Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes
March 18, 2013
3:15 p.m., 601 Rudder Tower
http://facultysenate.tamu.edu

Present:

Call to Order

Guest Speaker
Dean M. Katherine Banks, Dwight Look College of Engineering
Summary of the remarks of guest Speaker, Dr. M. Katherine Banks, Vice Chancellor and Dean of the College of Engineering on the plan to double enrollment to 25,000 by 2025.

Need:
Estimates show that Texas will need 18% more engineers by 2018 and could use 10,000 more stem graduates per year. Although we are now the 3rd largest College of Engineering, we now have over 10,000 applicants for about 1,500 slots and Texas is graduating 87,000 more high school graduates per year.

Resources:
The Provost has announced that a large part of any increase in designated tuition that comes from growth in student numbers will be returned to the departments teaching those students. These returns will be based on weighted student credit hour subvention rates provided by the state so will provide the funding for expansion for all colleges whose teaching load will increase.

Guiding principles for undertaking expansion:
1) provide access to high quality degrees, 2) use transformative education models to take advantage of technology and for access to laboratories, and equipment, 3) maintain or reduce the cost per student, 4) the increase will come at all levels, including Masters offered through distance education, with an annual growth rate of 6% at the undergraduate level, 5) the growth will provide for new hires of tenure track and ‘professors of the practice’ geared to teaching, so will create more graduate student positions and not greatly alter student/faculty ratios.

Issues:
1) Space is tight, especially for teaching and research labs, but an Engineering Education Complex is being planned ($137 million, with about half expected to be raised from former students) and an extra $38 million for equipment and support to departments. A hoped-for date of completion is 2016, in time for the large influx of students in engineering classes and which will also free up existing space for new hires.
2) Currently only 55% of those who start in engineering graduate in engineering, versus about 77% for peer institutions. The primary cause is thought to be the practice of first-come-first-served enrollments which leaves many of the best candidates out if they apply after September, essentially a year in advance. In the future, non-automatic admits will be held until early December so that it may be possible to apply higher standards for admission while accepting more students. (Most minority applications currently arrive after admissions too many majors have been cut-off.)

**Impact:**
US News and World Report rankings rely primarily on employer interviews to rank graduate and undergraduate engineering programs. Growth will allow the College to target ‘high flyers’ who will in turn generate additional research support so there is not expected to be a loss of quality.

**Implementation:**
Steering, operating and departmental growth committees are already in place. It was emphasized that each department, through its Faculty, will decide how any growth should occur, taking in the prospect of jobs after graduation for that major.

Response to questions provided the following additional comments: It is not assumed that if Engineering grows, other colleges will have to cut enrollment. It can only be assumed that the state will continue with the level of subvention that will allow the programs to grow. Part of the $38 million will be used to provide scholarships for travel abroad for students who can not otherwise afford it. Agreements are being established for TAMU faculty to team teach in several foreign countries. A special effort is to be made to increase, at least double, the % of female and minority students in engineering. Other Universities may be able to supply metrics, screens or filters that help to identify those applicants who are most likely to stay and succeed in engineering degrees. The new Education Complex may have one large classroom, but Dean Banks prefers using ‘flipped’ classrooms where students go over class materials ‘on-line’ and then have smaller sections with instructors to resolve questions, pose problems etc. during the class period.

**Speaker Comments**
Senate nominations and elections are coming soon.

Chancellor Sharp has put out a request for proposals (RFP) to examine the effectiveness and delivery of TAMU and System administration. It is not clear how for down into academic departments the examination might go, but the Speaker has emphasized to Mr. Sharp that Faculty could be greatly impacted so must have a voice before any suggested changes are implemented.

Those Senators who attended the joint meeting with the UT Faculty Council were recognized and a report from the meeting which included talks by Fred Heldenfels, Chair of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and State Representative Dan Branch, Chair of the Higher Education Committee as well as both University Presidents and Provosts.

A committee co-chaired by TAMU Senate Speaker Stallone and HSC Speaker John Quarls is meeting to work out details of how the Senates can be merged.

**Approval of February 11, 2013 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

**Attachment A**
Motion Passed

**Consent Agenda**

**GRADUATE COUNCIL – GC REPORT**
Consent agenda passed (OCEN 424 was corrected to OCEN 420 before consideration)

**Attachment B**
Motion Passed

**New Course Requests – February 7, 2013**
ASTR 601 Extra galactic Astronomy

**Attachment C**
FS.30.125
ASTR 602  Astronomical Observing Techniques and Instrumentation
ASTR 603  Stellar Astrophysics
ASTR 604  Cosmology
ASTR 605  Galactic Astronomy
ASTR 606  Radiative Transfer
ECMT 674  Economic Forecasting
PHYS 641  Extragalactic Astronomy
EDTC 641  Educational Game Design
PHYS 642  Astronomical Observing Techniques and Instrumentation
PHYS 643  Stellar Astrophysics
PHYS 644  Cosmology
PHYS 645  Galactic Astronomy
PHYS 646  Radiative Transfer

Change Course Requests – February 7, 2013
PHYS 606  Quantum Mechanics
PHYS 607  Statistical Mechanics
PHYS 611  Electromagnetic Theory
PHYS 615  Methods of Theoretical Physics I
PHYS 619  Modern Computational Physics
PHYS 624  Quantum Mechanics
LCS 622  Equine Disease and Epidemiology

Special Consideration Item
The College of Liberal Arts is requesting that a name change for the Master of Arts in Modern & Classical languages with an emphasis in Spanish to a Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies.

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – UCC REPORT
Change in Courses – February 8, 2013
PHYS 221  Optics and Thermal Physics
PHYS 302  Advanced Mechanics I
PHYS 303  Advanced Mechanics II

New Courses – February 8, 2013
Texas A&M University at Galveston
MAST 480  Honors Seminar in Service Learning

Change in Courses – February 8, 2013
Texas A&M University at Galveston
MARE 303  Marine Thermodynamics
Department of Maritime Systems Engineering
Course prefix change from MASE to OCSE - see memorandum from Dr. Donna Lang and Dr. Martin Miller

Change in Curriculum – February 8, 2013
Texas A&M University at Galveston
Department of Marine Biology
Minor in Marine Biology – requirement changes

Special Consideration – February 8, 2013
Texas A&M University at Galveston
Department of Maritime Systems Engineering
B.S. in Maritime Systems Engineering
Request for a degree program name change

W-COURSES
Courses submitted for W Certifications – February 7, 2013
OCNG 424  Introduction to Biological Oceanography

Courses submitted for W Recertification – February 7, 2013
INTS 481  Senior Seminar in International Studies
LAND 442  Professional Practice
PSYC 203  Elementary Statistics

Course submitted for C Recertification – February 7, 2013
ANSC 316  Equine Selection and Judging
ENTO 435  Case Studies in Problem Solving

Core Curriculum Council
Foundational Component Area: Communication
ENGL 104  Composition and Rhetoric

Foundational Component Area: Creative Arts
ARCH 249  Survey of World Architecture History I
ARCH 250  Survey of World Architecture History II
ENDS 101  Design Process
ENDS 115  Design Communication Foundations
THAR 201  Introduction to World Theater

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture
ARCH 213  Sustainable Architecture
GEOG 202  Geography of the Global Village

Foundational Component Area: Life and Physical Sciences
GEOG 205  Environmental Change
OCNG 251  Oceanography
OCNG 252  Oceanography Laboratory
SCSC 105  World Food and Fiber Crop
Committee Reports

SEBAC Report

SEBAC Report
Walter Daugherty
March 18, 2013

As the Faculty Senate's non-voting representative, I attended the regular meeting of the System Employees' Benefits Advisory Committee (SEBAC) February 26, 2013. Here are the highlights:

1. With the addition of former Scott & White customers and the removal of outsourced employees, there are now 48,931 covered health-care enrollees, a net increase of about 10,000.

2. Insurance for students other than graduate student employees will be consolidated into a single System plan.

3. The state contribution is expected to increase 7 to 8 per cent, except for employees with other insurance, in which case the state contribution will be limited to $50.

4. However, our premiums will likely not see a corresponding reduction, due to two more Obamacare taxes' taking effect in 2014 at a cost of over $3 million per year.

5. Obamacare will also require part-time employees working 30 or more hours per week, including summer student workers, to be covered as full-time employees, with out-of-pocket expenses limited to 9% of four times the poverty level. The current TAMUS policy of requiring 4-1/2 months' work at 20 hours per week or more to be covered (and receive half the state contribution) is not allowed by Obamacare. Instead, there are new IRS "lookback" and "stability" regulations (26 CFR 154 and 301) which require that if an employee worked at least 30 hours per week in the previous six months without coverage, then the employee must be given coverage for the next six months.

6. Other pending bills in the legislature include a plus-one plan with no state contribution, pharmacy management (which would affect Blue Cross and Medco), a high-deductible "consumer-directed" plan like that of the state Employee Retirement System, and refiled bills concerning podiatrists, sonograms, covering post-traumatic stress disorder as a mental health issue, and requiring all blood tests to include testing for HIV.

7. TAMUS will do a "wellness survey" to see what each campus is doing and target ways to help employees and reduce claims. For example, around the system the most diabetics are in south Texas and in Bryan/College Station, so the system could highlight doctors who are specialists in diabetes treatment and management in those two regions, recommend finger pricks when a full blood panel is not required, etc. Any such "wellness projects" would be funded from system reserves, i.e., from the health plan.
8. In response to a senator’s request for guidance on selecting an ORP/TDA vendor, I asked SEBAC to survey employees for their experience with the seven active vendors.

Old Business

New Business

Committee of the Whole
Senator Funkhouser (COALS) asked for details concerning how it can be determined, after the merger of several itemized student fees into a single University Advancement, how each of the prior targeted recipients fared. Provost Watson provided this answer: “...Each of the participants except the Library and IT, who had successfully requested increases, received the same amount that had been provided the previous year; the Library and IT did receive an increase. The ‘energy fee’ established when costs were overwhelming the University is still collected but due to a new highly efficient system, can be reallocated. The President will have to decide the basis for collecting the students’ assessed portion of expenses for renovation of Kyle Field will be collected, given that the administration and Student Senate resolutions had different outcomes....”

Senator Carlson (GEOS) asked if others found “Blackboard” as difficult to use as he does. Provost Watson suggested a faculty panel had decided it was the best system available at the time, but that changes may be coming. (Rumor says the new system may require 10 hours of training before use!)

Adjourn