TEXAS A&M FACULTY SENATE
ROUNDUP REPORT

Texas Council of Faculty Senates Spring Meeting
February 23-24, 2001

FACULTY SENATE ACTIONS

Proposed Rule on Technology Mediated Instruction and Technology Mediated Materials. TAMU recognizes the essential role intellectual creativity plays in furthering the interests of the University. With rapidly changing technologies in telecommunications, visualization, and pedagogy, the higher education community as a whole is moving into distance learning and all forms of technology mediated instruction. A proposed rule was approved at the November 2000 Faculty Senate meeting which is applicable to copyrightable materials that are Technology-Mediated Materials developed to facilitate and support Technology-Mediated Instruction. It will be interpreted in conjunction with the Ethics Policy, System Regulations, Faculty Consulting, Outside Professional Employment and Conflicts of Interest, which related to participation in private consulting and professional employment by faculty members and their counterparts in research and extension agencies.

Resolution on Emeritus Procedures. At the January 2001 meeting of the Faculty Senate, an addition to the current Emeritus Policy was approved. The addition states that when a faculty member in good standing dies while in active service, a posthumous award of emeritus status can be recommended to the Board of Regents as an appropriate gesture of respect upon request by the faculty members’ department, provided the request is submitted not more than two years after the death occurred.

An Administrative Framework for Interdisciplinary Programs. A proposal for a method of administering interdisciplinary programs at TAMU was approved at the November 2000 Faculty Senate meeting. The appropriate mechanism for administering such programs in conformity with TAMU’s strong college model is one that utilizes the Council of Deans as the principal overseer of academic programs and ensures that the involved departments are empowered to cooperate effectively. This would provide a new step by adding to University procedures for establishing either an interdisciplinary degree program or an undergraduate or graduate interdisciplinary degree program.

REQUESTED FOCUS TOPICS

Texas A&M University Rules can be viewed at http://rules.tamu.edu.

Stopping the Tenure Clock. Excerpt from University Rule 12.01.99.M2: Under some circumstances the probationary period (“tenure clock”) may be extended upon petition by the faculty member, positive recommendation by the department head and dean, and approval by the Dean of Faculties.

The tenure clock will be extended in case of leave without pay or reduction in service to 50% time for a semester or academic year, provided the leave is not taken solely for the purpose of pursuing activities that will enhance the faculty member's qualifications for
tenure and promotion.

An extension of the tenure clock may be requested in the absence of leave without pay or reduction in service, when a faculty member encounters circumstances that may seriously impede progress toward demonstrating qualification for award of tenure and promotion. Circumstances that may justify approval of such an extension include, but are not limited to, serious illness or injury; responsibility for the primary care of an infant or small child; responsibility for the primary care of a close relative who is disabled, elderly, or seriously ill; or other serious disruptions of the probationary period for unexpected reasons beyond the faculty member’s control. A stoppage of the tenure clock for reasons of primary care of an infant or small child will be considered a presumptive right.

The probationary period will normally be extended for one year, but an extended period may be requested for compelling circumstances. Extensions for more than one year must also be approved by the Provost.

The expected standard of achievement at the time of review for tenure and promotion will not be increased because of the additional time allowed.

Requests for extension must be made no later than December 31 of the year preceding the tenure review process, but should be made as soon as possible upon the discovery of the circumstance indicating the need for extension.

**Policies on Parental Leave.** Excerpt from University Rule 31.03.02.M1: Under certain circumstances, employees are entitled to parental leave of absence for the birth of a child or the adoption, or placement for foster care, of a child under three years of age. Under certain circumstances, employees may take up to 12 weeks of leave during a fiscal year because of the following reasons: (1) the birth of a child; (2) the adoption, or placement for foster care, of a child; (3) to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition; or (4) a serious health condition of the employee. Family and medical leave runs concurrent with sick leave. (For more information, see System Regulation 31.03.05, Family and Medical Leave.)

**Evaluation of Administration.** Policies have been established for faculty participation in the selection, evaluation and retention of the following administrators: President, Provost, Deans, and Department Heads.

**Burning Issues.** Bonfire, faculty salaries, and Blinn Team proposal.