

## **TAMU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

February 10, 2020

3:00pm

Rudder 601

<http://facultysenate.tamu.edu>

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Speaker Andrew Klein called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

### **GUEST SPEAKER**

Speaker Klein introduced guest speakers: Mr. Kevin McGinnis, Chief Compliance Officer; Dr. Jocelyn Widmer, Assistant Provost for Academic Innovation; and Dr. Juan Garza, Assistant Vice President for Academic Services & Director of Provost Information Technology Office; and welcomed them to the podium.

Mr. McGinnis provided updated information on the U.S. Department of Justice inquiry regarding ADA compliance of our electronic teaching platforms. Many people across campus have been working to supply the large data request, however, the DOJ has narrowed the data request. As a result, data collection efforts have been put on hold pending further discussions with the DOJ.

Dr. Jocelyn Widmer and Dr. Juan Garza supplied updates on the new Learning Management System (LMS), Canvas. The implementation of the new LMS will be a complex process involving multiple units on campus. They are coordinating the technical operations phase including the following activities:

- understanding the data that exists in Blackboard and the existing feeds between Blackboard and Banner;
- planning for close alignment between Canvas and Banner;
- leveraging Canvas with other services at TAMU to tighten integrations;
- setting up a vanity URL ([canvas.tamu.edu](http://canvas.tamu.edu));
- acquiring a new sandbox environment to be able to test integrations over time and not be limited to the test, beta, and production environment of our main instance of Canvas;
- and carrying out an extensive analysis and then re-building the middleware (eCampus Tools) to be able to support a more contemporary and secure interface between Banner and Canvas moving forward – particularly challenging will be the custom grade pass-back from Canvas to Banner. The data structure of this middleware is critical to our ability to grow and innovate our instance of Canvas in the future.

The team of presenters fielded questions and comments from the following Senators:

Jorge Alvarado, College of Engineering  
Tony Cahill, College of Engineering  
Catharina Laporte, College of Liberal Arts  
Adam Kolasinski, Mays Business School  
Andrew Klein, College of Geosciences

Speaker Klein thanked all of the presenters for speaking to the Senate.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Ms. Emilie Algenio**, Libraries, Authors' Addenda

**Dr. Julie Harlin**, *Entering Mentoring Faculty Series*

**Speaker Andrew Klein**

TAMU Faculty Senate & UT Austin Joint Meeting, Monday, March 2, 10am-3pm

Upcoming Awards – New Service Award, new Shared Governance Award, Aggie Spirit donations, Stadelmann nominations

## **SPEAKER COMMENTS**

Speaker Klein welcomed regular guests and Senators, sharing recent work of the Senate:

- The Executive Committee (EC) heard from Jeff Risinger, Vice President for Human Resources and Organization Effectiveness, on a variety of issues including Workday, CHI-St. Joseph, and concerns brought by SEBAC representative Gregory Heim. He encouraged Senators to bring any HR-related issues to the EC who would then contact Mr. Risinger for resolution.
- The EC met with Chancellor Sharp and others in his cabinet: James Hallmark (Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs), Jon Mogford (Vice Chancellor for Research) and Billy Hamilton (Deputy Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer). Significant development is coming to RELLIS and the Houston Medical Complex, which will bolster teaching and research. The System is also working on technological tools that will make it easier for students to transfer classes among system schools and help students at community colleges understand how what they take at community colleges will fit into our degree plan. We are scheduled to continue meeting quarterly with Chancellor Sharp.
- Several members of the Core Curriculum Council traveled to Galveston on Friday, meeting with a number of faculty and administrators about Core Curriculum and APT issues. The group was treated to a first-class tour of campus by two student ambassadors. He encouraged Senators to cross the bridge to Pelican Island and visit the campus when in Galveston. Other members of the EC and Speaker Klein will attempt to visit our other campuses this semester.
- Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee met with the co-chairs of the Subcommittee on the Status of Non-tenure Track Faculty (Erik Prout & Lorinda Cohen-Gomez) to discuss how the Senate can facilitate the success of this reporting committee.
- A task force is continuing to work towards updating the minimum University Syllabus requirements and hopefully the Senate should have a document to vote on in a few months.
- Thanks to Bruce Neville who continues to work on Bylaws and constitutional changes.
- Senators were reminded that the work of the Senate is primarily done in committees, which is why attendance is so important. Committee Chairs were asked to be prepared to present their committee's report at the April Senate meeting.
- The Senate is gearing up for elections with nominations beginning on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Everyone was encouraged to be on the lookout for more information. Reapportionment has been done as required by our constitution; a report on this will be presented later in the meeting.
- Speaker Klein gave a personal shout-out to the Posse Scholarship Program administered through Launch and all the faculty and staff mentors who support this program. For those not familiar with it, the Posse Scholars program provides outstanding students chosen by the Posse Foundation for exceptional leadership skills with intensive faculty mentoring and small group interactions. It has brought to campus an exceptional cadre of outstanding students from Houston and Atlanta, benefitting the University in many intangible ways. Kudos were offered for those in the DOF office who support this program.

- He stated that March's guest speaker would be Dr. Carol Fierke, TAMU's Provost.

Speaker Klein closed his remarks hoping to see many Senators at the Joint Meeting on March 2.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The motion passed to approve the January 13, 2020 minutes as distributed. **Attachment A – Passed**

**CONSENT AGENDA – Passed – FS.37.298** (Full *Consent Agenda* with FS #'s can be found below *Adjournment*.)

The motion passed to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

## **COMMENTS ON CURRICULAR ITEMS**

Speaker Klein highlighted PETE 660 - Technical Writing and Presentations for Petroleum Engineers, stating that when he talks to individuals he knows in the petroleum and other industries, they are more than happy to tell him how important good communication skills are, and how not all students possess strong communication skills, so courses like these are valuable.

He also commented on something he heard from colleagues at Galveston last week, made in the context of core curriculum assessment, that he felt Senators should contemplate. This has to do with the perceived ownership, or lack thereof, of classes taught across TAMU's multiple physical campuses. There are a number of classes, such as ENGL 104 or MATH 141, that are taught across the physical, and increasingly virtual, campuses. There is a need to make sure that everyone teaching them, whether in College Station, Qatar, Galveston, McAllen or elsewhere, feels they have an ownership stake in these classes. The Senate often states the curriculum is under the purview of the faculty, so this is an area of shared governance where the Senate should lead. As the teaching of these classes is truly global, it is probably time that decision-making about these courses extends past faculty who happen to geographically be located on TAMU's main campus. He closed by hoping that many Senators could imagine teaching a course that they felt little control over.

He then asked if any Senators wished to highlight any other curricular items. None did.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Core Curriculum Council Course Report – Attachment B – Passed – FS.37.299**

The motion passed to approve the Core Curriculum Course Report as presented. (*CCC Report* with FS # can be found below *Adjournment*.)

## **OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**2020 Faculty Senate Reapportionment Report – Attachment C – FS.37.300**

Senators Janice Epstein and Heather Ramsey presented the attached report, fielding questions and comments by Senators Angie Hill Price, College of Engineering; Dr. Blanca Lupiani, Dean of Faculties; Clint Magill, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences; Mark Sicilio, College of Medicine; and Greg Heim, Mays Business School.

A motion was then made and passed to approve the 2020 Faculty Senate Reapportionment Report as presented.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was conducted.

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Speaker-Elect John Stallone convened the Committee of the Whole.

### **Angie Hill Price, College of Engineering**

Senator Price wanted Senators to know that when submitting a new course, the developer selects the type of grading: with a grade, satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U), or both. The course then moves through the approval process (including the Senate) and prior to the Coordinating Board it goes to the Registrar, who automatically selects “grade” and “S/U.” When scheduling the course, if you do not look at the grading options it will default to both “grade” and “S/U” so if you want it to be taken only for a grade, the scheduler must make sure “S/U” is not selected.

### **Jose Fernandez-Solis, College of Architecture**

Senator Fernandez-Solis spoke about the risks of contracting the coronavirus. He asked whether the administration has any contingency plans for dealing with an outbreak on campus.

### **Clint Magill, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences**

Senator Magill expressed concern about the options being offered on MyEvide for earning the health benefit payment reduction. He wondered what the purpose of these options are.

### **Julian Leibowitz, College of Medicine**

Senator Leibowitz responded to coronavirus question. There is a task force for preparedness on which he serves since he has studied coronavirus for 40 years.

### **Greg Heim, Mays Business School**

Senator Heim addressed the MyEvide comment as it is under the purview of SEBAC. Many of the new options for receiving the discount were derived from data analysis done by TAMUS, oriented toward driving the faculty to use the different services that TAMUS is paying for to increase employee wellness.

### **Darlene McLaughlin, College of Medicine**

Senator McLaughlin requested more information on the details about the Houston medical facility shared at Chancellor Sharp’s visit to the EC. Speaker Klein encouraged her to look at the minutes from the recent board meeting in Laredo.

### **Mark Sicilio, College of Medicine**

Senator Sicilio commented on the faculty salary information provided in the Texas Tribune; that he has heard the salaries for the COM is down and we should look into that.

### **Jorge Alvarado, College of Engineering**

Senator Alvarado asked if President Young would be invited to return to speak to the Senate this year, and if he is meeting with the EC on a regular basis. Speaker-Elect Stallone answered that there is not currently a plan for President Young to address the Senate this spring, and that we have not met with him as frequently as we would like.

Speaker-Elect John Stallone turned the meeting back over to Speaker Klein.

## ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22pm.

**ATTACHMENTS BELOW: Approved Consent Agenda, Core Curriculum Council Report**

## CONSENT AGENDA

### GRADUATE COUNCIL

**Change in Courses – *Passed* – FS.37.298**

[AERO 602: The Theory of Fluid Mechanics](#)

[MEMA 613: Principles of Composite Materials](#)

[PETE 660: Technical Writing and Presentations for Petroleum Engineers](#)

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*End of Consent Agenda*

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## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**CORE CURRICULUM COUNCIL COURSE REPORT – *Attachment B – Passed* – FS.37.299**

**New Courses Submitted for Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy & Culture**

[INTS 211-GE: Foundations in Cultural Studies](#)

**New Courses Submitted for Foundational Component Area: Life/Physical Sciences**

[FIVS 205-GE: Introduction to Forensic and Investigative Sciences](#)

[GEOS 110-GE: Disasters and Society](#)

**New Courses Submitted for Foundational Component Area: Social & Behavioral Sciences**

[URPN 203-GE: Smart Cities: Bit, Bots and Beyond](#)

**New Courses – Cultural Discourse**

[SCSC 201-CD: Great Plains Settlement and Farming](#)

**New Courses – International and Cultural Diversity**

[ESSM 314-ICD: Principles of Rangeland Management Around the World](#)