FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Minutes
October 8, 2012
3:15 p.m., 601 Rudder Tower
http://facultysenate.tamu.edu


Call to Order

Guest
John S. Sharp, Chancellor

Chancellor John Sharp reviewed changes that have occurred in his first year, including:

An early unexpected return of one-time AUF funds provided over $25 million that was reallocated $5.7 million to Prairie View and $19.7 million to TAMU specified for use in faculty retention.

System expenses were reduced so that the System now operates within its budget without drawing on reserves and on its units as had been the case.

$5 million has been provided for the newly initiated University Institute for Advanced Study, headed by Dr. John Junkins, to help bring top scientists to the University for short stays to interact and collaborate with current faculty in the hope of ultimately hiring them.

The System is saving $6.5 million per year as a result of the competitive bid process that awarded Blue Cross-Blue Shield the management of our health insurance benefits.
The BARDA contract awarded to TAMUS for development of enhanced biosecurity preparedness will provide $70-75 million in annual research funds; it is the only award made to a University as prime contractor.

A full-time System representative/lobbyist (Scott Sudduth) with prior experience from Stanford and the University of Chicago is now serving full time in Washington as Director of Federal Relations to assist with securing research funding.

Negotiations for securing Texas Wesleyan law school as a part of Texas A&M is progressing; the intention is to develop a program focusing on intellectual property law specializing in biology and engineering, areas where we have expertise.

COMPASS has provided $40 million of ‘upfront’ funds for the contracts outsourcing dining, building maintenance, custodial and landscaping services. Only 12 current employees did not pass the required screening process.

At least $6 million per year of the outsourcing funds has been designated to pay salaries of outstanding scientists/teachers being recruited to recently designated focus areas. Another $33.3 million per year for 3 years has been secured for use in startups, renovations, etc. needed to bring the recruits into TAMU.

Rebranding efforts have been increased to make sure that all units that are part of the System bring recognition to Texas A&M. Members such as the Dental School are not now generally recognized as being part of TAMUS.

Bringing the HSC back into TAMU should boost our competitiveness for federal funding programs that very often now tend to fund collaborative research groups rather than individual PIs. The $70 million in annual research funding by HSC investigators will also raise our overall national ranking in competitive funds received.

A request has been prepared to seek commercial services to manage Easterwood Airport, primarily in the prospect that it may provide a mechanism for improving services.

A renovated system for handling construction projects is expected to reduce expenses.

An investigation of the possibility of monetizing parking or of borrowing at extremely low rates against parking revenues has been initiated, basically to see if it would make sense.

An attempt to secure benefits for non-traditional domestic partners has been stymied by current state laws.

The gains we have made in managing finances should stand in good stead with the next legislature.

The Chancellor invites each president to bring 5 faculty members to each Board of Regents meeting; the attitude changes as faculty and regents come to know each other has been noticeable.

Senator Angie Hill Price asked the Chancellor if the price increases at dining facilities accounts for the ability of COMPASS to pay the University; if so, she suggested the gain to the University was mostly coming at the expense students and employees. Chancellor Sharp indicated that at least for the student meal plans, the price for this year had been established before the company was involved. She was also concerned about the prospects for outsourcing parking, since the rates at Ohio State where this has recently been done are scheduled to increase dramatically, but the Chancellor indicated it is way too
early to even consider what effects any contract, which would require considerable negotiation, would have.

Speaker-Elect Daugherity asked the Chancellor’s opinion of the new committee chairs in the State Senate and House of Representatives. Chancellor Sharp feels that those appointed will be fair and many have a tie to TAMU, some through the presence of a member school in their district. He also indicated that although Judith Zafarini has been replaced as Chair of the Education Committee, she is still Chair of the select committee to monitor 'the seven solutions' effort and of the committee to oversee the sunset review of the Coordinating Board. Once the legislative session starts, he will essentially decamp to Austin for the duration.

Senator Alvarado asked about the concept of freezing tuitions at the freshman level, but the Chancellor suggested that was not something Presidents could better address. He also responded to Senator Alvarado’s question concerning the feeling of faculty they were being considered ‘second class’ by the quest to hire ‘superstars by pointing out the large amount of funds that he has provided for faculty retention.

Senator Greenwald asked about the possibility of tuition relief for faculty and staff. Mr. Sharp said he was all in favor as it would be a real boom for hiring and retention, but again, is something that can't be achieved without changing state laws.

Senator Coopersmith expressed concern about the low graduation rates at other system schools and wondered if something is being done. The Chancellor answered that Regent Mendoza was actively working with the provosts to develop a plan, that Vice Chancellor and Dean of Engineering Banks is attempting to coordinate engineering programs across the System and the College of Education has some outreach programs. He mentioned that 72% of our education graduates are still teaching after 8 years whereas less than 50% after 5 years is the norm.

Senator Hill indicated that he is personally less optimistic than the Chancellor that the increase in state revenue will be reflected in higher education but wondered if the faculty could help in any way. Chancellor Sharp asked that any Faculty who know legislators well enough to discuss issues to let his office know and they may be called on to help sell issues important to TAMU. He indicated that a number of student leaders have already engaged in similar activities. Just spreading the word that ACT scores of our students exceed those of any other state public University could not hurt. To quote: "We need to tell our story better". He indicated the number one priority of this session is to restore formula funding to the 2008 level.

**Speaker Comments:**

Minimum syllabus requirements to satisfy Senate and State regulations require learning or course objectives. Help for meeting the standards is available on the Howdy portal.

The merger of the HSC with TAMU is now targeted for June.

Dr. Teresa Fossum is serving as the Interim Vice President for Research and a search committee including faculty representatives is being formed.

The list of Senators and Committees will be updated this week.
The September 10, 2012 Faculty Senate meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Consent Agenda - The consent agenda was approved as submitted.

GRADUATE COUNCIL – GC REPORT

New Course Requests – September 6, 2012

- BIOL 661 Antimicrobial Agents
- CSCE 621 Language, Library, and Program Design Using C++
- ECON 684 Professional Internship
- HIST 624 Readings in Race, Ethnicity, and Migration
- HIST 625 Research Seminar in Race, Ethnicity, and Migration
- HIST 639 Readings in Asian History
- HIST 640 Readings in Atlantic World and Caribbean History
- HIST 641 Research Seminar in Atlantic World and Caribbean History
- HIST 648 Readings on Topics in Modern European History
- HIST 674 Readings in Chicano-Latino History
- HIST 675 Research Seminar in Chicano-Latino History
- VIBS 613 Evolutionary Bioinformatics
- VLCS 681 Seminar

Motion Passed
Attachment A

Course Change Requests – September 6, 2012

- HIST 645 Research Seminar in War and Society
- HIST 646 Readings in War and Society
- NUEN 611 Radiation Detection and Measurement
- NUEN 612 Radiological Safety and Hazards Evaluation
- NUEN 613 Principles of Radiological Safety
- NUEN 673 Radiation Biology
- NUEN 676 Health Physics Instrumentation
- NUEN 681 Seminar
- NUEN 684 Professional Internship

Motion Passed
Attachment C

Special Consideration Item – September 6, 2012

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences would like to change the names of the Master of Agriculture, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Management to the Master of Agriculture, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy in Ecosystem Science and Management

Motion Passed
Attachment D

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – UCC REPORT

New Courses – September 14, 2012

- ALEC 412 Technology-Enhanced Instructional Design Strategies For Agriculture

Motion Passed
Attachment E

Change in Courses – September 14, 2012

- AGSM 315 Food Process Engineering Technology
- EURO 484 Internship
- FSTC 311 Principles of Food Processing
- FSTC 312 Food Chemistry

Motion Passed
Attachment F
FSTC 313  Food Chemistry Laboratory
FSTC 314  Food Analysis
FSTC 315  Food Process Engineering Technology
FSTC 401  Food Product Development
GERM 336  German Fairy Tales. FSTC 401
HORT 311  Principles of Food Processing

Special Consideration – September 14, 2012

College of Liberal Arts
Certificate in Foreign Language Competency
Request to withdraw certificate

Motion Passed
FS.30.045
Attachment F

Special Consideration – September 14, 2012

College of Liberal Arts
Department of International Studies
Minor in Chinese
Request for a new minor

Motion Passed
FS.30.046
Attachment G

W-COURSES

Courses submitted for W Certification – September 13, 2012
VIST 201  Writing for Design

Courses submitted for W Re-Certification – September 13, 2012
AGSC 384  Clinical Professional Experience in Agricultural Science
ANSC 310  Behavior and Management of Domestic Animals
JOUR 203  Media Writing I

End of Consent Agenda

Committee Reports

SEBAC Report – Walter Daugherity, Speaker-Elect

Approximately 5,000 individuals formerly covered by Scott and White are now with BC/BS or have waived coverage.

Our medical plan is self insured and has $48 million currently in reserve, which is above the required level and may lessen an impact if state contributions are cut in the future.

Employee/dependent audits have been completed, leading to removal of 694 ineligible dependents removed from the rolls, at potentially significant savings, though savings can only be estimated based on averages which may not apply to those individuals.

Individuals using a doctor paid by a hospital may have co-pays charged by both the Doctor and the Hospital.
Individuals who have a health risk assessment and physical exam conducted each year will lower the deductible expense by $50 for each for a total of $100.

**New Business**

**Proposed Changes - Student Code of Conduct**  
Anne Reber, Dean of Student Life  
Kristen Harrell, Associate Director  
Dr. David Parrott, VP for Student Affairs

This is an informational discussion with the expectation that voting will occur in November.

Significant changes include addition of animal abuse, addition of non-informed recording or picture-taking, dropping of sanctions that involved a verbal-only warning and ‘dismissal for unspecified period”. Other changes would prevent a student from having a lawyer at the conduct hearing unless the student also faces a criminal charge and would drop one of three faculty members from the UDAP hearing panels to be replaced by a staff person.

The changes are proposed to make our rules better fit the ‘best practices' and in response to a federal directive on dealing with sexual harassment.

Senator Stadelmann raised a number of concerns and with Senator Clark were especially concerned that the vagueness of the rule as written would allow almost any act, even if off-campus and not related to University activities be defined as breaking a University rule or guideline, essentially at the whim of the Student Life office since students could be held to a ‘higher level of morality’ than others. The presenters agreed to set up a meeting with those Senators and any others that would like to provide input. Senator Stadelmann was also concerned that in the past, the accuser-investigators also served on the hearing panels. Jerry Brown from the Office of the General Council responded that although legal precedent allowed that to occur, at least in any case where separation from the University is a potential sanction, the rule and procedures are now constructed so that will not happen.

Senator Price who has served as a UDAP panel member asked that more faculty become involved so that the faculty could still have a majority vote at the hearings.

Senator Magill pointed out wording problems in Section 24.4.5 that the presenters agreed should be changed. He also asked about removing the statements giving students access to the recording made of any hearing, but was assured that as part of a student’s record, that access could not be denied and didn’t need to be in the rule.

**Committee of the Whole**

Senator Alvarado expressed concern with the number of Senators in attendance.

Senator Klein expressed concern that the effort for uniform branding was disrupting the use of printed letterheads (the official maroon has changed to a different color according to Speaker-Elect Daugherty), and the fonts are proprietary so users would have to pay for their use.
Senator Biggs asked that the Senate online list of committees be updated.

Secretary Magill asked that the problems in timely serviced part-time employees are having in switching between BC/BS and Medicare/Medicaid being the primary coverage is investigated.

**Adjourn**
The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.