

Minutes of Faculty Senate 10 October 2014

Present: Ambrose, Blanton, Branson, Commissiong, Crandall, De'Armond, DeOtte, Diego-Medrano, Dursun-Kilic, Fiaud, Hartin, Klaehn, Lee, Osei-Hwere, Ottoson, Pendleton, Shao, Stuntz, and Takacs

Absent: Atchison, Browning, and Hindman

Guests: Gary Byrd and Wade Shaffer

Call to Order: Ambrose called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m. in Room 14 (Eternal Flame) of the Jack B. Kelley Student Center.

Approval of Minutes: Stuntz made a motion seconded by Fiaud to approve as amended with clarification for De'Armond the minutes of the 26 September 2014 meeting of Faculty Senate. The motion passed unanimously by the Senators present.

Byrd handed out the proposed revised WT post-tenure review policy. He said the committee suggested inserting a paragraph at the beginning of the post-tenure philosophy section of the Faculty Handbook. The current paragraph would remain as the second paragraph in that section in the Faculty Handbook. "Minimum standards" would be renamed "required standards." After the subheading "post-tenure review procedures" would be inserted a paragraph to set up two tracks -- the new comprehensive peer evaluation and the current annual performance evaluation by the direct supervisor. Development would be triggered if a faculty member evaluated did not meet the required standards two years in a row. The comprehensive peer evaluation committee would evaluate and establish a plan to assist the post-tenure faculty member adjust activities to develop and satisfy requirements. Shao asked what might be the implication of changing minimal standards to required standards. Ambrose said minimal sounds like faculty are trying to get by with minimal work and required standards sounds better. Fiaud questioned determining who to put onto the comprehensive peer evaluation committee. Byrd said the details have not been determined but all committee members must be tenured and the most-senior faculty are preferred. Perhaps most-senior faculty would have two chances to be selected for the comprehensive peer evaluation committee and younger tenured faculty would have one chance. Byrd recommended using the faculty's tenure anniversary to help determine who is most senior versus younger tenured faculty. Faculty Senate will select the committee members. Ambrose said 25 tenured faculty will be needed each year. The most-senior faculty members might review their college's post-tenured faculty while younger faculty would be distributed as out-of-college committee members. A post-tenured faculty member being reviewed who did not pass the first year would be reevaluated the next year by a different set of faculty. Development would be needed for a faculty member who fails both years. A tenured faculty member could potentially be on the committee every other year, but the selection of committee members would be random. DeOtte said he does not understand the point of trying to use a lottery. He

said promotion and tenure committees already are in place and using the college committee would be better. Stuntz said random chance is more equitable because the same people often are selected over and over to serve on promotion and tenure committees. Byrd said some WT committees have the same set of committee members for many years. He said a variety of factors (respect, popularity, being well known, willing to serve, etc.) are involved in why some faculty serve more often on committees. DeOtte said some committees, such as the Killgore committee, have requirements that not all faculty meet. De'Armond asked Shaffer to provide the context that WT did not meet the legal requirement. Shaffer said The Texas A&M University System attorneys reviewed Texas A&M University and said review by department heads was not peer review. Shaffer said peers need to evaluate and determine if a faculty member needs development. Byrd said TAMU, College Station, revised their system in July, as did some other universities. De'Armond said in 51.932 each faculty is subject to annual performance evaluation. He said comprehensive peer review instead of only saying peer review is confusing. Byrd said the committee used the same language as TAMU, College Station, to be sure both comprehensive and peer were put into the title to emphasize the point. WT could just institute some form of peer review such as a survey, but the committee did not want to create a whole separate process, so they thought the annual review of faculty performance could be used. Byrd said a number of universities tended to create a lengthy process like tenure every 6 years. DeOtte said the annual performance evaluation should be redefined as comprehensive. Shaffer said it is going to be easier for faculty to collect the same information already required to be submitted each year. Comprehensive peer evaluation could be done during 2 months in the spring which takes it out of the timeline of the annual evaluation by the department head. Shaffer said he does not care how members of the committee are selected but if WT is serious about shared governance, all faculty need to be ensured input into the process. DeOtte said faculty and administrators want faculty to succeed, not weed out faculty but help them develop. Shaffer said a review by a direct supervisor could not be used to substitute for comprehensive post-tenure peer review. Ambrose said both evaluations are different. Osei-Hwere asked the guidelines for fixed-term contract faculty. Shaffer said fixed-term contract faculty are not tenured. Shaffer said he thinks Faculty Senate is close to having a post-tenure review policy ready. He said peer review needs to be separate from evaluation by the department head, and the committee members must be tenured faculty. Shaffer thinks "yes" or "no" and not a number should be used. Takacs asked what would happen if the committee decision differed from the decision by the department head. Shaffer said the language needs to be clear, that if either the department head or the peer evaluation committees decide negatively for two years, the faculty member needs to start development. Shaffer left.

DeOtte suggested faculty who have already gone through post-tenure review should be eligible to serve on the committee. Stuntz said after seven years faculty will have been through the process and might be able to change the process. The committee preferred most-senior faculty to review. Branson said some colleges do not have senior tenured faculty. Some colleges might not have three tenured faculty for a committee. Blanton said there is only one senior tenured faculty member in her college. Shao said non-tenured faculty have a chance to give input on promotion and tenure. Dursun-Kilic said

some committee members from the college of a faculty member might be totally against the faculty member. Commissioning suggested faculty being reviewed should have say that they do not like the committee members who were selected randomly. Stuntz said committee members need to be chosen at random and not be someone's best friend, worst enemy, etc. Fiand said if the selection is random, it does not matter. Ambrose said there is only one overall post-tenure peer evaluation committee, not departmental, college, and university levels. He said he prefers weighting senior members more. Byrd said one regent is inquisitive and has taken an active role in seeing how universities are functioning; the regent said the post-tenure process might create a committee that "you pass me and I'll pass you", so Byrd said a WT committee with members selected randomly offsets any impression of bias. Commissioning said there might be concern if faculty are doing controversial work. Ambrose said that is the reason why there will be a different committee the second year. DeOtte said it is too difficult to communicate specialities to others who do not know the college requirements, so he recommended having three committee members from the college and only two from outside the college. Takacs said there should be justification if the committee votes "no" so the faculty member knows the reason why. Takacs asked what happens if professional development is triggered. Ambrose said if two evaluations are negative a developmental process would be set up by the committee to have a constructive approach for the faculty member to develop. Takacs asked if there could be termination. Ambrose said faculty doing development have two years to correct the problem or will be let go. Klaehn asked if it is really that bad for the committees to judge faculty. De'Armond said his idea of post-tenure review is negative, but everyone needs to be evaluated six years after tenure. DeOtte said he looks at it as possibility of reaffirmation of faculty. De'Armond asked if a faculty member who passes might receive a bonus. Byrd said the first paragraph in his handout describes it as positive and reaffirmation. Tenured faculty continue to maintain the quality of the university. Ambrose said he and Bryd will rewrite and provide a document so Faculty Senators can suggest adjustments.

Ambrose said he talked to Dr. O'Brien about the term of the ombuds officer, but Dr. O'Brien had not had time to think about the situation. Faculty will need to apply if the term is not changed.

No faculty were proposed yet for Piper Professor. Senators are to keep thinking of faculty to nominate.

Applications for Faculty Development Leave need to be submitted by 1 December. Faculty Senators will vote at the first meeting in the spring.

Ambrose said he received an e-mail from the University of Texas that some students want comments from student evaluations posted online. Stuntz said there are places that do that. Ambrose said WT might need to discuss this.

De'Armond said the final QEP meeting with a student present was on 10 October. Information on the QEP is at wtamu.edu/qep. Faculty can vote on the topics.

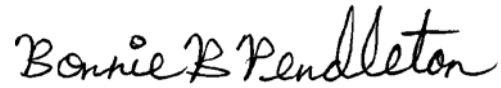
Ottoson announced the Data Base Drop In library activity for faculty on Friday. Diego-Medrano reminded faculty to remind students of Spanish Heritage Week next week.

Ambrose said he invited Dr. O'Brien to come to Faculty Senate next time, so Senators should think of questions to ask. In four weeks, James Webb from IT will come to Faculty Senate, so Senators are to think of questions for him.

DeOtte asked how long Faculty Senate meetings normally are. Ambrose said there is no fixed length, but he has the room reserved until 3 p.m.

The meeting of Faculty Senate adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie B. Pendleton".

Bonnie B. Pendleton, Secretary

These minutes were approved at the 24 October 2014 meeting of Faculty Senate.