

TCU Faculty Senate Meeting
6 October 2011
3:30 – 5:00 PM
The Chambers, Brown-Lupton University Union, Room 3004

Minutes

Senators Present

Bob Akin, Ronald Anderson, Onofrio Annunziata, Arnie Barkman, David Bedford, Martin Blessinger, Jon Burgess, Rebecca Dority, Richard Estes, Greg Friedman, Jeffrey Geider, Tracy Hanna, Dianne Hawley, Ted Legatski, Carrie Leverenz, Dianna McFarland, Stathis Michaelides, Thomas Moeller, Ed McNertney, Linda Moore, Joddy Murray, Jan Quesada, Ranga Ramasesh, David Sandell, Michael Sawey, Chris Sawyer, Marie Schein, Paul Schrodt, Krista Scott, Alan Shorter, R. Eric Simpson, Michael Skinner, Gloria Solomon, Loren Spice, Gregory Stephens, Michael Strausz, Angela L. Thompson, Stephen Weis, Jo Nell Wells, Dan Williams, Scott Williams

Senators Excused

Julie Baker, Lynn Flahive, Sarah Fuentes, San-ky Kim, Suzy Lockwood, Johnny Nhan, Hylda Nugent, Maggie Thomas, David Vanderwerken, Scott Williams, Barbara Wood

Senators Absent

Misha Galaganov, Bi Ying Hu, Steve Palko, Magnus Rittby

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dan Williams at 3:30 PM.

Welcomed Guests

Guests included Provost Nowell Donovan, Brite Divinity School President Newell Williams, Vice Chancellor for Governmental Affairs Larry Lauer, Registrar Pat Miller, Dean of Admissions Ray Brown, Professor Anne Van Beber, and *Daily Skiff* reporter Travis Puckett.

Approval of Minutes - September 1, 2011

Following the presentation of President Newell Williams, the minutes for September 1, 2011, were approved as amended.

Old Business

None.

New Business

1. Presentation by President Newell Williams, Brite Divinity School
President Newell Williams of the Brite Divinity School gave a detailed presentation of the history of Brite Divinity School and its relationship with Texas Christian University. This history covered 1873 to the present day and included the key moments of

transition, growth, and change, as well as individuals who were relevant to those moments. He also discussed the steps that were taken to move the school toward integration. In a brief question-and-answer session, President Williams talked about their new building. It will serve 240 students and twenty faculty members, doubling the current academic space. They will be teaching classes in the space starting in January.

2. Presentation by Vice Chancellor for Governmental Affairs Larry Lauer

Vice Chancellor Lauer greeted the senators and stated that the biggest problem in deciding what to share with the senate was in deciding what not to say because there is so much complexity to the important issues he faces in his position. He continued by providing a glimpse into the evolution of his position for the university. Starting with his years as the head of Marketing and Communications, Lauer thought that TCU was beginning to see itself as a national leader in our industry and those who were shaping the industry would need to know who we were if we wanted to be “at the table.” He recognized the need for TCU to have a stronger presence in both Austin, Texas, and Washington, DC, if the university was to move toward a strong national presence. Tracing significant moments in this journey, Lauer covered the changing landscape in Washington and Austin that has had an effect on the “financial part of the puzzle.” He also spoke of the development of TCU’s relationship with Bob Scheiffer, TCU winning the Super Bowl, and other factors that have had an impact on TCU’s goal to achieve national visibility. Following the Rose Bowl, Lauer stated that “the door was opened and we were there to walk through it ... I walked through the door and they know who I was and who TCU was and they wanted to know more. The timing has been spectacular.”

Lauer continued by addressing some of the challenges that TCU and its students will face in the near future. He discussed regulatory issues introduced through last year’s Higher Education Act (with its twenty-four categories of regulations, all of which are bewildering in detail). Provost Nowell Donovan echoed similar sentiments regarding the challenge of keeping up with increased regulation. This discussion was followed by information regarding the changes in Pell Grants. Lauer informing the Senate of the effect these changes will have on certain populations in the TCU community.

The Vice Chancellor closed by saying that we face a myriad of challenges and that if senators were interested in discussing them, contact him when he was in town. He stated that he might sound like he is frustrate, “And I am, but I love the advocacy part of my work ... it’s important work.” He then thanked the Senate for their time.

3. Presentation by Registrar Pat Miller on Astra Report and classroom usage

Registrar Pat Miller explained that last spring, as part of the university strategic planning efforts, a firm (Ad Astra Information Systems) was engaged to look at TCU’s classroom usage. Given that TCU is in a growth mode, the question to answer was, “How are we positioned regarding classroom space?” Miller stated that TCU classroom inventory is adequate for expanded growth through some time, but will require changes in policy and application of the rooms to support this.

Miller continued his explanation with a shortened version of the PowerPoint presentation created by Tom Shaver of Ad Astra Information Systems. Miller gave

assurances that any changes made in the classroom schedule approach we now enjoy will be gentle and collaborative and that the first steps in adjusting the schedule are not difficult. He then proceeded to give the results of the study regarding enrollment, classroom space, and usage of that space. In the prime time of 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, lecture utilization is at 77%. The second finding was that departmental priority rooms (spaces over which departmental needs are considered first, but other departments can use) have a much lower utilization rate. One difficulty in utilizing these spaces more fully is that many of them are spaces designed for very specific usage. Giving the example of geology rooms full of rocks, Miller articulated the challenge of departments having to move all their valued equipment out of the room while non-departmental classes use the space, then return it when major classes are taught. Individual departments simply aren't staffed to support that. The conclusion is that there are small tweaks that can be made to the usage of departmental priority rooms, but not large ones.

Miller continued by saying that, based on a detailed examination of the space, class limits, room placement, and other issues, things look good for smaller classes. But for larger classes, TCU is using a relatively small percentage of the seat capacity. The consulting firm concluded that we may be able to increase efficiency of classroom use by moving certain classes to smaller classrooms. The data supports that some improvement could be made this way.

In a discussion that followed the PowerPoint presentation, different concerns were voiced by various senators. Senator Friedman observed that in some of these instances suggested, the "available classrooms" might be across campus and he hoped that we don't replace one kind of inefficiency with another.

Miller clarified that there is no implication for more "larger classrooms." He also stated that the study reflected one fall semester. This semester was used because it was the busiest. In addition, Brite Divinity School was not a part of the study.

Senator Bedford voiced concerns that moving certain classes to "available classrooms" does not necessarily reflect the sense of community as to where the class was originally held. Miller answered that attention to where a course is taught (where it is meaningful to students) will be maintained and that learning communities will be addressed. Additional information that will be shared with chairs and deans reflects that we aren't setting class limits near enrollment limits.

Chair Dan Williams stated that one of the reasons Pat Miller was at the Senate meeting today was in response to a point Provost Donovan had discussed with Williams earlier. We are expecting sixteen new faculty lines; at present there are only six vacant faculty offices. Donovan elaborated that this lack of office space is a constraint to our growth. Over the next several years, TCU is modeling fifty to sixty new faculty. This is germane to a discussion of classroom space because frequently new offices are acquired by cannibalizing classroom space. Another concern is that departments are able to keep their colleagues close to one another. Senator Friedman also stated the desire to keep communities of students near the communities of faculty. The Provost agreed, stating that when his first office was 800 yards from the department, students simply couldn't

find him. Brite President Newell shared that Brite went from six classrooms to three in order to increase the size of the faculty. He also stated, "We teach in the evenings and on Fridays. I'm not recommending it, but we have to do it."

In conclusion, Miller voiced that class design issues may not reflect size, but pedagogically they make sense, and that a discussion of formal instructional areas is still on the table. He also stated that we need to remember that, for many classrooms, there is a lot of "off-grid" usage, which is reflected as "waste" or "white space" in these studies.

4. Presentation by Dean of Admissions Ray Brown and Professor Anne Van Beber on TCU's dual credit policy

Dean Ray Brown and Prof. Anne Van Beber presented information regarding TCU's dual credit policy and wanted to see if the Faculty Senate would like to see some of the issues taken up by the Academic Excellence Committee. Brown explained that the phenomenon of giving dual credit (high school and college credit for the same course) has exploded this past decade, with certain states encouraging this practice more than others. In Texas, in an effort to address the challenge of students graduating from certain higher education institutions in a timely fashion, the legislative fix was to give them college credit in high school. Brown clarified the difference between dual credit courses and AP credit course for the Senate and stated that (at some institutions) a high school student may be at a disadvantage if they have chosen to take dual credit courses over AP courses, as it is easier to get an "A" in a dual credit course than a 3, 4, or 5 in an AP credit course. Brown defined a dual credit course as one that has been approved by a community college which "dubs a high school teacher teaching high school students as a college course." Students get credit for both, thereby "double-dipping." It is Brown's opinion, however, that these courses are routinely less rigorous than AP courses; AP has national norms, national curriculum, and national exams that dual credit courses do not.

Senator Schein proposed that schools can control this by vetting only courses that are taught by people with higher degrees and have curriculum assessment. Senator Friedman countered that this would entail vetting courses from hundreds, if not thousands, of high schools.

The Senate agreed with Chair Dan Williams that this issue should be addressed by the Academic Excellence Committee.

5. Presentation by Professor Ed McNertney, Writing Committee Charter

Prof. McNertney expressed that he was not bringing any item to the floor today, but that his presentation was informational. He stated that he wished to talk the Senate through the TCU Core Curriculum Course Vetting and Assessment process. He outlined the committees responsible for the areas of Heritage, Mission, Vision, and Values (HMOVV), Human Experience and Endeavors (HEE), and Essential Competencies (EC). McNertney stated that, unfortunately, a process had never been put in place for the vetting of Writing Emphasis (WE) classes. Current practice has been to latch onto an *ad*

hoc committee and ask it to serve as the assessment and vetting committee for these classes. However, he thinks it is time to make an official committee responsible for the Writing Emphasis courses. This issue will be brought to the Senate sometime in the future. McNertney stated that he needs to speak with other people first before bringing this to the floor, but wished to place this before the Senate for future consideration.

Open Forum

There were no Open Forum items for discussion.

Announcements

Following the approval of the minutes near the beginning of the Senate Meeting, Lanelda Pennington spoke about Cyber Security Month. Pennington works at Technology Resources and is part of TCU's security team. Technology Resources will be sponsoring lunch workshops about cyber security, so Pennington asked senators to share this information with the coworkers. There will be tips on the TCU announcements as well. Additional information can be found at <http://www.security.tcu.edu> . If you have any questions, please contact Lanelda at l.pennington@tcu.edu.

Chair Dan Williams reported that plans are in the works for a Faculty/Staff picnic in late March. He stated that work is being done with the Staff Assembly to combine resources and interest in this endeavor.

Williams continued by presenting "Policy on Employment of Professors of Professional Practice," a document which has yet to be approved by the Faculty Senate. It was his suggestion that it be sent to the Faculty Governance Committee with the hopes that they will have a recommendation for approval at the November Faculty Senate meeting. This item also brought up a related issue that Williams would like Faculty Governance to investigate. With the shape of the university faculty changing slightly with the addition of more non-tenure track positions, it is his wish that we do not become a multi-tiered system of "privilege and under-privilege." He would like the Faculty Governance Committee to look into the possibility of the creation of a Faculty Senate resolution stating that all faculty would be treated equally. In some parts of campus, distinctions are being made between PPPs (Professors of Professional Practice), Instructors, and other faculty. With the Senate's approval, Williams asked the Faculty Governance Committee to create a Senate resolution.

What followed was a brief discussion of some of the issues arising from the distinction between PPPs, Instructors, and tenure-track faculty members. Senator Skinner stated that one issue not addressed in the document was if PPPs are eligible for sabbaticals. Provost Donovan clarified that TCU does not have "sabbaticals," but "research leaves." Comments were made that the document does not include Instructors. This was followed by a discussion of the varying nomenclature from college to college (within TCU) for various teaching employees and the history of these inconsistencies. Williams reiterated his point that he does not wish to reinforce the "culture of the 2nd class citizen." The Provost supported Williams and stated that a department (in which an injustice in this regard had occurred) recently reversed its vote following a letter from Dan Williams.

With no other announcements or questions from the Senate, Chair Dan Williams adjourned the meeting at 5:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Shorter
Secretary, Faculty Senate