Faculty Senate

Minutes

September 8, 2017

Island Hall 323

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Senators Attending:  Katelijne Acker, Glenn Blalock, Eugene Bland, Lisa Comparini, Vanessa Crocker, Catherine Harrell, Timothy Klaus, Edward Kownslar, Karen Loveland, Laura Martinez, Joseph Mollick, Miguel Moreno, Dorina Murgulet, Kimberly Reinhardt, Elizabeth Shope, David Smith, Frank Spaniol, Corinne Valadez, Kim Withers

Ex-Officio and Guests Attending:  Amy Aldridge-Sanford, Lauren Cifuentes, Ted Guffy, Kevin Houlihan, Kelly Quintanilla, Ben Soto

Call to Order:   Spaniol called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:  Valadez made a motion to approve the agenda.  Acker seconded.  The agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of April and August Minutes:  Smith made a motion to approve the April minutes.  Klaus seconded.  The April minutes were approved with one abstention.  Loveland made a motion to approve the August minutes.  Withers seconded.  The August minutes were unanimously approved.

Speaker's Report:  Spaniol first recognized President Quintanilla, who gave her report to Senate:  (1) She thanked everyone for getting the campus back in order after Hurricane Harvey, especially with helping the students get adjusted to the fall semester.  (2) The campus will receive weekly updates for volunteer and service learning opportunities for students and campus organizations.  (3) The campus had 12,461 students enrolled for the fall semester, but the campus has delayed de-registration because there were students still trying to get back from Houston.  There were drops in enrollment from international students and from first-time, full-time students.  (4) TAMU-CC will build a strong cooperative with Del Mar College.

After Quintanilla's report, Spaniol gave his report:  (1) Faculty were helping students adjust after Hurricane Harvey.  (2) He forwarded an email from the faculty senate of UT-Austin that gave us their support.  (3) The Provost search committee is underway and will review applications soon.  He will report on the process to the Senate.  (4) Dr. Piker, the university's Ombudsman, will attend the Senate meetings as a guest.  (5) Quintanilla has formed a task force to look at the plans for salary, equity and merit issues, as well as for post-tenure.  Step one will involve re-visiting the previous study and determine the progress from that study, and step two will involve generating a plan and them moving on.  The task force will also analyze a plan for summer school.  (6) He encouraged all senators to take more active leadership roles within the colleges.  He will also encourage the college deans to allow the senate representatives to speak for a few minutes during the college meetings.  He will also encourage open college forums.  (7) Faculty and staff members can now take six classes a year as a benefit.  (8) Senators will use the green cards at their seats to be recognized by the Speaker.  (9) During the April, 2017, meeting, the Senate approved a motion (with one abstention) to recommend to the 2017-2018 Senate to investigate governance issues in the College of Business.  Spaniol said that, even though the Senate is not an investigative body, he speaks with the Provost, Ombuds, and Executive Committee on a regular basis to address specific governance issues from all colleges as they arise.(10) Loveland will conduct the annual Faculty Senate survey of faculty members that will identify issues for Senate consideration this year.

Guest Speaker: Lauren Cifuentes, the Director of the Office of Distance Education and Learning Technology, spoke to the Senate about Blackboard and the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Committee (ITDEC). She discussed Blackboard’s Grade Center and how students can find out their current grades, adding that the office was integrating tools from Blackboard into the Grade Center. She asked for feedback and comments about these Blackboard and Grade Center. Several senators reported problems with hiding the running total column on Blackboard, but other senators discussed ways to hide that column. Not all faculty members use Grade Center, and a senator suggested that the colleges run a competition about the number of faculty members who use GC and award a prize to the college with the highest number of users. Cifuentes will consider that idea. Also, not all faculty members post mid-term grades on Blackboard; Guffy said that, while that practice was not currently mandatory, it was still highly recommended. Lastly, Cifuentes said that she would discuss the structure of the ITDEC with the Provost.

Old Business: None

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs: (1) Valadez met with Debbie Linares and Amy Aldridge-Sanford about the new University Curriculum Committee, which had been approved by the President’s Cabinet. The UCC will be activated during the spring semester. Before the spring, all members of the Academic Affairs Committee will to be trained on Curriculog, and training sessions will be scheduled. This training is also open to other interested faculty members. (2) The committee will review the documents for the certificate in dance, as well as the undergraduate music degree proposal that was sent back to the university.

Faculty Affairs: Harrell introduced three procedures that were also on the I: drive. The Senate will vote on the proposed revisions to those procedures at the next meeting, but she asked the Senate to send her feedback in the meantime.

Committee on Committees: (1) Smith was appointed as the Senate’s representative to the University’s Committee on Committees, but that committee has not met in two years. Guffy said that the university committee will start meeting soon to discuss appointments. (2) The librarians and the Department of Undergraduate Studies would like to serve on more university committees.

Awards, Bylaws and Elections: (1) Mollick sent out the announcement for the awards, which had a September 29 deadline. (2) The committee will need to conduct special elections to replace senators in the College of Nursing and the College of Science and Engineering. The lists of faculty members in both colleges will need to be updated before the ballots can be sent out. For these special elections, the Senate will use Qualtrix and paper ballots. (3) Mollick talked to Katharine Mason about using Qualitrix for the ballot, and she said using the software is not completely anonymous.

Budget and Analysis: (1) Bland said that they needed more members on this committee. (2) They were still trying to meet with Terry Tatum.

Liaison Report: (1) No reports from the Senate appointments to other university committees and councils. (2) Loveland suggested appointing a Senate representative to the Instructional Technology Task Force. (3) Spaniol was invited to a Staff Council meeting and was impressed, especially with the kudos system. The Senate will discuss whether to use the kudos system.

Provost’s Comments: (1) Guffy thanked the Senate for approving the large number of procedures at the end of the summer. He also thanked everyone for their work in starting the semester. (2) The appointment letters should go out to everyone on 9/12. (3) Due to several retirements in upper administration, the university was conducting four searches. They hoped to fill the positions by the end of the year.

For the Good of the Order: (1) Spaniol said that he would host a Senate functions at his home this year. (2) Spaniol will talk to the Senate Executive Committee about the kudos system.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Kownslar, Faculty Senate Secretary