Faculty Senate Meeting
May 5, 2015

Senators Present: Bart Ballard, April Conkey, Kathleen Rees, Armando Ibanez, Christine Fiestas, Barbara Cooke, Elizabeth Janzen, Joachim Reinhuber, Ed Butterworth, Richard Miller, Stan Hodges, Don Jones, Daniel Burt, Melody Knight, Monica Wong Ratcliff, Rajab Challoo, Ryan Rhodes, Polly Allred, Jody Briones, Valerie Bartelt, Patricia Huskin, Nestor Sherman, Lifford McLauchlan, Hong Zhou, Maria de Jesus Ayala-Shueneman, Amit Verma

Senators Absent: Eliezer Louzada (1), Todd Lucas (5), Jon Baskin (1), Xiaoliu Chi (2), Brooke Mascagni (2), Pamela Wright (2), Ryan Paul (2), Hueytzen Wu (2), Kendra Huff (2), Ruth Chatelain-Jardon (2), Chonwei Xiao (1), Joseph Sai (1), Nuri Yilmazer (1), David Ramirez (1), Bruce Marsh (1), Yahia Al-Smadi (1), Rajan Lamichhane (3)

Attending: Abigail De La Mora, Dr. Rex Gandy

- **Welcome:**
  - *Dr. Verma asked Dr. Sherman if there are enough members for a quorum to which Dr. Sherman replied yes.*

- **Approval of Minutes from April Senate Meeting:**
  - *Dr. Verma asked for approval of the previous meeting minutes.*

    - Dr. Verma stated that the minutes prepared were done by the previous senate and asked if the Senate would accept the minutes not necessarily approve them.
    - Motion to accept was made, seconded and finally unanimously approved.

- **Update from Provost:**
  - *Dr. Gandy gave an update to the Faculty Senate.*

    - Board of Regents met last week and approved tenure of various faculty members.
    - Budget for next year looks good. TRB started with music building and a classroom building by the tennis courts. Recently, A&M System has come in and refinanced monies and found a pool of money to match the cost of both buildings.
    - Campus launched a strategic plan retreat. Discussed high level portions such as mission statement and vision. In the fall, will go to departments and colleges.
    - Core Resource Committee has met for about a month now to reallocate one million from non-core to core positions. Currently, all recommendations have added $800,000 in items. Committee will push for over one million as there may be issues with the type of money.
    - Dr. Gandy asked if there were any questions.
      - Question on HEAF funds was asked. Dr. Gandy stated that there is a bill currently that would increase HEAF funds. This would give us an 80% increase. It is estimated we would receive nine million. Some of these funds could be tied up in the new building, as the system may ask one million to be tied to the new building. HEAF funds are used for major projects. Dr. Gandy stated that the technology upgrades in Fore Hall were the result of HEAF funding.
    - Dr. Verma thanked Dr. Gandy for his service to the university and the Senate during his tenure. This is the last Faculty Senate meeting for Dr. Gandy as he is leaving at the end of the month.

- **Report from Officers:**
  - *Dr. Verma asked committees to report any updates they may have.*

    - Election Committee: Announced there are five new senators from recent elections in the departments of Music, Chemistry, Chemical & Natural Gas Engineering and College of Engineering 2nd at large member.
    - Committee on Committees: Dr. Verma asked the committee to make sure the load is distributed equally among senators. His motto: "No senator left behind". He stated there may be special reasons, such as someone is more suited based on their experience for a committee, which would be acceptable.

- **Update on Faculty Count Committee:**
  - *Dr. Verma gave an update.*

    - Currently, the senate does not know the correct count of faculty in each department that are eligible to vote or that can be elected to serve as a senator. The committee was formed to work on this issue. Dr. Verma has spoken to Miao Zhuang, Interim Director of OIR to help with this committee. Dr. Verma spoke of the importance of this committee as the senate needs to understand and take an accurate count to set guidelines for the future.
    - Dr. Verma asked if there were any questions.
      - No questions were asked.

- **Report from Core Resource Committee:**
  - *Dr. Verma gave an update on the Core Resource Committee that he is currently serving on.*

    - The committee has been meeting for a month. Several proposals have been submitted. The committee discussed the proposals and has approved several to go over again. Some proposals that have been submitted are the merger of departments of Chemistry and Physics and Geosciences as well as the merger of the Department of Environmental and Chemical and Natural Gas Engineering.
    - Suggestions and opinions can be submitted on the website. They are sent to Martin Brittain who then forwards them to Dr. Gandy, Committee Chair. Faculty and students from the departments have been talked to with these changes. Chemistry is against the merger.
    - Based on opinions, Honors College and Student Success will not be merged.
    - To get to goal amount, it has been suggested to cut pay 25% from top administrators.
    - There was also discussion on how course release can save money from administrative budget.
    - Lots of controversial proposals have been suggested. Dr. Verma suggested senators view the website which has minutes posted and pay attention to the changes. Changes will be implemented in the Fall.
    - Dr. Verma met with the President and Provost and highlighted that the cuts that occur in College Hall need to be publicized as most feel it is the departments that experience changes. President stated that is not true and specifics will come soon. Committee will finalize in a couple of weeks before Dr. Gandy leaves.
    - Most controversial has been the merger of Chemistry and Physics as there is no agreement. Suggestion has been made to keep the department separate but have a common chair. Dr. Verma stated if there are any concerns about this process, please contact Dr. Ratcliff or Dr. Verma as they are both on the committee and have been the loudest faculty representatives there.

- **Strategic Plan Retreat Update:**
  - *Dr. Verma asked for an update on the Strategic Plan retreat from the senators that attended.*

    - Two day retreat to create a mission and a vision and discuss major themes. Information was sent to a committee chaired by Dr. Terisa Riley to review and make sense of the information and sent to the President for final approval.
      - Dr. Verma stated that Dr. Gardiner informed the Dean's Council that no second committee would be formed.
      - Dr. Sherman stated that maybe the information had changed but that was the information presented to the group at the retreat.
    - Dr. Miller stated that some of the themes were facilities, discovery (referencing research) and visibility (website). New mission statement has to go forward for approval.
      - Dr. Ratcliff asked if consultants were going to be hired as stated in previous meetings.
        - It was stated that two consultants were hired to lead the retreat. It was unknown where the consultants were hired from.

- **Executive Committee Luncheon:**
  - *Dr. Allred gave an update on items discussed in the Executive Committee Luncheon with the President and Provost.*

    - Several items were discussed such as the sustainability push. The President was asked if this was still a priority. Dr. Tallant stated yes. It was suggested to publicize it more and it was agreed they would do a better job of that in the fall semester.
    - Dr. Verma mentioned female faculty felt the workplace was not accommodating to women. Dr. Tallant was unaware and asked if this was true. Individuals shared experiences. We are the only university with a Title IX Coordinator. It was stated that the university is doing things that are forward and progressive in that matter.
    - Dr. Verma stated it was mentioned to look at sport facilitates. Tennis matches are not held on campus, they are held elsewhere.
    - There was discussion on SRI implementation dates. It was suggested to have SRI's available earlier and not on finals week. OIR data says that up until the end of the SRI availability, scores did not have much of a difference. If faculty are not happy with that then the issue can be taken up to the new Provost.
      - Dr. Allred stated that the data showed the early results were not substantially different from the later results. The results are not grade related and currently there is an 80% return in results. The provost did not want to affect the response return.

- **SRI:**
  - *Dr. Verma opened discussion on latest SRI version dated May 5, 2015.*

    - Dr. Verma suggested the Senate should not vote for the entire document, rather it be broken into sections for each to be voted on. During a meeting with President and Provost, it was mentioned that the SRI new version has not been tested. Section 4 asked to set up a senate committee in charge of implementation. It was asked if the senate would like to vote on the committee then setup the committee to work on any changes to the questions. During Executive Committee meeting, it was determined that Dr. Kathleen Rees would head that committee.
      - It was asked why Section 4 was in a different font.
        - Dr. Verma replied stating that the fault was his as he added the last section.

- Dr. Verma suggested the senate bring a motion and vote.
- Discussion was started on Section 1 including: there are not enough domains, this is not as comprehensive and is missing favorable comments section.
- Senators were previously asked contact their departments or college they are representing to get feedback. Dr. Allred stated that she received 20 responses from the College of Arts and Science. She indicated that she had not been able to summarize the results as they were very detailed. She stated that they listed many concerns such as the question research framework (how they were developed, how do they measure instruction). Some felt the questions prejudicial to individuals that teach required courses versus electives as well as big courses versus small courses. Lots of concerns and worries were voiced. Some questioned how the questions were measured as well as worried about the open ended questions. Some indicated that they missed the open ended comments as both positive and negative were used for personal growth. Dr. Allred thanked the Senate for working and helping getting input from departments and colleges and is happy to forward the information.
- Dr. Challoo suggested that the comments be forwarded to the committee to work on item development.
- Dr. Miller stated he was on the original committee and the questions came from Kansas State as they used them as a guide. Dr. Miller also gave insight on the justification for the questions.
- It was suggested again that the SRI draft be sent back to the committee with comments senators have received. It was also suggested to expand the committee to include student representatives both at the undergraduate and graduate level as the previous committee did not have student input. It was suggested to approve Section 4 then send the SRI draft to the committee.
- Dr. Sherman stated that education has changed and is changing before faculty.
- Dr. Rees suggested that faculty can select which questions pertain to certain courses or certain sections.
- Dr. Verma asked if there was an agreement that the current SRI is flawed.
    - It was stated that music did not like existing SRI but that may be different for other departments.
- It was stated that with the addition of a student representative that a representative from OIR needs to be incorporated in the discussion to ensure suggestions can be done. Dr. Verma agreed to that.
- It was stated that since Faculty Senate asked constituents their input there is now an unsaid obligation to honor and consider the comments submitted.
- Motion was made to table Sections 1, 2, and 3.
    - Dr. Sherman questioned how and who would do the statistical evaluation as OIR is not capable to do that and it will be a lot of work.
    - It was stated that this issue will come after implementation so it is a problem for the future.
    - It was asked also how appropriate would it be to approve Section 4 with Sections 1, 2, and 3 tabled.
        - It was stated that Section 4 is a protective measure to show oversight. The number just so happen to be where it was located on the document. In reality, Section 4 supersedes all to ensure interests are well guarded. The major portion of section is the appointment of a committee to oversee concerns on statistical practical requirements.
- Motion was made to approve Section 4. Motion was seconded. Motion was passed unanimously with the Senate.
    - Committee on Committees will work on forming a committee as there is no SRI committee at the moment. It was suggested to go back to the old committee. Dr.

Verma stated that will depend if the old committee members wish to volunteer on the new committee. It was stated that Dr. Gardiner was the chair of the prior committee and will now be assuming the role of interim Provost. Dr. Verma stated that he wanted a senate led effort and not have administration involved. He stated that we are not working with the prior committee as it stands as it is not going to be headed by College Hall. Previous members can be on the committee as well as some students.

- Motion to table Section 1, 2, and 3 and refer back to other committee with concerns and recommendation was made. The motion was seconded.
    - Dr. Sherman motioned for discussion before vote. Dr. Sherman suggested that Section 3 not be tabled which discuss the terms of evaluation. Larger issue is that existing data shows no correlation. There will be two sets of data and no instruction how to evaluate. Committee to look into statistical evaluation. Dr. Verma agrees but sees Section 3 as tying into Sections 1 and 2. It was questioned as to why we are voting on Section 3 as well as Section 4. The voting was for the establishment of the committee but no action to Section 3.
        - Discussion was conducted on the purpose of voting on the various sections.
- Since the motion had seconded, Dr. Verma asked for a vote. Motion passed with one nay.

❖ **New Business:**

- *Dr. Verma stated new business to Faculty Senate*

- One of the items was SRI implementation meeting, and since that had been discussed in detail already and voted on, Dr. Verma went on to the next item.
- Committee on support for senior faculty. Several have brought to attention that senior faculty are not given support that junior faculty are receiving. Faculty members stating this have been vague as to what they are asking for. Because their request is vague, administrations response has been vague. There is discussion on a Faculty Senate committee composed of senior faculty from all over. They are to find items to take to the President and Provost to help senior faculty.
- Dr. Verma opened the floor for any discussions.
- Next meeting will take place September 1, 2015. iTech is schedule to address broad concerns to the group. In August, Executive committee meeting will be held to discuss state of Library as it pertains to Faculty Senate. There is a struggle in membership in Senate committee so how to treat this will be addressed.

❖ **Open Floor:**

- *Dr. Verma opened the floor for discussion and new items.*

- With no new items brought to the floor, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.