

Texas A&M- San Antonio
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2015, Central Academic Building Room 334

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

In Attendance:

E.Bliss-Zaks, R.Kapavik, B.Moore, R. Sajjadur, J. Simpson, D. Glaser, R. Pittman, K. Voges, R.Vinaja, L. Webb, E. Westermann, B. Snow (Provost), Dr. Teniente-Matson(President), M. Wise de Valdez, C. Ross

Approval of Faculty Senate meeting Minutes from Feb 6, 2015

Amendments: E. Westermann suggests that the minutes be amended to fix the following typos: On page 3, believes is misspelled in the sentence starting with "E. Westermann shared that he...". The last sentence in the SRI survey section should read, "E. Westermann asks if J. Simpson is willing to chair ad hoc." In that same section change Claire to read C. Nolasco. On page 5 in the student activities and eligibility section, the sentence should read, "We have corrected the issue on the financial accounts..."

Motion: J. Simpson motions to approve the minutes as amended, 2nd by L. Webb

Vote Passes: 11yes; 0no; 0 abstentions

Administrative Update

Dr. Teniente-Matson addressed the senate to share administrative updates.

Dr. Matson stated she has been getting an overwhelming amount of positive feedback and support from the community about the university and its role. Though, Dr. Matson stated that there is a concern about the lack of knowledge surrounding the university in the community. For example, some don't realize we can only accept junior and senior level students. Dr. Matson feels more outreach needs to be done to ensure the community has a better understanding of what the university offers. Dr. Matson would like the university to be known as a center of excellence.

Dr. Matson discussed the university's research agenda. Dr. Matson has discussed this with the Provost, as well as the community. Water research has been identified as a focus. Both the Chancellor and the Governor are supportive in the university's role in this agenda. Dr. Matson and the Provost are going to hire a faculty member to head this research agenda and stressed that we need to hire a highly qualified leader in this field. The university will be holding a water summit later this month to brainstorm water agenda items that we need to address. We will hear more about the details of the summit at a later date. Dr. Matson noted that this program has been in the works for quite some time, but we are refocusing on this area of research again due to recent legislative support.

Cyber security research is another area the university will be focusing on. This includes physical security aspects as well as biosecurity. The university will also be funding a position in this area as well. Dr. Matson stressed that the university needs to look for programs that aren't over saturated in the market. According to Dr. Matson, the community wants the university to show them how we differentiate from other universities in the area. Dr. Matson feels both the water research and cyber security program are two programs that will allow us to stand out and will fit the community's needs.

Opens to discussion: E. Westermann asked where the funding was coming from for both of these programs. Dr. Matson stated the salaries would be coming from university budget where as the chancellor's office would cover the start up fees, labs and misc. other expenses.

J. Simpson asked about the curriculum structure for the water research program. Dr. Matson said that the plan is to start with just a Master of Water Resources program but we might also offer an undergraduate program down the road.

M. Wise de Valdez asked if the Biology program could be more actively involved in providing ideas for the water summit since their department was involved in the early stages of this program. Dr. Matson clarified that the water summit is more for getting thoughts and suggestions from experts outside the university and to act as an advisory to the president and provost. K. Voges stated that she would like to see this program branch out to multiple programs on campus such as in the College of Business. Dr. Matson said there is a possibility of this happening in the future but our focus needs to be narrow in the beginning stages. E. Westermann asked if there were going to be military representatives at the water summit. He suggested the military would be a great community partner to invite to the summit because for example, the Lackland Air Force Base is currently conducting research on water management. Dr. Matson didn't believe anyone was coming from the military but she will look into that.

Dr. Matson continued to share updates to the Senate. Dr. Matson announced that she has been to numerous speaking engagements. Some examples include:

- St. Mary's University President's Peace Commission series: Dr. Matson spoke on the topic of the value of a liberal arts education at St. Mary's University last week. The session was recorded and a link will be sent out to this presentation when it becomes available.
- Chancellor's Century Council: Dr. Matson updated members of the audience on our university's status and vision for the future.
- Texas State Legislature: Dr. Matson informed as that we currently have four requests before the legislators. Our top priority is money for downward expansion followed by capital to build a STEM building.

Dr. Matson informed the senate that ROI Consulting was interviewing various faculty and staff. Their focus was on providing Dr. Matson with an assessment on the university. Several themes came from the data collected. A few are listed below.

- The university has a strong commitment to serving under served students
- Concern that there is a lack of higher education experience among senior leadership
- Lack of diversity among faculty and administration.
- Silos are in place preventing individuals from working effectively with each other
- Lack of transparency with budget
- Senior staff roles need to be defined and communicated across campus
- Matson's experience and skills will get us where we need to be

Dr. Matson proposed ideas to address a couple of these themes. Dr. Matson will be holding a campus budget forum on March 20th. This forum will address the current state of university's budget and as well as future plans. All are welcome to attend and ask questions. Dr. Matson intends to appoint a Commission on University Resources to advise her on fiscal matters. This commission will replace the Council on Assessment, Planning and Budgeting (CAPB). Dr. Matson briefly discussed the new commission and the group's goals. More information will be sent out on this new commission once items are finalized.

The second theme Dr. Matson addressed in more detail was a concern coming from the department chairs. The concern was that the campus seemed to lack a general process for planning. Silos are in place and thus individuals are left out of the decision making process. Dr. Matson believes a set of best practices needs to be implemented to help correct this theme as well as many of the other themes addressed. For starters, the university will hold a speakers series that will focus on innovative high-impact practices that improve student academic success. An email will be sent to all with more

information on this series. The intent to have an understanding for what practices are currently in place and as a community, we will decide what will work for us. Dr. Matson believes the information from the series will help guide us through our downward expansion as well as aide us in achieving a national model for student success.

Dr. Matson stated she would attend as many Faculty Senate meetings as she can.

Executive Committee Update

Update on Course Reassignment Policy: E. Westermann met with the Provost recently to discuss proposed changes from the Deans on the policy draft. The Deans proposed that that they should be allowed to appoint the reassignment committee members. E. Westermann and the Provost suggested changing the wording to say instead, “Applications for reassigned time will be evaluated by a committee consisting of one faculty representative selected by each College Dean and one Faculty Senator from each college selected by the Faculty Senate and will work in consultation with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.” Additionally, the Provost and E. Westermann suggested the wording be changed to state, “After receiving a course reassignment (s), faculty will not be eligible for additional course reassignment under this policy for a period of two years.”

Motion: Simpson motions to amend the policy with the amended wording listed above for the Provost to re-examine. 2nd by K. Voges

11Yes 0 no 0 abstentions

Election Committee: J. Simpson shared that the committee will meet after spring break. Seven senate seats will be up at the end of the academic year. J. Simpson suggested to senate members to start talking to their colleagues and encourage individuals to put in their nominations.

Texas Council of Faculty Senates Summary: Due to time constraints, L. Webb did not have the opportunity to provide the senate with an update. This item will be added to the agenda for the April meeting.

Old Business

Faculty Handbook- Due to time constraints, E. Westermann did not have the opportunity to provide the senate with an update. This item will be added to the agenda for the April meeting.

Dean’s List- R. Pittman shared that the committee met with the provost last week to discuss the cut-off hours for the GPA honor lists. R. Pittman provided a handout showing there was no difference in the amount of students who qualified based on 12 hours to that who were enrolled in 6 hours. The committee will meet again after spring break to further discuss this subject.

Faculty Recognition Committee: A written update was provided to the Faculty Senate that stated the following:

“Following the survey distributed to the faculty in December, three meetings were held (2/10 @ 9:00 a.m.- Main Campus.; 2/10 @ 12:00 p.m. – Main Campus and 2/11 @ 3:00 p.m.- BCB) to get feedback from faculty on a Faculty Recognition Process. Approximately 11 faculty members attended the meetings with representation from the Library, College of Arts & Sciences and College of Business. The committee sincerely appreciates faculty taking the time to share their thinking and will try to use the information shared to develop a recognition system responsive to faculty. The committee is currently determining how much of this system can be developed during the Spring 2015 semester as they generate draft rubrics, guidelines and support documents.

Committee Members: Karan C. Kalmbach (Arts & Sciences), Pablo Calafiore (Business), Scott Peters (Education & Human Dev.) and Melissa Jozwiak (Faculty Senate)

Faculty Development Leave: There were no additional updates on this agenda item.

New Business

Motion: D. Glaser motions to extend meeting by 10 minutes.

Vote passes: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions

Grade Appeal Process Policy: E. Westermann shared that student handbook contains a grade appeal process policy already. E. Westermann read the last section of the policy in the handbook which states, "If the student is not satisfied with the chair's assessment of the issue or the faculty member refuses to alter his or her decision after discussing it with the chair, the student may then request a review of the decision by the Dean." The Provost suggested that there should be an additional sentence added to the end of this policy that states, "The Dean is the final level of appeal with grade change requests." E. Westermann stated the current verbiage implies the Dean is the final level, but the policy it doesn't officially specify this is the case.

Motion: J. Simpson motions to propose to the Provost to add an additional sentence to the student handbook that states the Dean is the final level of appeal with grade change request with the caveat that we check what the policy is for appealing graduate thesis defenses.

Discussion: J. Simpson asked for clarification in regards to how disciplinary issues would fit into this. E. Westermann stated that even though that is related to the grade change policy, there is another section in the handbook that covers disciplinary issues. L. Webb asked if the Dean was the final level for approval, could faculty members meet with the Provost if they don't agree with the decision made by the Dean. E. Westermann said that would be an administrative issue, and faculty members could still meet with the Provost to further discuss issues such as this. J. Simpson asked if anyone knew how other universities handled grade appeal processes. Dr. Snow stated he has rarely seen it go beyond the Deans. Without a final level of appeal the student could go as far as the President. J. Simpson asked if it's always a single observer making the final call when it comes to grade appeals or could a panel of individuals make the decision. R. Pittman and L. Webb mentioned that students start the appeal process internally though a department on campus but the process doesn't end there. J. Simpson is fine with the process ending at the Deans but as we upward expand we need to think how this decision would affect graduate students. For example, how this would apply to graduate students when they are defending their dissertations. In this situation, J. Simpson feels more than one individual should be discussing a students appeal. E. Westermann stated that perhaps the Graduate Studies program handbook should include a line that addresses thesis defense.

11 pass 0 no, 0 abstentions

Scheduling: J. Simpson stated that the Sociology departments had several issues with scheduling courses this semester. The department had to submit numerous revisions because the issues they had with each draft submitted were not being addressed. J. Simpson feels the scheduling process should be examined. R. Pittman and D. Glaser also stated they have had similar issues in the past as well with scheduling. K. Voges asked about J. Simpson's role in scheduling. J. Simpson stated he is the point of contact for the Sociology program in terms of scheduling. He sends the drafts for the program to the department chair. He is unaware of the process after that. Dr. Snow commented that the chair has responsibility for the schedule but each of the programs still has a say in the schedule. Due to the

lack of time, E. Westermann suggests that J. Simpson draft a position paper that outlines some of the issues further discuss this agenda item at the next meeting.

Motion: Motions to adjourn.

E. Westermann adjourns the meeting at 1:12p.m.

Approved 4/3/15