

Faculty Senate Meeting

3 December 2010
12:00 noon - 2:30 pm
WHTC 250

- I. Call to Order by Dr. Riggs at 12:07 p.m.
- II. Roll Call : **Present:** Dr. M. Bennett, Dr. G. Clarke, Ms. V. Garcia, Dr. A. Limon, Mr. J. Maxstadt, Dr. M. Munoz, Dr. J. Norris , Dr. L. Prieto, Dr. C. Sung, Mr. B., Townsend, Dr. F. Rhodes, Dr. A. Ramirez, Dr. W. Riggs
- III. The minutes of the November meeting were approved.
- IV. Our guests Dr. Keck and Dr. Arenaz were given the floor.

The President and the Provost have just returned from a Board Meeting at College Station and there is nothing definitive to report about the recent budget cuts and how they may affect us. The worst case scenario is that we will receive a budget cut from the State of between 15 - 25% with a high probability of it being 20%. Our Board would like our University to respond by saying that everyone will teach more and we will have bigger classes because they have the perception that we as a University are not working hard enough. But, they are allowing us to determine how we should make these cuts and the President and the Provost wants this to be an open process where everybody knows the numbers and the goal. Budgetary information will be disseminated from the Vice Presidents to the Deans to the Department Heads and the Departments and every one should start discussions and help provide options about what we will do when the budget cut occurs.

It was announced that the student's voted to increase the Athletics fee. Depending on enrollment, this should allow us to completely uncouple athletics from academic funding. The fee increase will still have to be approved by the Board.

The President and the Provost expressed tremendous gratitude to the Handbook Committee for their fine work. Several revisions that never made it to the President or the Provost for approval were not included in the now 'approved' handbook. Two of these revisions were requested to not be reenacted on.

- In case of financial exigency, layoffs will be based on seniority. Because financial exigency is already covered in the A&M System Rules.
- Moving from 2 consecutive years to 3 consecutive years for the time of review of the substandard performance of a Faculty, because this could be perceived as us being less concerned about the welfare of our students.

V. Old Business

Ombudsman status: Dr. Riggs will write the announcement for the position and intends to get it out before the Christmas break and will probably put a closing date on the position by mid-February. Then the Senate will review the nominees and pass on their recommendation to the Provost so that a choice can be made by April or May and the position could be staffed by the Fall.

Administrator Evaluation and Student Evaluation update: Mr. Townsend reported that the Assessment Committee has completed their review of the newly revised Administrator Evaluations. The Senate was asked to forward any questions that they would like to see included in the annual Faculty Senate Evaluation. The Assessment Committee recommended that for the Spring 2011 the Faculty be given three options for Student Evaluation:

- use the Chancellors Teaching Excellence Award questionnaire as is,
- use the Chancellors questionnaire as modified by the Assessment Committee:
 - the wording was changed on some of the questions to make them more relevant to a broader classroom situation;
 - a less confusing numbering system to be incorporated in the responses
- use the current University of Washington Evaluation form.

It was suggested that the Assessment Committee look into how changing the evaluation tool would impact large classes and how it could be compared with the Wash U. form as a tool for the over-all evaluation of a Faculty's performance. It was also suggested that the Assessment Committee look into the possibility that the Chancellor would accept a modified version of his Teaching Excellence Evaluation for purposes of receiving the award.

There was considerable discussion on having Faculty choose the 4 questions from the Chancellors Questionnaire and having the Administrators accepting those questions that the Faculty approve as a means of evaluating their overall teaching performance. Mr. Townsend was asked to bring these discussions up at the Provost Counsel Meeting to let them know the Senate's concerns.

Definition of an Administrator: Dr. Riggs provided a handout to the Senate which will serve as a model for trying to define what an 'Administrator' is. It was requested that all comments on formalizing this definition should be emailed to Dr. Riggs.

System Document on faculty workloads/salaries: The Faculty Work and Morale Committee was asked to help come up with a template that would show that Faculty do a 40 hour work week in the performance of their duties.

VI. New Business

Handbook vote: Mr. J. Maxstadt presented several changes and corrections to the handbook for the Senate's approval. All of the following items were approved:

- in the History section we were Texas A&I before we were Texas A&M
- in the Ethics section some portions that quoted System policy needed to be changed to reflect the current wording in System policy
- the System has removed Sexual Harassment as a separate policy and placed it under Discrimination Policies
- Make a brief paragraph for Political Activity to summarize the important points and refer the rest to current System policies and regulations
- Under Academic Freedom, paraphrase the most important points and refer the rest to System policy so that there is no undue duplication in wording with System policy
- Our statement of what the Faculty Handbook does and is.

Editorial work will continue with the appendices, the index and placement of the new Honor Code. Since some of the changes that were previously made to the Handbook were not included in the now 'approved' Handbook, those changes will have to be revoted on by the Senate and the Administration and approved by the Faculty if they are to become part of the Handbook.

VII. Committee Reports: See previous Old Business section

VIII. Other Business

2010 - 2011 Agenda / Faculty Agenda Questionnaires: Dr. Riggs is preparing the progress report and the final report will be placed on our website.

Handbook Issues: There was discussion in that there are no criteria in the Handbook for the Chair's input on everyone's PP&E in the College of Arts and Sciences. And, according to the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Senate should vote on any changes that are made to such criteria. Such changes should be resolved early in the calendar year because PP&E's follow the calendar year and not the academic year.

It was pointed out that the Senate should communicate what goes on in these meetings to the Faculty.

It was announced that the Library has about three times as much money as is normal for book, audio/video and database materials so we need to get the requests in earlier so that the Librarians can process them before April 1st of next year.

We will have a Faculty Senate Meeting on Jan. 21st. This was voted on and approved.

IX. A motion was made to adjourn, seconded and approved at 3:10 p.m.