

Faculty Senate Minutes

February 1, 2019

Senators Present: Ambrose, Babb, Bartlett, Burnett, Castillo, Clewett, Clifton, Curl, Davis, Franken, Ingrassia, Karaganis, King, Kwan, Leitch, Lewis, Macdonald, Meljac, Revett, Rollin, Seth, Seward, and Woodyard.

Senators Absent: Garcia, Li, Wang, and Williams

Substitutes: Chris Macaulay for Dale Li and Adam Weiss for Elizabeth Garcia

Call to Order: Davis called the meeting to order at 12:19 pm in the Eternal Flame Room of the JBK.

Guest Speaker: Elise Tolley, WTAMU Student Body President and member of Chancellor's Student Advisory Council

Ms. Tolley is an Economics major who is also taking courses for dental school. Davis invited her to discuss the student view of OER (open educational resources). Ms. Tolley stated that during her freshman and sophomore years she bought all the books before the first class day. When she went to class, none of the books were actually used in the course. After sophomore year, she always went to class before buying any books.

Ms. Tolley ran a student survey concerning textbooks when she was Vice President of the Student Body. The majority of the students were in favor of a textbook minimal approach. Ms. Tolley is also in favor of a textbook minimal approach rather than no textbook approach. She said there were certain courses, such as physics, that she could not imagine taking without a textbook.

One key issue that emerged from the ensuing discussion was the lack of communication between faculty and students concerning textbooks/course materials. As faculty, we rely on the bookstore and/or posting the syllabus the week before classes to get course material information to the students before classes begin. Some students do not buy from the bookstore or know that the syllabi are available on WTClass. Others, as mentioned by Ms. Tolley before, won't buy the materials until the teacher verifies use.

Based on the conversations, the idea of a Faculty Senate Committee was introduced. The Faculty Senate Committee would meet with a Student Senate Committee. See the heading OER under New Business below for details of the committee.

Ms. Tolley felt that a lack of communication was the biggest problem via textbooks. She was for getting rid of buying a textbook(s) where a course did not use a textbook(s); however, where a textbook was clearly needed and used in a course the opposite was true.

Ms. Tolley ended her discussion by giving senators her email address and encouraging communication between Faculty and Student Senate.

Before moving to regular Senate business, David Rausch spoke concerning Straighterline course credit. (See January 18, 2019 Faculty Senate minutes for a discussion and vote on accepting Straighterline course credit.) First Rausch said that Texas A&M Commerce accepts Straighterline course credit outright. Next, he said that it is possible we have accepted course credit from Straighterline because

other higher education institutions, such as Dallas Community College and Ranger College, use Straighterline as a third-party provider in certain courses. The Straighterline course credit is then on the transcript of an accepted institution. There is no straightforward way to prevent this happening and it does not change our vote of January 18, 2019.

One possible idea: Maybe we should have on application that every educational provider needs to provide transcript or record.

No further discussion on Straighterline.

Approval of Minutes: King made a motion to approve the Faculty Senate minutes of January 18, 2019; Meljac seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Current and Pending (Old) Business

Instructor Promotion

Ingrassia researched the number of faculty in the 2018-2019 QuickFind directory who had a designation other than Assistant, Associate or Full Professor. His results by college/school and title are as follows:

	ANS	COB	ECSM	ESS	FAH	NHS	Totals
Instructor	6	10	11	10	29	26	92
Clinical Professor	2						2
Clinical Assistant Professor		4					4
Senior Lecturer					1		1
Associate Lecturer					4		4
Assistant Lecturer					1		1
Visiting Assistant Professor					1		1
Adjunct Instructor		1					1
	8	15	11	10	36	26	106

At the January 18, 2019 meeting, Ingrassia discussed the faculty titles at Texas A&M – College Station. A motion was passed that the Instructor Promotion Committee work on a proposal to make our Faculty Handbook closer to College Station’s. This table shows a diverse application of job titles and an inconsistent system around campus.

Change to Faculty Handbook

Dean’s Council are happy with the current system.

Code of Student Life

Nothing to report

Merit Increase

Davis sent an email from the Merit Increase Committee January 30, 2019. The committee asked senators to ask their peers at similar institutions the following questions and return the answers to Jeremy Lewis.

Does your institution have a documented merit increase process, if so, where?

What is that process?

What do you know about merit increases at your school?

Did you receive a merit increase this academic year?

Faculty Development Leave

Faculty Development Leave Committee reported that according to the Faculty Handbook it is up to the Senate to set a timeline. The committee felt that an October 1 deadline with voting on November 15 for the next school year would be sufficient.

For the two current applications, Davis will put them on WTClass in the Faculty Senate Group for us to review and then vote at the February 15, 2019 meeting.

New Business

OER

The Senate continued the discussion of OER and the System push for a textbook free campus. Senator's primary concerns are:

- Encroachment on academic freedom
- OER accessibility issues
- Discipline-specific concerns
- Assignment of books not needed

The Senate revisited the prior motion to form a committee that worked with the Student Senate Academic Affairs Committee. The primary purpose of the committee is to open communication between faculty and students. The committee members are: Seward, Meljac, Babb, Clewett, Kwan and Clifton. The members consist of one person from each college/school.

Upcoming Schedule

February 15 – Provost/VPAA Dr. Wade Shaffer

March 1

March 22

April 5

April 26

The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned 1:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Burnett, Secretary

Minutes approved at February 15, 2019 Faculty Senate Meeting