FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Minutes
July 9, 2012
3:15 p.m., 601 Rudder Tower
http://facultysenate.tamu.edu


27 Senators were officially inactive for this meeting:

Call to Order

Speaker Comments:
The speaker reported that the committee he co-chaired with Dr. Tesh from the TAMU Health Science Center (HSC) back into TAMU has submitted its report detailing potential problems and benefits of merging the HSC under the University. He found that most respondents to an earlier questionnaire felt they did not have enough information to provide an opinion and indicated that a new survey may be prepared accompanied by the report.

He also read the following aresolution for the outgoing Dean of Faculties: WHEREAS, Dr. Antonio Cepeda-Benito has faithfully and honorably served the faculty and students of Texas A&M University as a faculty member and Dean of Faculties, and WHEREAS, he was always available and helpful in advising faculty serving on CAFRT hearings on their duties and the nuances of the rules, and WHEREAS, he provided advice and counsel to faculty facing dismissal, and guided them through the rules and protocols to contest dismissal, and WHEREAS, Dr. Cepeda-Benito readily gave up his new offices in the basement of the YMCA so that others would have a place to work, and WHEREAS, Antonio has so successfully dedicated himself to improving his English that he now mispronounces his own name like we, his colleagues, do, and WHEREAS, he demonstrated an ability to continue functioning as Dean of Faculties while sleep-deprived (worthy of the best of our undergraduates) during the European soccer championship, which his beloved Red Fury has now won again this year; and WHEREAS, we will miss the ubiquitous ball cap and the stylish sports coat that he wears during the frigidly cold winter weather in Texas, and WHEREAS, he has shown such marvelous adaptive and survival skills in the Texas heat that we are confident he will adapt and survive in the Vermont snow, no doubt by replacing his baseball cap and bicycle with a fur cap and skis, NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M University sincerely thanks Dr. Antonio Cepeda-Benito for his service to the university in general and to the faculty in particular, and extends its best wishes for success in his new academic setting at the University of Vermont.

Guest Speaker:
Karan Watson
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Provost Karan Watson, addressed a set of issues as requested by the Senate Executive Committee:

1) The large ($260 million) Biodefense Grant was developed by the system and like other Federal grants will come in 1 year increments providing satisfactory progress and availability of funds up to 5.5 years. Most of the funds are geared toward developing systems and methods for rapid manufacture of large doses of anti-bioterrorism or other disease agents rather than basic research. Faculty involved are positive participants and their time will be considered to be in-kind matching payment Building renovation will add value to an A&M building in the research park. The maximum risk to the University is about $1 million. She compared it to the operation of the Ocean Drilling Program and indicated it could have a very positive effect on our community.

2) Merit pay increases averaging 3% were geared to the prospect of an increase in tuition, but Deans and VPs were also agreeable to absorbing a 1.5% increase from existing budgets on a one-time basis, and felt they could do so without severe losses to programs and personnel. Since the Board of Regents did not permit the increase in tuition but did allow the President to increase some fees with greater flexibility in how the fees collected can be spent, a one-time merit raise pool of 1.5% from the presidents office will provide for the 3% targeted merit raise total. There was a stipulation that merit must be involved and that consideration should be for performance over the past 3 years when the last raises were given. In a response to Senator Miller (LA) as to why the Regents and legislature members seem not to trust or respect Faculty, Dr. Watson suggested things may be getting better; a regent recently commented that he thinks 95% of faculty do work hard. She reminded us that valuing higher education it is a national
problem, but that we can still improve public perception if faculty will lead the dialog in pointing out the benefits of a tier one education and also recognize that not all faculty need to be ‘stars’. She recommends that if each of us will 1) strive for a balanced personal life, 2) commit to excellence as scholars, and 3) commit to making TAMU the best it can be, we can achieve our “Top-Ten” goal.

In response to a question from Senator Klein (GEOS) concerning how fees could be diverted from specified purposes, she pointed out that not only fees that are applicable only to certain individuals such as the graduation fee are not subject to reallocation, and said that we need to develop a mindset of using reallocation to enhance targeted programs.

In response to Senator Mathewson’s concern that we are not doing better than average in having students pass a national Geology exam required for licensing, Dr. Watson pointed out that in many areas our graduates are well above the national standards and are widely sought; perhaps the problem is in that program. Similarly in response to Senator Tebeaux’s concern about ‘shallow learning’ and grade inflation, the Provost pointed out that our entering students are more highly selected than ever before and that rigor alone may not be a motivation for learning. The concept that grades have inflated may be real, but it will require detailed and difficult assessment to verify than simply comparing average grades over time.

With regard to TAMU buying the Texas Wesleyan School of Law, Provost Watson indicated the announcement was required so that all necessary details could even be assessed. Issues such as SACS and ABA accreditation, Coordinating Board buy-in, financial stability, faculty positions and other factors can now be considered, whereas they could not be before. Most AAU member schools do have a law school and it is a Vision 2020 goal. She indicated that similar details apply to importing the HSC back under TAMU, including maintaining the higher rate the state pays for medical students, accreditation and administrative organization: these concerns must be addressed satisfactorily before the merger can proceed.

Former Speaker Benedik was been appointed acting Dean of Faculties to serve until an internal search can be conducted in the fall semester.

Senator Greenbaum (SCI) asked about the status of the Senate–passed bill to change the Core Curriculum primarily be eliminating 300 and 400-level or higher courses. the Provost said the President asked for more detailed information concerning the potential consequences on current students.

Senator Clayton (ARCH) raised the question of how Faculty at a remote Law campus would be hired, tenured, funded, etc. Basically, as in the case of the Galveston campus, they might be expected to maintain their own budget, but would be subject to the same processes used by TAMU.

The June 11 Faculty Senate meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted

GRADUATE COUNCIL GC Report

New Course Requests - June 7, 2012

- BICH 661 Advanced Genome Annotation with Ontologies
- BIOL 625 Structural and Molecular Biology
- EDCI 606 Cognition, Culture and Literacies
- HISP 605 Spanish for Reading and Translation
- MARA 684 Maritime Administration

Motion Passed FS.30.015

Change in Courses - June 7, 2012

- AERO 631 Model Predictive Control for Aerospace Systems
- BAEN 665 Design of Biological Waste Treatment Systems
- CVEN 684 Professional Internship
- ECEN 687 VLSI: Physical Design Automation
- ENTO 619 Insect Toxicology

Motion Passed FS.30.016

Course Withdrawals - June 7, 2012

- BAEN 610 Spatial Technology for Site-Specific Crop Management

Motion Passed FS.30.017

Special Consideration - June 7, 2012

The College of Geosciences wishes to withdraw the following graduate courses from their course inventory:

- ATMO 605 Atmospheric Phenomena
ATMO 621  Atmospheric Science
ATMO 638  Dynamics of Convective Clouds
ATMO 666  Agricultural Meteorology
ATMO 635  Atmospheric Thermodynamics
GEOG 641  Hist. Geography of the World System
GEOG 646  Periglacial Geomorphology
GEOL 646  Biogeochemical Cycling
GEOL 667  Structural Geology II
GEOP 630  Interactive Seismic Interpretation

Special Consideration Item:
Course Withdrawal within the College of Education and Human Development for SPSY 629

Special Consideration Item:
Course Withdrawal - College of Liberal Arts
MODL 645  Studies in Modern and Classical Literatures
COML 603  Introduction to Comparative Literature
COML 645  Studies in Comparative Literature and Culture
COML 685  Directed Studies
COML 689  Special Topics in Comparative Literature and Culture
COML 691  Research
COML 697  Methodology of Teaching English and Foreign Language and Literatures

Motion Passed FS.30.018
Attachment E

Special Consideration Item:
The College of Education and Human Development would like to request the deactivation of the MS/MED in Career Development option in Ed. Psychology.

College of Education and Human Development: Request for Deactivation of the MED program in the Department of Health and Kinesiology

Motion Passed FS.30.019
Attachment F

Special Consideration Item:
Proposal within the College of Liberal Arts to allow their students working specifically in early modern philosophy to take 24 hours of approved graduate courses in several fields instead of getting a master’s in a single discipline.

Motion Passed FS.30.020
Attachment G

Special Consideration - June 7, 2012
The Department of Engineering Technology and Industrial Distribution would like to request TAMU-Qatar as an additional location to offer Residency Week for the existing Master of Industrial Distribution (MID) degree program.

Motion Passed FS.30.021
Attachment H

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE UCC Report
New Courses - June 8, 2012
ENGL 302  Environmental Literature
ISEN 360  Lean Thinking and Lean Engineering in the Process Industries
ISEN 450  Healthcare Systems Engineering
Withdrawal of Courses - June 8, 2012

College of Geosciences
GEOG 326  Geography of East Asia
GEOG 433  Geography of Communications
GEOP 213  Exploration of the Moon

Change in Courses - June 8, 2012
INFO 305  Intermediate Business Statistics
INFO 335  Sourcing and Procurement
INFO 345  Business Process Design
INFO 361  Operations Planning and Control
INFO 364  Operations Management
INFO 465  Information Technology for Supply Chain Management

Motion Passed FS.30.022

Special Consideration - June 8, 2012
Dwight Look College of Engineering
Request to change grade requirements for all engineering certificate programs.

W-COURSES
Courses submitted for W certification - June 12, 2012
ESSM 406  Forest Policy
INTS 401  Urbanism and Modernism
OCNG 410  Introduction to Physical Oceanography
WFC 101  Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

Courses submitted for C certification - June 12, 2012
ANSC 481  Seminar in Animal Science
MART 410  Watchstanding-Bridge Resource Management

Courses submitted for W recertification - June 12, 2012
HIST 280  The Historian's Craft

End of Consent Agenda

Committee Reports

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Learning Objectives in Minimum Syllabus Requirement

Attch K.  Senator Magill (COALS) expressed concern on how assessable learning objectives could be designed that would apply to all students, not just A students. Provost Watson indicated that it will take a new way of expressing expectations than many of us are used to, including for example using Bloom’s taxonomy of higher-level learning to meet the mandated criteria. She suspects that all of us generally know what we expect of the students, but likely haven’t found a good way to express it. The motion passed with grammatical corrections.

Committee of the Whole
There was no business for the Committee of the Whole

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm