

Approved Minutes - Faculty Senate
November 4, 2016

Present: Alex, Ambrose, Bartlett, Blanton, Blodgett, Branson, Commissiong, Craig, DeButte, DeOtte, Dursun- Kilic, Hartin, Ingrassia, King, Klaehn, Nam, Osei-Hwere, Ottoson, Revett, Shao, Tao, Seward, Stuntz

Absent: Lee, Lust, Meredith, Revett

Guest: Malvika Behl for Janet Hindman

1. **Call to order – 12:15 by DeButte**
2. **Minutes from last meeting unanimously approved**
3. **Old Business**

a. Student Evaluations

DeButte introduced Jarvis Hampton, he proceeded to provide an overview of the course evaluation process including a background for the new course evaluations. Jarvis told senators that the process changed last year after the committee appointed to review course evaluation options and vendors. The current system was selected by the course evaluation committee. Jarvis and his staff went from working with 2000 records on the old system to about 40,000 records per semester. Concerning the question of faculty having the autonomy to select dates for student access to course evaluations Jarvis explains that the faculty handbook states that evaluations must be completed by the last day of class. He added that his preference would be for faculty to be able to open and close evaluations but IOTA and other vendors reviewed did not have that option. Based on the current set-up Jarvis and his team are only able to access data for course evaluations through datatel instead of blackboard.

Senator were encouraged to remind faculty to review email notifications from IOTA to make sure instructor, course, department and college/stand-alone school information are listed correctly. Jarvis explained that that aspect of the system is overseen by IOTA and that faculty who notice incorrect information need to contact Dan at IOTA to correct such discrepancies. If faculty don't hear back from Dan after notifying him they should contact Jarvis right away. Vetting and discussions about when to open course evaluations are on-going according to Jarvis. Start and end dates for course evaluations and retrieved and sent to departments/department heads for vetting and approval. These dates are not determined by IOTA, they are determined by WT.

Jarvis explained that faculty can only see results of course evaluations after final grades are posted. Additionally faculty ratings are higher on the IOTA system compared to the old course evaluation system. The evaluation instrument itself is partly responsible for the higher scores/ratings faculty are seeing. The instrument is better because it eliminates validity issues by eliminating repetitive questions. Jarvis also reported significant improvements with student response rates and attributes the increase to the length of availability of evaluations to students.

Jarvis was asked if it was possible to remove students who don't attend from the list of respondents for course evaluations. He said it was possible but explained that option would need to be approved by the administration or the provost's office.

b. Surveying Students Dropping Classes

- i. What next steps would the Senate like to take? Reach out to Registrar to see if this is even possible?*
Senators were concerned about how the data from such surveys will be used and their potential impact on faculty merit increases for example.

4. New Business

a. Texas Council of Faculty Senates Report

Osei-Hwere attended the Fall TCFS meeting on behalf of the faculty senate president. The meeting went well and representatives from senates across Texas discussed the state of higher education in the United States and ways to improve the quality of college education and cost for our students. Additionally senators discussed ways to protect faculty detrimental political agendas and decisions.

TCFS screened the documentary “Starving the Beast” which explores the philosophy and players following the recent push to cut state support for higher education. TCFS is looking into the possibility of getting the film makers to approve screening the film across university campuses and communities to educate people and bring attention to the issue of defunding higher education.

Representatives also heard presentations about Title IX and discussed potential impact of the mandatory reporter compliance guide. Additionally representatives were encouraged to explore starting campus chapters of AAUP for faculty and encouraging faculty to consider becoming AAUP members.

5. Announcements

- Post tenure review process will be carried out this year, names for committee members will be drawn randomly at the senate meeting on 11/18. Meredith and officers will figure out a system.
- Faculty Athletics Representative will attend Faculty Senate meeting on 11/18
- Faculty Development Leave application process open, applications due 12/1

Meeting adjourned at 1:04pm.