Call to Order at 11:30 a.m. by E. Westermann

In Attendance:
Emily Bliss-Zaks, Katherine Gillen, Melissa Jozwiak, Robin Kapavik, Bryant Moore, Rahman Sajjadur, Joseph Simpson, Daniel Glaser, Kathleen Voges, Claire Nolasco, Robert Vinaja, Lorrie Webb, Ed Westermann, Brent Snow (Provost), Sherita Love(AT), Andres Holliday (SGA).

Approval of Faculty Senate meeting Minutes from Nov 7, 2014

Motion: L Webb motions to approve the minutes from 11/7/14
Vote Passes: 11 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions

Executive Committee Update

Presidential Search & Chancellor Update: E. Westermann shared that there were over 100 applicants with a number of extremely qualified candidates. The committee recommended 3 names. They have been interviewed by the Chancellor. The Board of Regents will announce the finalist Saturday. It is his understandings that one of those applicants will have been offered the job and have accepted the position He feels whoever is selected will be well qualified. All finalists were at a major system, two were female, and one was a male. They have different backgrounds and different strengths, but positive energy, vision, leadership, and a strong academic background in all cases.

Chancellor's Meeting: E. Westermann was asked by the president to put together a group of six faculty members to meet with the Chancellor while on campus. Lorrie Webb, Dan Glaser, Robert Vinaja, Ester Garza & Megan Wise de Valdez. Issues discussed with the Chancellor include downward expansion; and, as a key element, preparation for that. One item discussed was the indication that downward expansion seems to be moving forward in fall 2016, regardless. In response, the Chancellor expressed his hope the legislature will support this so that the financial burden doesn't fall solely on the System. Another issue discussed was the full-time versus contingent faculty and the disproportion we are currently under; such that if we downward expand, we will need to get ahead of that faculty hiring. Retention and graduation rates: the outcomes based funding raised concerns because it is different if you are getting top 10% of students from the state versus open admission and how will that be reflected in funding. R. Vinaja adds that it was discussed that there is a pool to attract new faculty members (Chancellor's Research Initiative).

Chancellor's Research Initiative. E. Westermann shared that Tarleton and A&M System have designated funding and that funding will expands to the regionals. There is $10 million in funds that are intended to be used as seed money to entice senior faculty members to come into institutions. The funds are not as much for salary as for infrastructure and

facilities that would then motivate faculty members to come to that institution. R. Vinaja also asks E. Westermann to also address the issue of admission that was discussed.

System Admission Policy: E. Westermann explained that if a student applies at College Station, but doesn't get admitted, that instead of getting a rejection letter that is final, he or she can be advised that they have been rejected by A&M College Station but given alternative acceptance at another system school. Further, if they attend that school, they are guaranteed the ability to transfer to College Station at the two year point. J. Simpson asked if that was regional acceptance. L. Webb clarified that it could be any system school looking at the candidate and deciding if they want to accept them.

Finally, L. Webb shared that the Chancellor encouraged us to have a group of faculty meet with the new President and have frank discussions with him/her when he/she arrives.

Old Business

Faculty Handbook Update: E. Westermann shared that the Deans have requested to review the faculy developmental leave request policy. This seems prudent as it would involve their resources. E. Westermann forwarded that document to Dr. Snow who will then forward to the Deans. The Deans will give input back so that we can discuss that at the February meeting and then finalize it in the handbook. K. Gillen reminded everyone that at the last meeting it was decided not to include that language at this point but add it at a later date. J. Simpson adds that we have already approved the handbook. E. Westermann expresses concern that the Faculty Handbook has errors, specifically, that office hours were listed at six hours not eight as amended. This needs correction. E. Westermann asks for clarification on if the Faculty Handbook is ready to go. J. Simpson & L. Webb clarify that when the Faculty Handbook was approved it included the office hours amendment (it was assumed that correction was to be made). E. Westermann recommends that all senators distribute this out to faculty. Dr. Snow will also distribute via provost office.

Dean's List: R. Pittman was not able to be with Faculty Senate but the committee's report is located on the back of the agenda. R Sajjadur reported that the committee met with Dr. Snow and made two recommendations: 1.) Graduation Honors, the committee feels that GPA requirements are not comparable to other universities so they recommend it is made more competitive by a 0.1 increase at each award level (Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Cum Laude). 2.) Begin a President, Provost and Dean's list are each semester. Dr. Snow added that he requested statistics on current honors so we could see what this looks like. Fall 2014 Graduates: 12% Cum Laude, 18% Magna Cum Laude and 16% Summa Cum Laude, with 54% not receiving honors. If we applied the recommendations, we would have 14 % Cum Laude, 17% Magna Cum Laude and 10% Summa Cum Laude, with 59% not receiving honors. He suggests a future discussion on raising standards even higher. J. Simpson- asks about using a percentage ranking. Robert V. asks what the percentages are for other universities. E. Westermann suggests other schools utilize 10%. 25% is probably stretching the system. J. Simpson offers that other universities offer an honors college with an honors degree. E. Westermann asks the committee to look at local schools to see what their percentages are to re-evaluate. E. Westermann raises the point that using a percentage cut may require each college to have a separate threshold because the percentage of honor graduates varies between colleges. R. Vinaja reminds us that the advantage of having a specific threshold (rather than

percentage) is that students know the target and asks if we can look at historical data. L. Webb affirms that it would have been nice to see what the threshold would have had to be in the fall. Dr. Snow advises that he would like for us to move forward but take our time and do this correctly. He goes on to share that by college. Fall 2012- Cum Laude: 10% Arts and Sciences, 17%, Business and 19 % Education. Magna Cum Laude: 13% Arts & Sciences, 7% Business, 26% Education. Summa Cum Laude 8% Arts & Sciences, 8% Business and 31% Education. Spring 2014- Cum Laude: 8% Arts and Sciences, 12%, Business and 16 % Education. Magna Cum Laude: 14% Arts & Sciences, 13% Business, 28% Education. Summa Cum Laude 10% Arts & Sciences, 10% Business and 28% Education. This shows Arts & Sciences and Business are fairly close. Education skews that. E. Westermann shares that you have about a 30% honors rate for Arts & Sciences and Business and a 70% rate for Education. D. Glaser states that as we look at a threshold, we must consider that another part of the issue is the grade inflation that is going on which would be a function of the faculty in each college. E. Westermann supports the belief that you don't get to 70% without grade inflation. This is not an issue for the senate but is an issue for leadership in the colleges to address. R. Vinaja suggests that grade distribution charts are required by some colleges when faculty submits annual evaluations. J. Simpson added that can be manipulated by doing a curve. K. Gillen, questions Faculty Senate's role in this issue of grade inflation but reminds us that the recommendations are in line with the A&M System and the numbers are fine. She supported the committee's recommendations. M. Jozwiak has concern with raising the threshold, concerned that it would penalize students in colleges where it is already difficult to reach those thresholds. She suggests that now that we have this data, it is easier to go back to colleagues and ask what we can do about this. R. Kapavik notes that if you apply the new rule to the 2014 data, Arts & Sciences and Business are in line, the issue seems to be internal to the College of Education. R. Sajjadur asks for clarification on if honors are based only on TAMU-SA courses or those from community college. J. Simpson affirms that we need to find out what GPA based on. E. Westermann asks if it is the Senate's job to raise that issue. Dr. Snow states that he will address this issue and this is why he asked for this initiative so we could clarify if there is a perception or if there is a problem. He raises another issue with the Dean's List, Provost's List and President's List. The committee recommended this honors only applied to full-time students. As he looked at the enrollment, only 42% of students are fulltime, therefore, should we look at that limitation more carefully? K. Vogue adds if we are here for the non-traditional student, then requiring fulltime enrollment as the criteria may be too high. R. Vinaja asks if we could look at lower percentages, i.e. 9 or 6. J. Simpson suggests that all these equations will change in 2016 and when the first graduating class finishes in 2020. He shares that he wasn't aware of a fulltime or part-time distinction in those honors. E. Westermann advises that there are often many rules on the awarding of honors related to threshold hours including disqualification for consideration if you drop a course during a semester to prevent students from dropping courses just to earn the honor. He asks that the committee revisit the number of hours required for the cut. R. Kapavik shares that it is her understanding that the top list of honors include the hours at TAMU-SA only, not cumulative.

Faculty Recognition Committee: M. Jozwiak shares that faculty were surveyed with 55 responding. Findings: 1.) nominations should be open, 2.) faculty most supported faculty electing a committee that would make award recommendations, 3.) teaching was the most supported award, followed by research and service. The committee feels that they still need input from faculty and need more time before making any formal recommendations. For example, the question about stipends/payment was poorly written and faculty didn't understand what we were asking. Therefore, the committee will be going back to faculty to talk about that and other issues such as what constitutes excellence in teaching. E. Westermann asks about the timeline for implementation. M. Jozwiak shares that originally the committee anticipated having the recommendations ready by February and the application deadline during the spring 2015 semester. Due to the difficulty in defining several aspects of this system, i.e. excellence in teaching, the committee anticipates having recommendations ready for fall 2015. This will allow for greater feedback from faculty on the proposed process. The survey revealed that there is tension with faculty around some issues and the committee is slowing down the timeline and working to ensure that the award process that is proposed reflects faculty voice and addresses existing concerns. J. Simpson asked about the other opinions regarding the selection process. M. Jozwiak shared that faculty elected committees received the highest response followed by Dean's selecting, Provost and last was Faculty Senate. J. Simpson shares that at OSU many awards were student-run. C. Nolasco asked how this award differs from the teaching excellence awards given in the past and if the emphasis is on teaching, how do you recognize and award other faculty who excel in other areas. M. Jozwiak shared that it is her understanding that the previous teaching excellence awards were based on SRI scores, and that because that award criteria was such an intense point of contention with faculty, the committee is trying to talk with faculty about how we can define teaching excellence. To her second point, the committee is actually recommending awards that separately recognize excellence in teaching, research and service. How we will define excellence in each area when there are differences in expectations, across colleges, is a significant challenge the committee faces and the primary reason why the committee is asking for more time. Dr. Snow provided further clarification that for a few years the Board of Regents put money into a teaching award that was based on student feedback and SRI's. The award was about $2,500 and many people got that award. Eventually the money went away so, currently, we don't have a system to formally recognize excellence at the university level- so this committee is looking at that. E. Westermann summarizes that this committee is developing a system to institutionalize recognition but that the recognition may not include any monetary award. C. Nolasco asked for specifics on how recognition areas were rated. M. Jozwiak provided that 69% rated 54% research and 34% rated service as very important. An e-mail will be sent to faculty and focus sessions will be held in 2015. D. Glaser shares that it is interesting to him, coming out of industry and Management by Objectives and motivation theory, is that we have a process for evaluating faculty and what we are saying is that we would like to have recognition and are, thereby, creating a parallel system. It questions if the existing system (annual evaluations) is effective in motivating faculty. E. Westermann states that the existing system isn't working because we don't have a system for recognition. Your recognition is happening on your annual review but it isn't' being recognized at the university level. It is like having a Dean's list for

students. We don't have a faculty recognition system for faculty. J. Simpson suggests this is less of a parallel system as a feedback loop as this award will end up in annual evaluations. Dr. Snows shared that he didn't anticipate this being such a complicated issue and that he would hope the process doesn't drag on for several years. M. Jozwiak affirmed she didn't anticipate the complication, either. E. Westermann shared some of the prior award criteria (i.e. return rate, enrollment in class, etc.) and shares that grade distribution is another consideration that we have mentioned here and that grade distribution can be another element to look at. E. Westermann asks for a February update to faculty senate.

Faculty Development Leave- K. Gillen shared that the committee made revision, based on feedback. The main revisions were that the proposal process would include a description of the project, why it is significant to the faculty member's field, a demonstrable outcome, an explanation of why reassignment is necessary for the completion of the project, CV, and letter of support from the Department Chair. Regarding the rubric, issues the committee would consider include: 40% based on the quality of the project, the applicant's record of excellence in research measured by previous annual evaluations, the number and quality of publications, number of working papers, degree to which demonstrated the need for reassigned time. She emphasizes the important of an outcome as well as report. The project is currently with the Deans. E. Westermann affirms that what is important is that we show production.

New Business
Blackboard Archives- S. Love updated that we are at critical with our storage limit in Blackboard. Course are still there from 2009 to current. In 2011 we had 47G now we have 296 G. Therefore we need to off-load courses. In Feb. we will implement an archive plan where one year of course will be on server. Two years of courses will be stored in-house. The rest are purged. We won't' purge until end of summer such that, in the fall, there will be one year in Blackboard and two years in storage. If you would like to create a personal archive, Academic Technologies is preparing instructions on how to do that simple process (handout and video).   K. Voges- asks for confirmation that, in essence, there will be three years of records maintained. S. Love confirms. K. Voges also asks if the archive will capture all materials (i.e. e-mails, etc.). S. Love confirms that, when you archive, you are taking a complete snapshot of the course that includes everything. When needed, Academic Technologies can restore an archive. Faculty save the archive but Academic Technologies must be the one to restore it. It can be stored on a thumb drive or –CD, but must use management system to restore.
Online Teaching Training- S. Love shared that in the past about 83 faculty completed 101, 103, 105 or 106, so, the Deans asked to have crash course for faculty who have not completed the requirement. S. Love provided a written description on the Boot Camp- two days of courses; day one is 101 & presenting content. Day two is all assessments/assignments. J Simpson asks if you can attend only the sessions needed. S. Love confirmed. There is an online form in survey monkey to register.
Student Government (SG) - A. Holiday shared the year-end update. This term SG held the Jaguar 5 K and, after expenses, it raised approximately $2,100 for student scholarships. The committee is deciding if they will award it for spring or let funds accumulate before

awarding. SG passed three bills or resolutions. One resolution is that SG will publish the SG quarterly newsletter with stances on issues SG is working on, how students feel about issues, who current members are, and polls, etc. Additionally, they passed recommendation to make fitness council to focus on all around wellness of students-mental, physical or dietary. This has significant support from Mayor's Fitness Council. TAMU-SA is the first university to develop this type of idea. Third is a service grant initiative that provides extra assistance to students through SG's partnerships with other organizations. For example: Texas diaper bank is helping to provide a starter kit of formula, diapers, etc. that will help the student feel like they are Jaguar and that the university is welcoming the child. Another is a partnership is with ADL, if you puppy/dog is lost they will help locate them in city. So, any student or student family member with a lost pet and can come to SG and we will print 50 flyers and connect you with ADL to help find the pet. San Antonio is the only city with UT and A&M campuses in one city. Therefore, SG is discussing the market available due to this unique pairing. I.E. they are trying to organize a Big Event to give back to the community. SG has also started a SG Legacy Circle taking seasoned organizational leaders (student organization), nominated by the President, and connects them with community leaders, thereby, introducing seasoned leaders to future leaders. SG hopes to have their first meeting in spring. Finally they are starting a SG research initiative. This partners particular student organization with SG around an area of need, such as programming, marketing, etc. SG is currently piloting with BOSS for SG marketing. They hope to see result by spring.

Faculty Survey: J. Simpson shared the results from about 25 surveys that the students prepared into a packet. J. Simpson noted that there was difficulty in getting feedback from adjunct faculty. In summary, Academic Technologies is doing good job most very satisfied with only a small percentage (<10%) dissatisfied. 86% of respondents said they didn't seek out campus services. When they do seek out services, where do they go? Respondents cited Academic Technologies as the main source, then colleagues and help desk. The third thing he noted it that Sherita is overworked. 44% of respondents said they went to her vs. their college representative when they needed help. Faculty prefers to get their information via e-mail with links over the website. Overall, satisfaction is good. The main technologies used are desktop presentation, with course management second and, third, virtual meeting, with a small numbers of others mentioned. Faculty didn't feel they had many challenges, except making lectures more interactive. Barriers to use of academic technology included lack of money, lack of time, skills and lack of classroom equipment. Developing and customizing was identified as important to faculty. A copy of the results will be included with the minutes.

Administrative Updates
Provost Comments: Dr. Snow congratulated the committees on all their work. He also shared that E. Westermann and he had talked about the future of Faculty Senate. The next Faculty Senate President will be able to receive a course reassignment for their work with Faculty Senate. It is an important enough position to warrant that. J. Simpson asked for his thinking with regards to the incoming President, specifically as it relates to interaction between the President and Faculty Senate. J. Simpson expressed appreciation for the frank interaction Faculty Senate currently has with Dr. Snow and wonders about the future. Dr. Snow expressed

that he would expect that the new President will want to interact with faculty and Faculty Senate and that type of community is critical. His impression of the candidates is positive. 65-70% of what happens at a university is academic affairs. Other areas are important but teaching and learning, that is what Academic Affairs is about. He believes you can expect that from the incoming President.

<u>Announcements</u>

E. Westermann- We had invited Dr. Ferrier to be with Faculty Senate today but, due to SACS COC, she was not able to attend. Dr. Snow offered an alternative on Dec. 11 @ 11:30 during his regular meeting with President. We will send an invite. A Plaque was ordered to thank her for her leadership. Faculty Senators were encouraged to attend, if possible.

J. Simpson. Facilities Committee had a meeting there to deal with three issues. There were two competing proposals for space in Brooks City Base. The committee decided to award the space to the Library for their special collections vs. the business college request for classroom space. The other was a closet storage issue.

J. Simpson motions to adjourn. E. Westermann adjourns the meeting at 12:50 p.m. He reminds faculty that the next meeting is in February.

Dean's List Report:
November 19th, Wednesday, at 9:00 a.m., the Dean's List committee met with Dr. Snow to discuss the graduation honors and the semester honors. After viewing other universities in the A&M system, Dr. Snow and the committee felt that A&M-SA should raise the graduation honors' requirements to be in-sync with most system universities.

The "suggested" GPA are in discussion to be used for Fall 2015 graduation:

3.9-4.0 Summa Cum Laude
3.7-3.89 Magna Cum Laude
3.5-3.69 Cum Laude

In essence, we will be increasing the GPA requirements from their current honor distinctions.

Next, we discussed implementing a "semester" honor distinction system and the GPA requirements for each. The committee decided upon the following:
4.0- President's List
3.7-3.9- Provost's List
3.5-3.6- Dean's List

Each of these are, at present, suggestions.

In addition, Cynthia DeLeon, from the registrar's office, was invited to attend the meeting. The committee asked several questions to determine if implementing new GPA requirements would cause a problem for students, programs , the Univeristy, etc. Ms. DeLeon stated that it would not be a problem to change the GPA requirements for December 2015 graduation, AND it will be no problem to add the semester honor names (President's List, etc) to students' transcripts each semester. She stated that it's just a matter of inputting the new requirements into the system.

The new requirements will need to be posted in the 2015 catalog (June) before officially going into effect.

Last, Dr. Snow wants Ms. DeLeon to retrieve the percentages for the graduation honors for "each" category (Summa Cum Laude, etc) that A&M-SA currently graduates. The percentages will give the committee some more insight into whether our GPAs are too low, etc.