

Faculty Senate Meeting—March 1, 2016

Senators Present: Bart Ballard, April Conkey, Kathleen Rees, Manuel Flores, Armando Ibanez, Chang Sung, Xiaoliu Chi, Christine Fiestas, Ryan Paul, Khairul Islam, Elizabeth Janzen, Joachim Reinhuber, Richard Miller, Stan Hodges, Daniel Burt, Monica Wong Ratcliff, Chonwei Xiao, Joseph Sai, Nuri Yilmazer, Rajab Chaloo, David Ramirez, Polly Allred, Jody Briones, Valerie Bartelt, Patricia Huskin, Nestor Sherman, Lifford McLauchlan, Hong Zhou, Amit Verma

Senators Absent: Eliezer Louzada (5), Alberto Rodriguez (2), Barbara Cooke (3), Pamela Wright (4), Kendra Huff (4), Ruth Chatelain-Jardon (3), Don Jones (2), Melody Knight (2), Bruce Marsh (3), **Ryan Rhoades (5)**, Maria de Jesus Ayala-Schueneman (3)

Attending: Dr. Heidi Anderson, Abigail De La Mora

❖ **Call to Order and Quorum Call - 3:30 p.m.:**

➤ *Dr. Verma asked parliamentarian, Dr. Nestor Sherman, if there are enough members for a quorum. Dr. Sherman replied in the affirmative.*

❖ **Approval of Minutes from November Senate Meeting:**

➤ *Dr. Verma asked for approval of the previous meeting minutes.*

- A move to approve the minutes as stands was made. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kathleen Rees.
- The motion passed unanimously.

❖ **Presentation from Provost:**

➤ *Dr. Heidi Anderson, pleased to come speak with the Senate, gave a quick update.*

- Update on the search for the College of Arts and Sciences Dean position:
 - There were 40 applications submitted with one internal candidate.
 - The 17 member committee, chaired by Dr. Alberto Ruiz, will narrow down the candidates to 10 and conduct Blackboard Collaborate interviews, and will shorten the list.
 - Campus interviews will take place mid-April.
 - Two individuals had withdrawn as of this morning.
- Update on the search for Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies:
 - This was an internal search with 6 applications submitted and four finalists selected by the committee.
 - Campus forums are being held all week and the candidate will be meeting with staff members and the search committee.
 - This search is moving quickly. We may hear results before Spring Break.
- The Registrar's Office has been moved under Dr. Anderson's division.
 - A consultant will be coming on campus to review that office. Bobbi Brown comes highly recommended by state and national registrar's organizations.

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- She will do a full spectrum review of that office and may want to meet with the Faculty Senate or Executive Committee for information. Dr. Anderson asked the Senate for their cooperation, and solicits ideas and concerns.
- Dr. Anderson's office currently handles commencement as well as scheduling. Other institutions have the Registrar's Office handle these two items and she would be happy to shift in that direction.
- Dr. Anderson mentioned Dr. Duane Gardiner had a consultant review and give advice on the Study Aboard program. The Senate is invited to submit a collective pool of ideas for the study abroad program if they wish to do so.
- Dr. Anderson has started meeting with the Council of Chairs on the last Friday of each month.
- Discussion in that meeting took place regarding faculty evaluations.
 - Suggestions regarding a formative and summative evaluation of faculty teaching were made as well as ideas for giving peer feedback.
 - The current evaluation of teaching is focused on student evaluations and Dr. Anderson wants chairs to begin thinking about other methods.
- **Dr. Anderson opened the floor for questions.**
 - *Dr. Ryan Paul posed a question unrelated to Dr. Anderson's presentation but rather on security cameras, as his department asked him to raise this issue:*
 - Dr. Anderson replied that question should be directed to Dr. Terisa Riley's office as the undertaking is under her division.
 - *Dr. Paul said faculty members want to know how the cameras will make the campus safer and how will the data be processed and will it be stored. He asked, "Could this information be subpoenaed?"*
 - Dr. Anderson replied that these were good questions and it would be better for Dr. Riley to answer them.
 - Dr. Paul will forward the department's list of questions to Dr. Anderson for Dr. Riley.
 - Dr. Anderson referred to changes in the Clery Act by the Department of Education and noted that security camera installation may be an effort to better align with that.
 - She also stated that students have expressed feelings of being unsafe on campus.
 - *Dr. Elizabeth Janzen stated the previous Provost (Dr. Rex Gandy) had discussed changes regarding the teaching load to reflect a greater emphasis on research (a 3x3 option).*
 - Dr. Amit Verma replied that there is interest, and exploration into this topic will begin.
 - Dr. Anderson stated that when she interviewed for this position and was visiting the campus, the item that struck her was that this campus was teaching first. The Faculty Handbook states excellent teaching. That is our campus mission and Dr. Anderson wants to see the evaluation of teaching where we can better reward faculty and show that teaching is valued.
 - Dr. Anderson is looking at a Provost teaching awards.

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- Dr. Anderson is looking into the workload of department chairs.
 - She wants to make sure all department chairs have administrative assistant help and would like to increase the chair's compensation.
 - Dr. Anderson stated the current compensation is not on par with even the A&M System.
- Dr. Anderson stated she is looking at various things and wants to maintain shared governance and keep the Senate updated on items as well as ask for input.
- With no further questions, Dr. Verma thanked Dr. Anderson for her presentation.

❖ Report from Committees and Officers:

- *Dr. Verma asked for the various committees and officers to give updates to the Faculty Senate.*
 - Faculty Senate President Update - Dr. Verma
 - *Dr. Verma traveled to Austin to attend the Faculty Senate President Council meeting as well as a meeting with System Faculty Senate Presidents and Dr. James Hallmark.*
 - Important items were discussed including **the 60x30 initiative**. Dr. Verma asked Senators to go through the information on this initiative as it is already starting to affect the campus.
 - Some community colleges will be handing out bachelor degrees and the campus will see changes to the enrollment numbers as well as the kind of students we enroll.
 - Dr. Verma has asked the Senate to read this initiative give him a collective input on this issue.
 - **SB 15** was also discussed.
 - There is bill currently develop which would transfer power from the Board of Regents to the Chancellor. This bill would put more power to the Chancellor but it is felt that the Chancellor is more invested in the system.
 - Dr. Verma asked Senators to lobby local representative on this issue.
 - This bill is going to affect the campus in a positive way and the Senate should decide where we stand on the issue.
 - In the Council meeting the gun issue was most dominant in the discussion. The realization that it's here to stay in August is occurring.
 - The concern is not mass shooting but rather an increase in suicide rates. There has been a request for more investment regarding mental health issues.
 - Dr. Verma has the agendas for these meetings for anyone who wishes to view them.

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- *Dr. Richard Miller opened discussion regarding Dr. Anderson's comments on 4x4 teaching.*
 - He stated that the provost is equating 4x4 with emphasis on teaching.
 - He stated that release time is not just for scholarship but can be used elsewhere and suggested a broadened notion of release time.
 - It was suggested that the Senate form a committee to give recommendations.
 - It was stated that the campus is transitioning to a more balanced distribution of research and teaching and the teaching loads need to reflect that.
 - Dr. Stan Hodges stated that the previous Provost suggested change for economic reasons. The vision and emphasis need to change and reflect the times as the campus cannot be teaching only.
 - Dr. Christine Fiestas mentioned that the university does not only have undergraduate programs.
 - It was stated there needs to be a link to the senior faculty initiative.
 - Dr. Daniel Burt warned Senators to remember the end road in this discussion with the possibility of eliminating tenure track positions which is becoming a standard practice.
 - It was stated that Dr. Mohammed Abdelrahman's research center is giving funding and release time for projects.
 - It was suggested that a wordsmith will need to draft up something to bring as a resolution.

❖ **Old Business:**

- *Dr. Verma stated there was no old business at this time.*

❖ **New Business:**

- *Dr. Verma opened the floor for new business items.*

- Dr. Verma brought the amendment to the promotion guidelines to the floor for discussion. A copy of the motion was given to all Senators. The motion was developed by the Executive Committee in response to efforts made by the Handbook Committee. The Senate viewed the document and called for a vote. The Senate approved unanimously the following change:
 - *B. Academic Personnel Policies*
B.4 Promotion in Rank – Guidelines
B.4.1 Principles, Section 6b:
6. (b) An associate professor may become eligible for review for promotion to full professor in the faculty member's fifth year in rank.
 - **The evaluation period for promotion to full professor begins with the date of portfolio submission for associate professor and ends with the date of portfolio submission for full professor, except in the case of a faculty member at the associate professor rank.**

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- ***In the latter case, unless otherwise negotiated and specified in the faculty member's letter of appointment, the evaluation period for materials submitted for review for the rank of full professor begins with the date of appointment to rank of associate professor, and ends with the application for rank of full professor.***
- ***It is the applicant's responsibility to provide documentation confirming his/her date of appointment to rank of associate professor.***
- ***Materials used in the evaluation process from assistant professor to associate professor (including any used for appeal) may not be submitted for evaluation in the process for promotion from associate to full professor.***

❖ **Announcements:**

- *Dr. Verma opened the floor for various committees to give an update.*
 - Election Committee – Dr. McLauchlan:
 - The Biology Department needs to hold elections.
 - This week the Music Department and Department of Teacher and Bilingual Education will hold elections.
 - After Spring Break, elections for College At-Large seats will be held.
 - 12 senator terms are expiring this year.
 - There was discussion about visiting with iTech about holding elections online/electronically. (This led to a conversation about classroom technology needs and issues.)
 - An update will follow.
 - Dr. Verma called for a Review of the Constitution of the Faculty Senate by senators:
 - Dr. Verma handed out the most current copy of the Faculty Senate Constitution.
 - He asked senators to read and review the document.
 - Next meeting a committee would be established in order to look into possible updates to the document.
 - He also noted the Faculty Senate does not have by-laws. If there were by-laws created, this document could not be found.
 - This topic will be up for discussion.
 - Announcements from the Floor:
 - *Dr. Polly Allred made an announcement on behalf of Dr. Singh in the Department of Mathematics regarding Statistics Day.*
 - Posters of the event were provided for Senators to review and take back to departments to post.
 - Dr. Allred mentioned to faculty opportunities for students to present research at this event.
 - More information was located on the posters.
 - *Dr. Monica Wong-Ratcliff asked about information on the gun law.*

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- Dr. Bart Ballard, who served on this committee, stated that forums were already held and the committee has finished its charge.
- The law will go into effect in August.
- No-gun zones that were requested had to go to the President for approval and then to the Board of Regents. Only then would the campus know if they are approved.
- *It was suggested the Senate take Dr. Anderson's offer and submit a draft recommendation for the Study Abroad Program.*
 - It was asked that the Provost share the consultant's report.
 - Discussion took place regarding some of the issues the faculty felt in regards to the program.
 - Volunteers were solicited to serve on the committee.
 - Dr. Stan Hodges stated he would be willing to serve.
 - It was suggested to wait till April when there will be a new senate as well as a new president.
- *It was stated that eligible faculty need to be clarified.*
 - The Faculty Count committee had not met recently and was not successful in the past.
 - It was suggested to contact Office of Institutional Research for a list and go from there.
 - It was stated that there needs to be an updated faculty list on the Provost's website.
 - It was stated the responsibility for an updated faculty list needs to be pushed to the Provost.
- *An update was given regarding a scantron machine that was purchased.*
 - Most felt this machine was not available but it is actually in operation.
 - Two individuals currently use the machine.
 - Dr. Kathleen Rees wanted to let Senators know it is available for their use.
- *Dr. Verma mentioned the possibility of moving next month's meeting to the Dining Hall, a better room to have a conference style seating were all can sit at the table, versus along the walls as in the Blue Room.*

❖ **Adjournment:**

- *Dr. Verma announced the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2016.*
- With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.