

## Faculty Senate Minutes

April 5, 2019

**Senators Present:** Ambrose, Babb, Bartlett, Burnett, Clifton, Ingrassia, Kwan, Leitch, Li, Macdonald, Meljac, Revett, Rollin, Seth, Seward, Wang, and Woodyard.

**Senators Absent:** Castillo, Clewett, Curl, Davis, Franken, Garcia, Karaganis, King, Lewis, and Williams

**Substitutes:** Nick Flynn for Cathy Clewett, Sang Hwang for Yvette Castillo, Guglielmo Manfredi for Jeremy Lewis, and Enyoman Osei-Hwere for Noah Franken

**Call to Order:** Babb called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm in the Eternal Flame Room of the JBK.

**Guest Speaker:** President Wendler

The majority of President Wendler's discussion time revolved around Open Educational Resources (OER)/no textbooks. Throughout the discussion, Wendler emphasized the following points:

- OER/No textbooks is an idea not a policy; this includes core courses.
- Wendler feels it is his responsibility to suggest ideas for people to analyze and then decide if idea is good or not.
- Wendler agreed that some administrators heard mandate when he meant idea.
- Wendler feels that cost reduction via textbooks is worth discussing. For instance, new editions are many times not worth the money.

Senators made Wendler aware of the following items:

- Meljac discussed the need for a common text for a course particularly with part-time instructors. The English faculty already have the ENGL 1301 book cost down to \$35.
- Flynn has had negative reactions from students and parents when discussing OER. Flynn also warned of the need to make sure certain items are covered in a prerequisite course.
- Leitch discussed professional disciplines that might have issues because laws or regulations change.
- Osei-Hwere discussed the problems associated with technology changes and proprietary technology. In addition, she mentioned the bookstore having difficulty finding older editions of textbooks. Wendler encouraged faculty to try getting site licenses for technology issues.
- Seward brought up putting books on reserve in the library for students to use. Macdonald said that the number of students using the books on reserve have been increasing.
- Ingrassia stated that while we should be aware of college costs, focusing on textbooks might not be the best way. He pointed out the numerous other costs that students are charged such as athletic fees. Wendler mentioned the buy three-years housing and get one-year free deal as well as his idea for a new lower cost meal plan (i.e., baloney and ramen). But, he also stated that the athletics fee was probably not going away.

Wendler ended by discussing a new program called the WT Principal's Scholar program (WTPS).

Wendler started the program by sending letters to all high-school principals in the top 26 panhandle counties. He told the principals to send five students who they think should be admitted to WT and on

their word alone, the students are admitted. So far, fifty students have been admitted through this program. Wendler then expanded the program by sending the same letter to all 1A and 2A high schools in Texas.

Students admitted through WTPS also receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Ingrassia wondered how the regional accreditors would feel about this. Flynn thinks the letter suffices as permission.

**Approval of Minutes:** Meljac made a motion to approve the Faculty Senate minutes of March 22, 2019; McDonald seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Current and Pending (Old) Business**

#### *Instructor Promotion Committee*

The committee brought an instructor promotion proposal titled *Proposal to Allow Promotion of Exceptional Instructors to the Rank of Senior Instructor*. Committee Chair Ingrassia and Member Seward reviewed the basics of the proposal.

- Rational behind proposal is the need to recognize long-serving instructors, who meet certain criteria, with a greater sense of job security
- Basics of the proposal are from the instructor promotion policy in place at TAMU – College Station.
- Criteria for promotion includes longevity at WTAMU, instruction field qualifications, historical Outstanding and Excellent APS ratings, and approval from four levels of administration.
- Results of promotion are title change to Senior Instructor and 12-month notice of non-reappointment.

Over the past few years, faculty senate has sent various instructor promotion proposals to Dean's Council. This proposal will follow the same route. Even though the prior proposals were rejected, the high percentage of instructors on faculty makes this topic too big to drop.

Flynn made a motion that we approve the committee document and have Davis and/or Ingrassia present the proposal to the Provost for delivery to Dean's Council; Meljac seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### *Merit Increase Committee*

At previous meetings, Committee Chair Lewis asked senators to ask outside colleagues how raises are awarded. Ingrassia spoke with a colleague at TAMU – Commerce and Babb spoke with colleagues at Tarleton State and Sam Houston. All outside faculty are dealing with same thing we are.

The committee will conclude its efforts at the next meeting.

#### *Joint Student Faculty Committee on Academic Affairs*

Committee Chair Babb had a meeting scheduled with Shaffer but it was canceled and moved to April 9th. The committee will present a resolution at the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. The resolution will also be presented to the student senate.

#### *Faculty Handbook Potential Changes*

Table

*Final Call for Regents Fellow Nominees*

The deadline for nominees is today. The sole nominee is Alex Hunt whose support materials were handed out today. Dr. Hunt will be considered at the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**New Business**

Li – Most schools use headshots instead of full body pictures. Is this a concern? No other senators expressed concerns.

Ingrassia – Recently some of the library databases were cut, but then temporarily restored. Some of these databases are necessary for faculty research. It is worrisome that a non-academic person – James Webb – made the cut decision. Macdonald said to let the library know if a database is needed for research. They can champion faculty too. Babb will try to get James Webb as a guest speaker for the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Meljac made a motion to adjourn; Li seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned 1:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Burnett, Secretary

*Minutes approved via email May 8-9, 2019*