Faculty Senate Minutes (DRAFT)

Regular Meeting: November 18, 2016

Island Hall 323

Attendance: Senators Araiza, Blalock, Bland (WebEx), Day (WebEx), Harrel, Katz, Kownslar, Kutil, Loveland, Martinez, Mollick, Ozymy, Reinhardt, Spaniol, Starek, Thiyagarajan, Watson, and Withers.

Guests: Kevin Houlihan, Kelly Quintanilla, John Paul Regalado, Amy Aldridge Sanford.

1. Speaker Ozymy called the meeting to order at 2:09 PM.
2. Senator Kutil moved to approve the meeting agenda; Senator Harrel seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote. .
3. Senator Harrel moved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2016 Faculty Senate meeting; Senator Katz seconded the motion. No corrections or discussion. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
4. Speaker’s Report
   1. Speaker Ozymy noted that Senator Katz agreed to act as Parliamentarian for this meeting.
   2. He explained that the Executive Committee agreed to add the motion regarding the proposed TAMUCC and TAMUK merger to the agenda as an emergency item. He also noted that President Killebrew (and other administrators) would arrive around 3:00 PM.
5. Old Business
   1. Motion supporting more time between midterm grades and the last day to drop a class tabled at the October meeting.
   2. Secretary Loveland read the motion from the October 21 meeting minutes. “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.”
   3. A senator requested clarification regarding the direction of the proposal; were we requesting that the deadline for midterm grades be earlier or that the drop date be later in the term. Senator Katz clarified that intention was to move drop date to later in term. After a brief discussion, Speaker Ozymy called for a vote. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
6. New Business
   1. Motion opposing the merger between TAMUCC and TAMUK.
      1. Speaker Ozymy explained that the merger plan was not transparent and did not appear to include input from TAMUCC faculty or other stakeholders. He noted that the original meetings presented the merger as merely an “idea”; but that subsequent information suggests it was a proposal.
      2. Speaker Ozymy moved to approve the following statement: “The Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Faculty Senate opposes the merger between TAMUCC and TAMUK.” Senator Spaniol seconded the motion.
      3. A lively discussion ensued with multiple senators commenting. A senator commented that the plan was severely lacking in detail. Another senator noted that such a plan would require buy in from multiple constituencies.
         1. Several senators noted that faculty in their area were opposed to the concept of a merger between the two, very different, institutions. Several other senators stated that some faculty viewed the merger as an opportunity; that while they might oppose the timing and lack of transparency in the current proposal, they saw several positive outcomes of a merger.
         2. Senator Araiza noted that the TAMUCC history (on the university’s Web site) doesn’t mention the lawsuit (LULAC vs. Richards, 1984), seen by many as the catalyst for the South Texas Border Initiative (STBI). The STBI provided resources to expand our programs and support universities in the border region that provide valuable access to higher education for Hispanics. She went on to note that the growth of TAMUCC has mostly focused on attracting students from more affluent parts of Texas and internationally; a merger to create a larger institution would likely make the problem worse instead of supporting our institution’s commitment to historically underserved populations. Growth has already diluted our focus on effective undergraduate teaching and education.
         3. A senator suggested adding “at this time” to the proposed statement to clarify that we were responding to the present proposal and not making a blanket statement opposing a merger or other alliance between TAMUCC and TAMUK. Another senator proposed adding additional language to document the reasons for our opposition (e.g., lack of transparency). Several senators noted that the proposal appears to have offended the local community and indicated that a strong statement of opposition might be preferable to a point-in-time perspective.
         4. Speaker Ozymy proposed to amend the motion to add the words, “Due to the lack of transparency and faculty input,“ to the beginning of the statement to clarify our position and still maintain the strong statement of opposition. Senator Loveland seconded the motion. The motion to amend the statement passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
      4. Secretary Loveland restated the motion to approve the following statement as amended: “Due to the lack of transparency and faculty input, the Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Faculty Senate opposes the merger between TAMUCC and TAMUK. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
      5. Speaker Ozymy reported additional information related to the merger he learned during his investigations. He stated that the proposal to create UTRGV was not a merger; the plan eliminated both original institutions and created a new institution. Sources at UTRGV reported multiple problems for faculty, staff, and administration. Both institutions were already commuter campuses, so the problems for students were not as significant as they would be with a TAMUCC/TAMUK merger. The new institution received large PUF funding instead of the much smaller HEF funding TAMUCC and TAMUK receive now. Without PUF funding, a TAMUCC/TAMUK merger would not work and that we cannot guarantee such funding for a merged institution. He noted that he believes the merger discussion will come back, if not during this legislative session then during the next. All constitutions should be involved from the beginning.
         1. Another senator noted that we already have low intention to graduate numbers (less than 60% of our students intend to graduate from TAMUCC) and that 1st year Islanders completion rates are very low. A senator who teaches in the 1st year program expects this number to be even lower this year; her students expressed concerns about the lack of stability; will TAMUCC still exist when they graduate? Another senator noted that the stability issue may also affect faculty recruiting.
         2. A senator noted that the idea of a TAMUCC/TAMUK merger circulated several years ago. At that time, the plan was to incorporate TAMUK into TAMUCC. The institution had problems at the time including enrollment declines and hostility between the faculty and the President. The rumor indicated that President Killebrew killed these discussions to avoid problems. He also noted that the decision to become a 4-year institution in the 1990s included campus wide involvement in the planning and that we still enjoy benefits of that process today.
      6. Speaker Ozymy advised faculty to “stay vigilant” to ensure involvement of all stakeholders if/when the merger issue arises again.
7. Committee Reports
   1. Academic Affairs (Senator Kutil)
      1. Six Fast Track Bachelor’s to Master’s Degree Programs: (1) BS and MS in Biology, (2) BS and MS in Computer Science, (3) BS and MS in Environmental Science, (4) BS in Geology and MS in Environmental Science, (5) BS and MS in Mathematics, and (6) BS in Geographic Information Science and MS in Geospatial surveying Engineering. All programs approved by the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. Unanimous approval by the Academic Affairs Committee
         1. Senator Kutil explained that the fast track programs all students to begin the BS and then apply for admission to graduate school at the end of their junior year. During their senior year, students may take two courses (six hours) of graduate-level courses. The program also them to then complete the MS with just 30 hours instead of the usual 36 hours.
         2. A senator asked if students were still required to take admissions test (GRE). Answer affirmative. Primary benefit to students is getting a head start on graduate work during senior year. Another senator noted that university waived the application fee for graduate studies.
         3. Senator Kutil moved to approve all six programs. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (16 for, 1 against).
      2. New program: Bachelor of Arts in Music Industry. Approved by Undergraduate Council and unanimous approval by Academic Affairs Committee.
         1. Senator Kutil moved to approve program. Motion passed by show of hands vote (unanimous).
      3. The committee received graduate catalog copy, but did not receive Graduate Council approvals in time to present at this meeting. Will present graduate catalog copy at the January meeting to make the February deadline for catalog changes.
   2. Faculty Affairs (Senator Araiza)
      1. Voting Items
         1. 12.01.99.C0.06 – Faculty Dismissals, Administrative Leave, Non-Reappointments and Terminal Appointments.
            1. Modification of section 4.1 to shift authority for randomly selecting hearing pool members from the Provost to the Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate also appoints members for individual panels to hear appeals.

A senator noted that FA committee voted to increase pool to 24 members. Araiza noted correction to document

* + - * 1. Section 4.3 added to reinforce the idea that service in the committee pool this is like jury duty.
        2. Committee made changes in several places to standardize timelines where possible except as in system policy. See comments in markup document provided at meeting.
        3. Unanimous approval of changes by Faculty Affairs Committee.
        4. Senator Araiza moved to approve the document. The motion passed by a show of hands vote (unanimous).
      1. 12.03.99.C1—Faculty Workload and 12.03.99.C1.01 Assignment of Faculty Workload Credit.
         1. Changes to University Rule document

Added 5.2 to require colleges to create policies within six months after Rule approved by President’s Cabinet.

* + - * 1. Changes to University Procedure document

Eliminated the word “seminar” in University Procedure section 1.1 because the word has different meanings across colleges and levels.

Modifications to sections 3.1 to require colleges to define “Large Lecture Classes” and “Large On-Line Lecture Classes”.

* + - * 1. Senator Withers moved to amend the document to unstrike the words “and by majority vote of” and delete sentence beginning with “Procedures will be in accordance with…” in section 5.2. Senator Kutil seconded the motion. The motion to amend the document passed by unanimous voice vote.
        2. Senator Araiza moved to approve the document as amended. To motion passed by show of hands vote (unanimous).
      1. 31.05.01.C1 – Faculty Consulting, External Professional Employment, and Conflicts of Interest.
         1. Committee amended document to restore previously deleted language required by system policy. Committee deleted section 4.6 that required faculty to report teaching at other institutions. Committee also modified section 4.9 to clarify that faculty required to maintain a current practice for licensure requirements will receive automatic approval and that such work will not be deemed a conflict of interest. The committee also added section 5 to provide a mechanism for faculty to appeal a denial of requests.
         2. Committee also crafted memo to voice concerns about system policy requirements to the system.

Provost Quintanilla noted that Provost Guffey would take the memo to the next Chief Academic Officers (CAO) meeting in February for further discussion.

* + - * 1. Senator Araiza moved to approve the University Rule document. The motion passed by show of hands vote (15 for, 2 against).
        2. Senator Araiza moved to approve the memo addressing concerns and present the memo to Provost Quintanilla for further distribution to CAP and system board (as applicable). The most passed by show of hands vote (16 for, 1 against).
    1. Notice & Comment Items –Three documents on I drive: (1) 11.99.99.C0.04 Academic Calendar Approval Process, (2) 33.04.99.C0.01 Service and Assistance/Emotional Support Animals on Campus, and (3) 22.04.99.10,03 Non-Research Animals on Campus. Please provide comments to Senator Araiza by December 2.
       1. A brief discussion of pets on campus and on the definition of pets versus service animals followed.
  1. Committee on Committees (Senator Katz)
     1. Committee to meet after meeting today to discuss review of university rules and procedures to identify references to university committees requiring faculty appointments.
  2. Awards, Bylaws, & Elections (Senator Mollick)
     1. Elections & Representation in CFE – Senator Mollick reported on issue that had deans appointing members to the CEF committee when the positions should be elected by each college. Noted that the Provost has already corrected the problem and that elections for positions commenced this week.
        1. Senator Mollick also reported issues with trust and questionable practices in college-level elections for university committees. Another senator suggested the creation of a university procedure governing the election process. Provost Quintanilla stated that such a policy sounded like a good idea and could either come from her office or be proposed by senate. ABE to consider language.
     2. Speaker Ozymy moved to extend the meeting to 4:15 PM; Senator Araiza seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.
  3. Budget Analysis (Senator Bland)
     1. Senator Bland was unable to report due to technical problems with WebEx feed. A committee member reported that the committee was meeting after Thanksgiving. Terry Tatum had a schedule conflict for the November meeting; committee will try to arrange his attendance at the January meeting.

1. Provost’s Comments
   1. Provost Quintanilla offered an emotional apology for her role in events related to the proposed merger. She stated that she was too trusting two weeks ago and this would not happen again; that she learned some tough lessons. She stated that her, “…eyes are wide open moving forward” and that she would “…go down fighting” to defend this institution.
      1. She believes we should focus on college readiness and on the 2nd largest group of young people in the country in the state of Texas. She stated that there was no reason to be concerned about enrollment.
      2. She also stated that she is “not pro football” and did not believe football was a legitimate motivation for a merger.
      3. She encouraged us to focus on “Islander Impact” and stated her intention to reinforce to the community what we do for community.
      4. She also noted that opportunities for collaborative research with other institutions are important. We should not make TAMUK our enemy due to this issue and should instead find ways to get past the “turf fighting” to find opportunities to work together for the benefit of both institutions.
2. For the good of the order
   1. Senator Araiza introduced two documents (Faculty Complaint Process and the Faculty Ombudsman procedures) available on the I-drive. These items will be discussed at the January meeting.
   2. A senator noted that there is food in the University Center this evening for the Dewali Festival.
3. Senator Ozymy moved to adjourn the meeting; Senator Withers seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 4:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen A. Loveland

Faculty Senate Secretary