Faculty Senate Minutes

Regular Meeting: January 20, 2016

Island Hall 323

Attendance: Senators Acker, Araiza, Ayarzagoitia, Blalock, Bland, Day, Harrel, Klaus, Katz, Kutil, Loveland, Martinez, Mollick, Reinhardt, Spaniol, Starek, Valadez,

Guests: Lionel Cassin, Amanda Drum, Ed Evans, Interim Provost Ted Guffy, John Paul Regalado, Amy Aldridge Sanford, Terry Tatum.

1. Deputy Speaker Spaniol called the meeting to order at 2:09 PM.
2. Senator Acker moved to approve the meeting agenda, Senator Ayarzagoitia seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote (unanimous).
3. Senator Katz moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2016 Faculty Senate meeting; Senator Blalock seconded the motion. No corrections or discussion. The motion passed by voice vote (unanimous).
4. Speaker’s Report
   1. Deputy Speaker Spaniol announced that Speaker Ozymy’s was not able to attend due to the birth of his son. Several statements of congratulations and support followed.
5. Guest Speaker I: Terry Tatum, VP Finance and Administration - Overview of University Budget
   1. VP Tatum presented a slide show related to the FY 2017 operating budget with the following highlights:
      1. Appropriations - $40,092,000 (GR less TRBs) for FY 2017. This number was about $500,000 less than FY 2016.
      2. Hazelwood Exemptions – 14% increase in FY 2016 projected to increase another 14% in FY 2017. FY 2017 exemptions estimated to be just short of $6.2 million.
      3. Tatum noted that budgeting is a multi-stage process that involves the following steps: (1) Budget Office projects available resources, (2) budget planning information sent to campuses, (3) departments & colleges review budget and adjust categories, submit new requests, and update budgets for self-supporting programs, (4) Vice Presidents review reports and prioritize new requests, (5), VPs submit requests for review/approval by the President’s Cabinet (6) university incorporates approved submissions into the operating budget proposal and (7) budget presented to the BOR for approval.
      4. FY 2017 new allocations requested included $3.6 million in new funds for enrollment and rate growth and $930K for set aside funding. These allocations decreased by $764K for exemptions, $94K for TPEG Set-Asides, $1.1 million for reserves, and $1.5 million for ongoing commitments leaving $1.1 million for allocations.
      5. 46% of TAMUCC FY 2017 revenue comes from tuition and fees with another $26 from state appropriations, 11% from student financial assistance, and 9% from contracts and grants. Total revenue for FY 2017 projected at $208.2 million.
      6. FY 2017 projected expenditures include personnel costs (53%), scholarships (21%), and operations and maintenance (18%). Total budgeted expenditures for FY 2017 projected at $188.2 million.
      7. FY 2017 new allocations permitted a 1% merit pool for faculty ($384K) and market and merit adjustments for staff ($780K).
      8. Reserves should be maintained at three months; but fell to 2.36 months for FY 2016.
      9. TAMUCC capital plan involves paying bonds out of energy savings. Capital allocations for new parking garage, new buildings and new physical plant projects questionable at this time.
   2. Tatum reported that appropriations bills were filed last week.
      1. State Senate certified smaller revenue amount for this year. Senate bill eliminated all special items, first section revenue, second section formula funding. Overall the proposal resulted in $28 million less in proposed funding for biennium.
      2. State House bills were less stringent and included cut in special item funding by 10% resulting in $4.25 million less in proposed funding for biennium.
   3. A senator asked how we compared to other institutions. Tatum indicated that both bills cut funding the same; but that the impact was different. Larger schools would be better off due to increases in formula funding; some schools, especially smaller schools, would be worse off due to their reliance on special funding.
   4. A Senator asked about the significance of 2010 in the comparison figures Tatum provided. Tatum said there were big cuts that year that we haven’t recovered from yet. The senator asked a follow up question about change in enrollment during same time. Tatum did not have those numbers but estimated it was about 50%.
   5. A Senator asked about the relevance of the 2 1/3 months reserve issue. Tatum noted that reserves decreased due to spending on a variety of things including replacing faculty/staff at higher market rates and leasing temporary classroom buildings. He stated that about $1.4 million of biennium funding will go toward rebuilding reserves to 3-month level.
   6. A Senator asked about the loan for the unmanned flight (drone) project; is the project self-sustaining as promised. Tatum indicated that the project was generating more revenue than it was, but still not enough to make loan payments. The University is picking up the difference. He noted that the program did not receive expected state funding last session and does not anticipate such funding this session. He also noted that program is “working hard to bring in customers”, but is struggling due to government actions (issuing permits to commercial entities).
      1. A Senator stated that the program was a disservice, using money that better used for educational purposes. Tatum stated it was visible program that enhanced the reputation of the institution.
   7. A Senator asked when reserves are measured. Tatum stated that measurement occurred at the close of the fiscal year.
6. Any questions about the budget should be directed to the Senate Budget Analysis committee (Eugene Bland, chair).
7. Guest Speaker II: Dr. Amanda Drum, Executive Director of Strategic Engagement Initiatives- Status on Smoke Free Campus Initiative
   1. Drum reported on the results of the 2016 survey.
      1. Demographics: 4% faculty, 24% staff, 69% students.
      2. 18% indicated they had consumed tobacco products.
      3. 56% supported a totally smoke-free environment, 13% supported changes to the smoke-free initiative (e.g., vaping allowed or establishing designated smoking areas).
      4. Reasons for supporting the SMI included health, second hand smoke, better environment, etc…
      5. Reasons for not supporting the SMI included desire for designated areas, infringement on individual rights, tobacco is a legal choice, etc…
      6. Changes recommended included establishment of designated areas and allowing vaping/dipping.
      7. Proposal 1 – total smoke free, not supported, proposal 2 – designated areas only. Proposal 2 approved. Group is working with Tatum to establish designated smoking areas on campus.
      8. Next step for the SMI group is to create campus readiness through awareness, education, cessation resources. Received $20k grant from American Cancer Society Tobacco-free Generation Campus Initiative grant program to support the Smoke Free 20 program.
         1. Tobacco Educational Summit, Feb 8 1:30 panel discussion, 2:30 desert reception & resource fair.
8. New Business: DUGS Amendment (Kutil)
   1. See handout provided at the meetings for to proposals for changing the Faculty Senate Constitution (and related documents) to provide representation for faculty in the Department of Undergraduate Studies. Opened for discussion.
      1. A Senator noted that, if passed, the initial terms should be staggered to match the process for other electoral units (staggered terms). Recommended that the person receiving most votes should be able to choose 1 or two years for his/her initial term.
      2. A Senator asked if the number of DUGS faculty is comparable to other colleges. The number of DUGS faculty is closer to Library (17 eligible to vote in DUGS, 9 in Library). A Senator noted that this is not a representative body or COLA would control the senate. Another Senator commented that the proposal, specifically the broader language (“two Senators representing the Department of Undergraduate Studies and any other faculty not affiliated with an academic college”, was preferable to ensure all faculty who are eligible to vote have representation long-term.
      3. A Senator requested a straw poll to determine preferences for the two proposed language changes. The 2nd option (listed above) appeared to receive widespread support. Committee will proceed with 2nd option language to propose specific changes to Senate Constitution and related documents for voting at next meeting.
9. Committee Reports
   1. Academic Affairs (Senator Kutil):
   2. Graduate Catalog Changes – Kutil noted that the Graduate Council was very thorough this year which expedited the Academic Affairs Committee review process.
      1. COE - Master’s in Athletic training language removed because program not approved by Graduate Council yet. All other catalog changes approved unanimously.
      2. COB – Modifications to EMBA consistent with new delivery method. New Accounting concentration for MBA and new Oil & Gas Accounting course. All changes approved unanimously.
      3. CONHS – All catalog copy approved unanimously. Noted a couple of issues with syllabi of new courses that didn’t affect catalog copy. College needs to edit syllabi before course begins.
      4. COSE – Changed name of Graduate Studies and some individual course changes. Computer Sciences restructured to offer three concentrations instead of original two. Master’s in Chemistry approved with minor corrections (typos) in course descriptions. Change in language to modify candidacy to completion timeline in Marine Biology. All changes approved unanimously.
      5. COLA –minor changes included removing EM certificate from the MPA, MA Studio Arts became MFA (terminal degree), and changes to electives and exit exam requirements. Unanimous approval by AA committee.
      6. Kutil recommended approval of all graduate catalog changes above. The motion passed by show of hands vote.
   3. Committee discussed Pathways Curriculum courses to replace ESLI. Full approval by UC after AA meeting, unanimous approval by AA committee via email.
      1. A Senator clarified that all courses will be in English department. Brief discussion followed.
      2. Kutil recommended approval of changes. Motion passed by show of hands vote.
10. Faculty Affairs (Senator Araiza):
    1. Five notice & comment items for next meeting. Araiza will distribute next week.
    2. Five items for voting at the February meeting. Araiza will distribute next week.
11. Committee on Committees (Senator Katz)
    1. Auditing rules/procedures to ensure following for faculty representation.
12. Awards, Bylaws, & Elections (Senator Mollick)
    1. Announcement for excellence awards – nominations due 27 Jan.
    2. Requesting investigation, 1st year advocate award nominee wasn’t able to attend conference because missed deadline for registration (didn’t find out about award receipt in time). Mollick will assist with investigation. A Senator asked Provost to remind staff to confirm receipt of important email.
13. Budget Analysis (Senator Bland):
    1. Tatum met with committee, shared info shared today, will share updates “sometime between now and never”.
14. Provost’s Comments
    1. Guffy expressed appreciation for information and reports. Pledged to keep us informed in a timely manner.
    2. A Senator noted that the Fall calendar has disappeared. Guffy said it is on PC agenda. Fall 2017 doesn’t have enough contact hours…adjustments to be approved at next PC meeting. Rendon working on 2017 to 2018.
15. For the good of the order – nothing.
16. Kutil moved to adjourn the meeting, Acker seconded. The motion passed by voice assent. Deputy Speaker Spaniol adjourned the meeting at 3:29 PM.