

Faculty Senate Minutes 5 April 2013

Senators Present: Alex, Ambrose, Anwar, Atchison, Bartlett, Dalton, Drumheller, Jafar, Johnson, Kuennen, Landram, Pendleton, Riney, Severn, Takacs, and Ward

Senators Absent: Crandall, De'Armond, Loftin, Rausch, Vick, and Vizzini

Guests: Marietta Branson (substitute for Loftin) and Barbara Wang (substitute for De'Armond)

Call to Order: President Ambrose called the meeting to order at 12:19 p.m. in Eternal Flame Room of the JBK.

Approval of Minutes: Takacs moved and Atchison seconded the motion to approve the 8 March Faculty Senate minutes as amended by Jafar and Vizzini. The motion passed unanimously by the Senators present. Drumheller made a motion seconded by Severn to approve as amended the minutes of the 22 March Faculty Senate meeting. The motion passed unanimously by the Senators present.

Reports: Ambrose reported Dr. Shaffer will come to the next Faculty Senate meeting; Senators are asked to think of questions to ask him. Ambrose said he and Pendleton met with the Departments Heads and discussed the revisions Faculty Senate proposed in the evaluation of faculty instructional responsibilities. The Department Heads worried about Faculty Senate removing subjective items and evaluation of collegiality. The Department Heads will discuss and perhaps suggest changes to the form. Faculty Senate is supposed to review and provide input on the final version of the form.

Anwar reported the Parking Committee still is waiting to meet, hopefully in April.

Ambrose said he reviewed with President O'Brien the list of faculty nominated for Regents Professor. Ambrose sent letters to and asked the five nominees if they were interested in applying. Two plan to apply, one turned down the nomination, and two nominees have not responded. Those applying were asked to submit packets by 20 May. Faculty Senators will vote by ballot in Cornette Library between 21 May and 4 June. Names and ranking of the nominees will be submitted to Dr. O'Brien on 5 June.

Takacs said he met with Dr. O'Brien to discuss teaching load and the database he developed on overloads. Dr. O'Brien said there might be noncompliance according to teaching loads in departments but Takacs' database might not be accurate. Some departments require teaching 15 hours for a full load and some faculty might receive reassigned time after teaching overloads. Takacs said in the music department, 22 of 24 faculty teach overloads. He asked Dr. O'Brien if graduate assistants might be used to relieve some overload. Takacs said each music student is required to take a lesson individually with a faculty member and asked if it might be possible for faculty to split the load with a graduate assistant. Some departments have faculty teach on Monday and

Wednesday and Graduate Assistants teach on Friday. Takacs said he took the idea to his Department Head. Drumheller said funding might be a restriction. Atchison asked if the Graduate Dean might have funds to pay graduate assistants, but Drumheller said academic deans distribute the funds. Drumheller suggested scholarships instead of graduate assistantships. It was discussed that Texas does not allow tuition waivers for graduate students. Takacs said graduate students would receive valuable applicable teaching experience. Using graduate assistants could help grow the graduate program and increase enrollment. Ambrose asked Takacs what Dr. O'Brien wants Faculty Senate to do. Dr. O'Brien suggested obtaining more information on overloads. Takacs asked if O'Brien could collect the information and Faculty Senate will wait for the data.

New Business: Ambrose said he searched and asked Dr. Shaffer by e-mail about guidelines for the Magister Optimus award. Dr. Shaffer said Faculty Senate is to select a Magister Optimus each year and the nominee kept secret until the university meeting in August. The Faculty Senate officers will count the votes by Senators and no one else will know until August. Full-time faculty, including Faculty Senators are eligible. Drumheller suggested creating a process for selecting the Magister Optimus. Anwar suggested one page about the faculty member nominated. Jafar said information about the award should be put into the Faculty Handbook. Drumheller and Anwar will be a Committee and develop a form that Pendleton will e-mail to the Senators.

Ambrose was a nonvoting member of the university Promotion and Tenure Committee that met 2 weeks ago to discuss changes to the promotion and tenure procedures. Ambrose said he thinks the proposed changes on the first page are positive but the last statement on Section 4 needs to be more precise. The change in 5.5.1 is to remedy the situation of small departments not having enough tenured faculty for a promotion and tenure committee. The College would elect faculty to form a departmental committee so everyone has the same evaluation structure. Drumheller said her department did not have enough but Trudy Hanson discussed the situation with her. Drumheller had no problems but could see the other side where College colleagues do not know faculty in a department and might be biased against them. Ambrose will take the concern to Shaffer. Jafar questioned the vague verbiage that does not say whether tenured faculty in a department must be included and additional faculty nominated to make three total tenured faculty on a departmental committee. It was recommended that the College Dean should select the committee members with approval from the Provost. Jafar questioned why the deletions occurred in Section 4.2.

Anwar questioned why a faculty member must have served a minimum of 4 years before going up for promotion to professor. Drumheller said this year WT let a faculty member apply early. Atchison said the word "must" is there and the language needs to be changed if any person will be allowed to apply early. Severn suggested eliminating the 4-year minimum.

Jafar said 5 should be an expanded "evaluation" not expanded "portfolio." He asked about 5.5.4.2 that all tenured faculty in a department provide a letter and asked about the role of tenured faculty. Atchison said tenure folders in a secure room are available for review by tenured faculty. Jafar asked what will happen to 5.5.4.2 and

5.5.4.3 if 5.5.4 is eliminated. He said someone needs to read the entire document to be sure it is consistent after changes are made.

Jafar said Faculty Senate should ensure changes are put into the Faculty Handbook. Kuennen suggested Faculty Senate should elect a Senator to fill the upcoming vacancy on the Faculty Handbook Committee. Jafar suggested a member of the Faculty Senate executive committee serve on the Committee. Jafar said Faculty Senate can make changes to the Faculty Handbook with a 2/3 vote, so Senate should each year or frequently review and make changes. Kuennen asked when during the year the Faculty Handbook is reviewed.

In the Committee meeting, Ambrose questioned the proposed sentence in 4.1.2 “an award of tenure must be in the best interests of the university.” Atchison said administrators should have written unsatisfactory letters each of the previous 4 years, so a 5th year is not needed. Kuennen said the sentence might be a way for administrators to veto recommendation of the prior committees. Atchison said the proposed sentence would not allow anyone to bring legal action. He said WT already has financial exigency if a faculty member’s position is no longer needed. Anwar said “best interest” is too subjective. Jafar said WT already evaluates attitude and collegiality. Faculty Senate made a resolution for the sentence “an award of tenure must be in the best interests of the university” to be deleted. Atchison made a motion seconded by Ward to pass the resolution. The motion passed unanimously by all Faculty Senators present.

Before 19 April, faculty in each College should get together and select faculty to fill vacancies on university committees. Faculty nominated for positions from any college will be voted on on 19 April. A faculty member may serve two terms of three years but then must be off the committee. Pendleton will send all Senators the link with the descriptions of the committees.

New Faculty Senators need to be elected this spring from the colleges of Fine Arts and Humanities and Nursing and Health Sciences.

Atchison said students taped 21 hours of lecture by Dr. Les Dalton without his knowledge or permission, and he was suspended from teaching and investigated by the EEOC. After he was cleared by the EEOC investigation, he was not allowed back to his faculty position or office. Dalton was an Endowed Chair. Atchison said anyone might be removed from his classes. Landram asked if taping was legal and told it is unacceptable for a person to tape without permission. Drumheller said Faculty Senate needs to assure faculty are treated fairly by due process.

The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Bonnie B. Pendleton, Secretary

These minutes as amended were approved at the 19 April meeting of Faculty Senate.