

TCU Faculty Senate Meeting

Minutes
October 30, 2003

Senators present: Arnie Barkman, Donelle Barnes, David Bedford, Art Busbey, David Cross, Lori Diel, Sharon Fairchild, Blaise Ferrandino, Andy Fort, Sally Fortenberry, Rob Garnett, George Gilbert, Tom Guderjan, Jack Hill, Jack Jones, Nadia Lahutsky, Steve Levering, John Lovett, Ed McNertney, Dick Rinewalt, Bill Ryan, Mike Sacken, Ellen P. Shelton, Carol Thompson, Jeff Todd, Peggy Watson, Melissa Young.

Senators absent: Chuck Bamford*, Carolyn Cagle*, Nowell Donovan*, Suzy Lockwood*, Linda Moore*, Don Nichols, Ranga Ramasesh*, Magnus Rittby*, Bill Ryan*, Gene Smith, Bill Vanderhoof, Molly Weinburgh.

*excused

Guests: Chancellor Boschini, Provost Koehler, Dr. Richard Durán, Melissa Canady, Catherine Wehlberg, Daryl Schmidt, Claire Sanders, Bob Vigeland, Brad Thompson, Crystal Forester.

Chair Nadia Lahutsky called the meeting to order and welcomed guests, making special note of the presence of the members of the Core Implementation Committee. She explained that the business of the Senate today would be taken up entirely by the new core proposals as presented by the CIC.

Chair Lahutsky asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the October 2 meeting of the Senate. There being no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Old Business

Chair Lahutsky explained that the only old business outstanding was the issue of summer school. The executive committee has been working on this subject and has had conversations with Leo Munson. The Academic Excellence Committee is also working on it. They have nothing to report at this time.

Core Business

Chair Lahutsky explained that work on the new core curriculum is following the Roadmap as closely as possible and that the Core Implementation Committee is ready for us to look at a major portion of the new core, which is the Heritage and Mission, Vision, Values part of the core. She outlined the procedure that would be used in approving the motions being submitted by the CIC. Discussion will be fifteen minutes per column of the proposed outcomes/action steps, if necessary. If it seems that we need more than

fifteen minutes, the category may be returned to the committee for further work. Senator Ed McNertney will present each category of the proposed core action steps and Chair Lahutsky will preside over the discussion. The member of the CIC will answer questions as necessary.

Senator McNertney took the floor and announced the new CIC Web page and its address, which is: www.cic.tcu.edu

He stated that new materials are being posted here as the committee works. Senator McNertney encouraged senators to look at the page for information.

Next, he thanked the members of the CIC that were present at the meeting and explained that the committee members wished to proceed by going through each category individually, beginning with Religious Traditions. He first asked senators to read the “General Notes” hand-out distributed at the beginning of the meeting. This statement defines the Competencies, Outcomes, and Action steps. He explained that the committee decided that each outcome and each action step does not necessarily have to be met, but that at least one action step in each category does have to be met by a proposed course. Some categories are different from others as to whether or not more than one action step is required for a course. Senator McNertney also stated that it will be possible for other action steps to be added and, indeed, can be added by the faculty member making the course proposal, provided the faculty member can show that the new action step can lead to the proposed outcome.

Professor Daryl Schmidt reminded senators that the outcomes were already approved last year, and that what we are considering today are the action steps for the various outcomes. These action steps are the only completely new aspect of the proposals before the Senate.

Religious Traditions

Discussion then ensued concerning the action steps for this category.

Senator Jeff Todd raised a question concerning the stated outcome and whether the outcome could be met with the study of only one disciplinary approach. Professor Schmidt explained that the meaning of the word “discipline” was meant to mean “discipline” in the classic, general sense. The action steps were meant to address the ways, but the outcome was worded in order to indicate that this is not just a religion category. Courses from other “disciplines” can be included in this outcome.

Senator Arnie Barkman asked whether or not the question of measuring the action steps had been considered; has the committee considered how they will be assessed. Professor Schmidt and Senator McNertney confirmed that this is under discussion; Professor Schmidt explained that there are conversations going on about this matter in the religion department. The committee has talked about this a lot, the steps are not created without having this in mind. Senator Blaise Ferrandino remarked that this question has been discussed a lot in the committee meetings and that Melissa Canady has helped formulate action steps making suggestions with this in mind.

Senator David Bedford asked about the second outcome, questioning the wording of “through the study of” and how students would demonstrate that. Melissa Canady

explained that the measurable part is “the student will demonstrate knowledge of,” while “through the study of” is a clarification of how this would happen. Students would have to demonstrate their knowledge through some work product such as an essay or an examination, etc. Further discussion took place concerning the wording of the outcome statement.

Professor Schmidt reminded senators that they are not asked to re-write the outcomes statements, but to scrutinize the actions steps that will lead to the outcomes. He stated that the committee responsible may need to explain the meaning of the outcomes, but that they were already approved last year by the faculty assembly. It is true that the committee was given the latitude to “wordsmith” the outcomes.

Regarding the action steps, Senator George Gilbert questioned the need for the parenthetical statement in the second action step (for the first outcome) that states: “through such media as specified by instructor.”

Senator Donelle Barnes questioned the use of the expression “various dimensions of religion” noting that she wouldn’t want to imply that there is only one religion. Professor Schmidt explained that these terms are meant to express the general concept of religion, not a specific religion. They are meant to be taken in a global, theoretical meaning. This question will show up frequently; using the singular form reflects the overall conceptual meaning.

Senator Ferrandino further explained that, if one reads the action in the context of the outcome, it is clear that making everything plural is unnecessary. The decision was made among the committee members to use the singular in these terms, expressing their abstract, general sense.

It was agreed that the phrase “through such media as specified by the instructor” would be deleted.

Senator Andy Fort then asked about who will be interpreting or judging these action steps. Chair Lahutsky answered that it will be the oversight committee. Senator Fort inquired about the make up of the committee. Chair Lahutsky explained that the committee has been working on a draft of the charter for the HMVV oversight committee, which would determine such things, but they are not at the stage to present it. Senator Fort further pointed out that we have been working hard to establish trust and he would like to be sure that people who are most experienced in understanding the various disciplines and things such as how many action steps or outcomes must be satisfied should be on that committee.

Senator Jeff Todd again addressed the question of how many action steps would be required. Discussion continued on how courses would satisfy the action steps and that all action steps may not be required of a course in order for it to qualify for the category. Senator Ferrandino restated that this issue is addressed in the document handed out at beginning of the Senate meeting.

Senator Jack Jones posed a question concerning the audience intended for the outcomes and action steps. He asked whether faculty not hearing these discussions will be able to understand them. Chair Lahutsky explained that the oversight committee will be the primary interpreter, but that the audience will be faculty and the committee will be holding sessions that will address this issue.

Chair Lahutsky called for the Senate to vote on accepting the Religious Traditions action steps with the deletion of “through such media as specified by the instructor.” The proposal was accepted as amended.

Historical Traditions

Senator McNertney next presented the Historical Traditions action steps. He pointed out that this one has only one outcome with three action steps. The history faculty felt this was the best approach.

Senator Barnes questioned the need for the sentence in the third action step “such media as specified by the instructor.” Professor Claire Sanders explained that it was meant to leave the choice of media up to the instructor, they wanted to avoid the appearance that they are telling the instructor how to achieve the outcome. The statement “through such media as specified by the instructor” will be stricken.

Senator Fort remarked that some people would appreciate the inclusion of the statement that the media used is up to the instructor since many faculty use a variety of media and not just books.

This might be mentioned in a paragraph somewhere outside the action steps and could be stated as a general principle in all the categories.

Professor Sanders confirmed that all three action steps must be done to achieve the outcome. Discussion ensued on the development of the three action steps for one outcome. Senator McNertney explained that it is the preference of those who wrote this that all three of the action steps be a part of the document.

More discussion followed concerning how faculty will know what is meant by the action steps and whether or not all of them are required for various outcomes.

Senator Ferrandino explained that the committee does not intend that these be the only means, but they represent the best thinking on how to get to the outcome. Other approaches to achieving the outcome can be considered.

The motion to approve the Historical Traditions proposal, with the removal of the statement “through such media as specified by the instructor” in the third action step, passed unanimously.

Literary Traditions

Senator McNertney next presented the action steps for Literary Traditions.

Senator Gilbert questioned the need for the expression “appropriate to course focus” in several of these action steps. Senator Ferrandino explained that the committee wanted to make it clear that the focus of the course may vary, not all are necessary, but the focus may be British literature, drama, poetry, fiction, or other, that is the reason for the statement being added.

Senator Todd asked for clarification about how many outcomes would have to be satisfied. Senator Ferrandino explained that one outcome is necessary. Senator Todd remarked that most literary courses would satisfy the second outcome. Discussion ensued on the idea of the influence of literature on society.

Senator Bedford asked for an explanation of how the two outcomes are different. Senator Ferrandino explained that one refers to the impact on society, while the other is the reflection of society. The issue of impact is a more broad-based issue; “construct” refers to a specific trend, or literature, that is designed for a specific purpose. Professor Schmidt confirmed that the goal is to provide enough range to be open to a wide variety of courses.

Discussion followed about the difference between “impact” and “construct.”

It was suggested that the first action step for the first outcome be revised to read:

“Students will read and analyze fiction, drama, poetry, etc, appropriate to course focus and examine the role of this material **in influencing society.**”

Senator Carol Thompson expressed concern that the outcomes appear to be concerned with social and historical subjects and does not address the idea of genre in literature or the appreciation of literature. Senator Peggy Watson mentioned that many courses are taught in other ways, but that these are appropriate for a core requirement.

Concern was expressed about the impression that the outcomes do not seem to address questions of literary genre and literary themes, etc.

Senator Ferrandino explained that the committee members and department consultants felt that the issues of genre would automatically be present in a course of literature.

Discussion of importance of genre followed. Senator Todd expressed concern that the outcome statements do not address any technical aspects of literature.

Senator Fort moved that the Literary Traditions action steps and outcomes be returned to the CIC so that the committee could consider the questions raised.

The motion passed.

Senator McNertney requested that people send him and the committee members e-mail messages regarding these issues. Catherine Wehlburg pointed out that the action steps are a small part of the possibilities, not a maximum.

Cultural Awareness

Senator McNertney presented the action steps for Cultural Awareness, explaining that two people who are at this meeting, Melissa Canady and Senator Thompson worked on this.

There were no questions, Chair Lahutsky pointed out that it is very clear that one or more actions steps are required, not all of them.

The question was called to accept the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Global Awareness

Senator McNertney then presented the action steps for Global Awareness.

It was noted that the word “geographic” was omitted in the form that was sent out to senators last week. It was agreed that the word “geographic” be added after the word “economic” in the first action step for the second outcome.

Senator Todd asked about the first outcome. He asked if there is a place for the immersion of the student in another culture. Senator Bedford questioned whether the meaning of global awareness is just how to sell a product to another culture.

Discussion ensued concerning the meaning of the outcome.

Senator Ferrandino referred the senators to the competency statement for this category. In reference to the first action step for the second outcome, Melissa Canady explained that all approaches and/or disciplines cannot be listed.

Discussion centered on how to re-phrase this action step in order to avoid leaving out a particular approach. It was decided to re-word as follows:

“Students will learn to employ discipline-specific skill sets in their analyses of global issues.”

The motion to accept “Global Awareness” action steps, with this change, was passed.

Citizenship and Social values

Senator McNertney introduced this category.

Senator Bedford stated that he likes the word “responsibilities” and the idea of individual responsibilities in the second action step of the first outcome.

With the addition of a comma in the competency statement and in third outcome statement after the word “professional,” the motion to accept the Citizenship and Social values proposal passed.

Senator McNertney announced that Catherine Wehlberg and he have set up discussions about the HMMV parts of the core. A schedule of these conversations was distributed to the senators. Senator McNertney explained the subjects and places of the meetings, inviting senators to participate and to be aware of them.

The CIC will be sending out information out about this.

Chair Lahutsky distributed a draft of the charter for the HMMV committee for senators to consider for discussion in future meetings.

Guest Brad Thompson took the floor. He thanked the senators for their work on the new core curriculum. He invited senators to attend the joint meeting of the Staff Assembly, Student Government, and Faculty Senate on November 18, at 4PM. The subject will be an Honor Code, something that the students have been working on and are very excited about. In a survey sent to students, they found that students are very interested in having an honor code. Senator Fortenberry asked that the proposed honor code be sent out to senators before the assembly. Senator Melissa Young stated that the Senate had asked students to develop their ideas on an honor code and she wanted to take this opportunity to thank them for doing it.

Chair Lahutsky announced that Senator Linda Moore was not present at this Senate meeting and will not be able to report on the Intercollegiate Athletic Coalition. She will be here at the next meeting.

She clarified that the Senate committee meetings will take place on the regular schedule, that is, on November 13.
The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Fairchild