issue of proposed changes in tuition benefits for the dependents of TCU employees, as recently given to Retirement, Insurance, Benefits Committee (RIB). She invited Mike Scott, Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid, to explain the current policy and the proposed changes.

Some of the changes have been proposed because TCU now participates in the Tuition Exchange program which includes some 500 institutions. Students apply for participation in this program like a scholarship. Currently there are more students requesting to come to TCU than TCU employee students trying to go elsewhere.

Provost Koehler explained that, at this time, the recommendations under discussion have gone to the RIB committee. There are several issues that have yet to be worked out, such as the impact on hiring, the question of how to grandfather the policy for current employees, the impact on minority employees, and others. He suggested that the Senate put a hold on discussion of the issue because no firm policy has yet been worked out.

Mike Scott's visit to the Senate made possible a clarification of misinformation that has been circulating.

Provost Koehler also suggested that the RIB committee talk to the Senate Executive Committee.

Faculty Senate Listserv

Senator Art Busbey addressed the Senate about the Faculty Senate Listserv and distributed a handout with instructions on how to use it. All senators should be on the listserv. He pointed out that the list is archived and searchable. Senator Busbey encouraged all senators to make use of the listserv.

Senate offices of Historian and Parliamentarian

Chair Lahutsky announced that the Senate Executive Committee proposes that a new senate office of Historian be established. The Committee asks the Faculty Governance Committee to consider the issue. For this year, however, the Executive Committee requests the Senate to allow it to designate the immediate past Chair of the Senate as Historian.

In addition, Chair Lahutsky asked that the Faculty Governance Committee consider designating the Chair of the Faculty Governance Committee to be the Parliamentarian of the Senate. In the meantime this year, Senator Dick Rinewalt has agreed to serve as Parliamentarian and he received the Senate copy of Roberts Rules of Order.

Provost Search

Chair Lahutsky informed the Senate that the Advisory Search Committee for the new Provost would meet on Friday, September 5. The members of that committee are: Nadia Lahutsky, Blaise Ferrandino, Carol Campbell, Mary Volcansek, David Grebel, Phil Hartman, Cornell Thomas, Brad Thompson, David Whillock, Stuart Youngblood, and Jean Walbridge, and Pam Fable.

Other new business:

Senator Ed McNertney asked when senators would receive the new charges to the senate committees. The Chair will send them by e-mail Friday.

Due to problems that occurred during the summer semester this year concerning course enrollment requirements, Senator McNertney asked the Senate to consider university policy about summer courses. He moved that the Executive Committee examine the policies concerning pay, enrollment, and oversight of summer course offerings.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57PM.