Faculty Senate Minutes

October 21, 2016

Island Hall 323

Attendance: Senators Acker, Araiza, Ayarzagoitia, Blalock, Day, Harrel, Katz, Klaus, Kownslar, Kutil, Loveland, Mollick, Ozymy, Reinhardt, Spaniol, Valadez, Watson, and Withers.

Guests: Kelly Quintanilla, John Paul Regalado, Kevin Houlihan, Amy Aldridge Sanford, Jennifer Anderson (Library), Cate Rudowsky (Library)

1. Speaker Ozymy called the meeting to order at 2:09 PM.
2. Senator Katz moved to approve the agenda; Senator Harrel seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed by voice vote.
3. Senator Katz moved to approve the minutes of the September Faculty Senate meeting; Senator Watson seconded the motion. No corrections or discussion. The motion passed by voice vote.
4. Speaker’s Report – Speaker Ozymy reported on the following issues:
   1. Results of the survey of faculty who attended the New Faculty Orientation in August were largely positive. While some participants expressed a desire to devote more time to reviewing their health care and retirement options, they otherwise reported that the orientation was useful.
   2. The Faculty Salary Survey endorsed by the Faculty Senate at the September meeting was sent to faculty on October 12, 2016.
   3. TAMUCC announced that Provost Quintanilla will be Interim President of the University starting in January 2017. She will provide more information in the Provost’s Report at the end of the meeting.
   4. Implementation of TAMU System Pay Plan includes plan implementation includes reordering job titles for staff. The Faculty Senate administrative assistant reclassified as Administrative Associate 4. This change included a well-deserved pay raise.
   5. Senate executive committee discussed issue of representation on Faculty Senate for faculty in the Department of Undergraduate Studies. This will require an amendment to the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws. Because such changes must follow a strict timeline, we will discuss the issue and request input today, but will not introduce an action item until spring. Awards, Bylaws and Elections Committee will provide more information during committee reports.
5. New Business
   1. Calendar Request/Drop Date – Senator Katz, one of the University Calendar Committee representatives, announced that the committee will meet again in November to discuss several action items.
      1. The last day for students to drop a class occurs before they have access to midterm grades in some terms. He made a motion for the senate to support the following statement for presentation to the Calendar Committee: “The Faculty Senate requests that the last day to drop a class happen significantly after midterm grades are reported to students. This will allow students who are failing at midterm to make an informed decision.” Senator Spaniol seconded the motion.
         1. A senator noted that midterm grading happens closer to ¾ of the way through the term; the midterm grading cycle closes on November 9 this term.
         2. Provost Quintanilla reported that the Student Government Association (SGA) plans to request a meeting with the Faculty Senate to discuss three issues with midterm grading and course drops: (1) the number of faculty/courses that do not report midterm grades, (2) the lack of time between posting of midterm grades and the drop date, and (3) a proposal to require a signature for dropping a class to make sure students understand all the ramifications of the decision.
         3. A senator noted that we need to check with financial aid to determine if there are any issues related to the timing of the drop date.
         4. A senator asked if the university loses money (funding) if we change the drop date. Provost Quintanilla indicated that was not an issue (tuition and funding based on earlier census dates).
         5. A senator noted that, some years ago, the drop date was the last day of class and asked if there is a reason for making that date earlier. Another senator noted that one of the issues with the earlier drop date related to the timing of student evaluations. Others noted that students are still evaluating courses under the current evaluation system after they drop the course. Provost Quintanilla stated that the evaluation process is changing; that the plan is to administer evaluations through Blackboard which would solve this problem unless we extend the drop date to the end of the term. Several senators noted that there may be some developmental value in obtaining feedback from students who drop the class. Provost Quintanilla will investigate the possibility of collecting the information but not including such responses in the faculty ratings used for performance evaluations.
         6. Several senators suggested that we propose a new drop date policy. Provost Quintanilla will ask Michael Rendon for suggestions/advice.
         7. Another senator proposed we start using Blackboard for reporting midterm grades to minimize delays in reporting the information to students.
      2. Senator Katz noted that the next Calendar Committee meeting is after the November Faculty Senate meeting. He moved to table the motion until that time; Senator Spaniol seconded the motion. The motion to table passed by voice vote.
6. Committee Reports
   1. Academic Affairs (Senator Kutil)
      1. Program and Catalog Approvals – AA needs to get through all catalog changes by the November meeting. Completed reviews of changes for the 2017-18 Undergraduate Catalog.
         1. Four “new” programs are revised degree offerings within existing programs: (BBA in General Business Online Completion, BA in Media Arts, Entrepreneurship & Innovation Certificate, and Minor in Dance). The committee noted that the Entrepreneurship and Innovation certificate was flagged by Undergraduate Council because it is only seven credits and won’t appear on transcripts. Academic Affairs added language clarifying that the certificate wouldn’t appear on transcripts to the associated catalog language.
            1. All four programs received unanimous support from Undergraduate Council and the Academic Affairs committee.
            2. Senator Kutil made a motion to approve all four programs. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
         2. Two issues with remaining catalog changes: (1) A wording change regarding the CLS program in COSE, and (2) A change in the foreign language requirement in CLA (students who are native Spanish speakers are taking Spanish 1; language related to proficiency exam). Undergraduate Council flagged two issues, Academic Affairs flagged another as problematic. The committee will consider revisions to address these issues at next meeting.
            1. Senator Kutil moved to approve all other changes to the Undergraduate Catalog. The motions passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
7. Faculty Affairs (Senator Araiza)
   1. Three items to be voted on at this meeting (introduced as discussion items at September meeting).
      1. 31.05.01.C1 Faculty Consulting, External Professional Employment and Conflicts of Interest. See handout from October 12 Faculty Affairs Committee meeting. Committee requests comments to Senator Araiza by November 4.
         1. Major concern is need to “request for approval” for outside work activities. Changed “request for approval” to “giving notification”. See changes in section 4.5 in copy of rule statement provided at meeting. Provost Quintanilla will bring up the issue at the next CAO meeting. Faculty find the language requiring approval offensive. A senator noted that the statement seems sufficient at general paragraph 1. Another senator noted that system policy uses term “approval”. Senators also discussed need to modify section 4.8 to address needs related to licensure requirements. Araiza requested language from nursing.
         2. Araiza asked for input on how to resolve conflict between system and proposed language. Kelly stated that language must be consistent with system. May take concerns about system policy forward (Kelly and Josh). Consider rewording for blanket approval with exceptions that require approval (instead of reverse). FA to look at it some more. Comments from colleges due to FA by November 4. Review with procedure statement 31.05.02.C0.01 External Employment.
      2. 12.01.99.C0.06 – Faculty Dismissals, Administrative leave, Non-Reappointments and Terminal Appointments. Committee identified issues with inconsistencies in time frames. Provost Quintanilla noted that many dates/time lines are set by system policy. She can take questions to system to ask for rationale. A senator suggested including a flow chart to clarify requirements. Faculty Affairs will compare to system policy. Comments to FA by November 4.
      3. 12.03.99.C1 Faculty Workload and 12.03.99.C1.01 Assignment of Faculty Workload Credit – questions about full time load. Is a 5/5 teaching load 100% of the faculty members workload expectations. What are the expectations for service and creative activity? What about teaching loads above 12 to 15 hours. FA will add requirement for development of college-level requirements and definition(s) of “full time”.
      4. Faculty Affairs will review above and hopefully present revisions for voting at the November meeting.
   2. Six “notice and comment items”: 09.02.99.C0.01 University Name and Insignia Usage, 09.02.99.CO.03 Commercial Filming, Videotaping, and Photography, 12.04.99.C0.01 Faculty Senate, 15.99.03.C1 Ethics in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work, 15.99.01.C1 Use of Human Subjects in Research, and 15.01.03.C1 Financial Conflict of Interest in Sponsored Research. Comments to Araiza by October 31 (5 PM). Comments will be compiled and forwarded to Kevin Houlihan on November 1.
   3. Three voting items introduced, to be voted on at November meeting. 32.01.01.C0.01 Complaint Process for Faculty Members, 32.01.02.C0.01 Faculty Ombudsperson, and 31.05.02.C0.01 External Employment (to be read in conjunction with 35.05.01.C1 from 7.1.1 above.
   4. Items to be delayed until November meeting: 31.99.99.C0.01 Academic Department Chairs and 31.99.99.C0.02 Assistant and Associate Deans. These were once “notice and comment” items but have become voting items. Documents need to be edited to incorporate language from flagship university that the FA committee wants in our documents.
   5. Anticipate 5 additional “notice and comment” items and three new discussion items (for voting in December) for the November meeting.
8. Committee on Committees (Senator Katz)
   1. No report from CoC.
   2. Senator Katz reported on issues related to University Calendar Committee. Calendars have different number of days in summer sessions and different number of total work days (271 to 278). Senator Kutil noted chronic issues with Monday classes meeting fewer times than Wednesday classes. Long term, we may want to change calendar to address issues. Normally calendar changes happen five years in advance due to contract with American Bank Center (governs scheduling of graduation ceremonies). A senator noted that there are precedents for making some changes in less than five years.
9. Awards, Bylaws, & Elections (Senator Mollick):
   1. ABE send Outstanding 1st Year Islander nominations to the Provost. One application for the Piper Professor Award is under review by the committee.
   2. New Awards – proposal to introduce Collegiality award(s). Option of having two or three categories: (1) department chairs, (2) deans and (3) faculty or combine 1 & 2 into single award group. Committee requesting opinions and comments to Senator Mollick by November 4.
   3. Senator Katz moved to extend the meeting to 4:30 PM, Speaker Ozymy seconded. The motion passed by show of hands (1 no vote).
   4. ABE would like to see award amounts increase for university awards. Provost Quintanilla said she would look for new money for such purpose.
   5. Discussion of possible Constitutional Amendment to add Faculty Senate representation for the Department of Undergraduate Studies. One option considered was to keep the size of the senate the same and merge the library with undergraduate studies plus other unaffiliated faculty (one seat for each). Librarians did not like idea and thought it important to maintain their current level of representation. The second option is to create a new electoral unit: “Other” or “Department of Undergraduate Studies and Other”.
      1. Speaker Ozymy made it clear we are not introducing a motion at this meeting or during the next meeting. The Executive Committee recommended waiting until the spring to allow us to dovetail faculty voting on amendments to Constitution (and related By-Laws) with the general election in march.
      2. Committee recommended delaying the “notice and comment” on 12.04.99.C0.01 Faculty Senate until spring since changes proposed above likely to require modification of language in university policy.
10. Budget Analysis (Senator Klaus for Senator Bland)
    1. The committee met with Terry Tatum for 2.5 hours. Tatum presented information on sources and uses of funds. He suggested that “some belt tightening is coming”. Committee members asked questions about raises, summer salaries, student fees for online courses, and other budget issues. The committee has additional questions and intends to meet with Tatum again soon. Committee intends to invite Tatum to Senate meeting in the spring.
    2. A senator asked a question about when we would know the details of any merit pool for next year. Provost Quintanilla said we would not know anything about Fall 2017 raises (if any) until after the legislative session ends in May 2017. Provost Quintanilla also noted that TAMUCC was required to submit budgets incorporating a 4% cut plus 10% extra (14% cut). She noted that, of the requests submitted by TAMUCC for the upcoming legislative session, merit/equity was a top priority.
11. Provost’s Comments
    1. Interim President – Quintanilla expects to spend lots of time in Austin. Her intention is to maintain attention on initiatives she started as Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. She stated that she intends to return to her current position after the system hired a new President. She also noted that they were meeting next week to discuss hiring an interim Provost/VPAA.
    2. Promotion &Tenure Issues – Quintanilla reported that we are working from the 2011 version of the Promotion document because the 2016 revision was not approved by the President’s Cabinet before the tenure timeline started in May. Issue with date concerns evaluations included in the dossier; 2011 version requires candidate to provide and 2016 version required dean to insert from faculty member’s record.
       1. Confusion about linking of tenure/promotion to full professor resolved. The procedures require concurrent consideration only for faculty applying for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.
       2. Confusion about inclusion of associate/assistant deans on department-level committees resolved. Administrative appointment limitation applies to college-level committee.
       3. A Senator asked about faculty holding the rank of Associate Professor (or below) should be voting on promotion decisions for faculty applying for promotion to Full Professor. Provost Quintanilla said that she believes this is not permitted on department or college-level committee, but will check for consistency in policies across colleges.
       4. A senator asked about the university “rule” 12.01.99.C2 Tenure (revisions approved by Faculty Senate in March 2016. This rule does not appear on the Academic Affairs website. Policy on the AA website is university “procedure” 12.02.99.C0.01 Tenure. In addition to change in level (rule to procedure) and document number, published document modified slightly from what senate approved last semester. Provost Quintanilla will investigate.
    3. Speaker Ozymy moved to extend the meeting to 4:45 PM, Senator Mollick seconded. The motion passed by show of hands (Senator Araiza voted no, Senator Katz abstained).
12. For the good of the order – There is a display of faculty at 6:00 PM at the Islander Art Gallery.
13. Speaker Ozymy moved to adjourn the meeting; Senator Mollick seconded. The motion passed by voice vote.
14. The meeting adjourned at 4:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen A. Loveland, Faculty Senate Secretary