Faculty Senate Meeting
September 1, 2015

Senators Present: Eliezer Louzada, Bart Ballard, April Conkey, Kathleen Rees, Armando Ibanez, Xiaoliu Chi, Christine Fiestas, Barbara Cooke, Pamela Wright, Ryan Paul, Elizabeth Janzen, Joachim Reinhuber, Kendra Huff, Ruth Chatelain-Jardon, Don Jones, Melody Knight, Monica Wong Ratcliff, Chonwei Xiao, Joseph Sai, Nuri Yilmazer, Rajab Challoo, David Ramirez, Bruce Marsh, Polly Allred, Jody Briones, Valerie Bartelt, Patricia Huskin, Nestor Sherman, Lifford McLauchlan, Hong Zhou, Maria deJesus Ayala-Shueneman, Richard Miller, Amit Verma

Senators Absent: Todd Lucas (6), Jon Baskin (2), Brooke Mascagni (3), Hueytzen Wu (3), Ed Butterworth (2), Stan Hodges (2), Daniel Burt (2), Yahia Al-Smadi (2), Rajan Lamichhane (4), Ryan Rhoades (2)

Attending: Dr. Duane Gardiner, Abigail De La Mora, Dr. Michelle Duran, Dr. Nancy KingSanders, Melissa Guajardo

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

- **Approval of Minutes from May 5, 2015 Senate Meeting:**
  - *Dr. Verma asked for review and approval of the previous meeting minutes.*

    - Motion to approve the May 5, 2015 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes was made, and subsequently passed unanimously.

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

    - Dr. Gardiner thanked senators for coming and welcomed them. He is happy to report there has been a good relationship between the Faculty Senate and Administration. The summer session has been fruitful, with good lines of communication, and he looks forward to continuing the good work.
    - Dr. Gardiner stated that there were few big decisions during the summer, as the President wanted to wait for the new Provost to arrive. Dr. Heidi Anderson will arrive on campus September 14, 2015. He reported she is excited to arrive and will be soon fully engaged.
    - Dr. Gardiner announced 19 faculty lines in addition to the faculty lines that were given to Engineering. Areas were based on semester credit hours. If faculty members are unaware of this, their deans are and they have been notified.

- Core Curriculum has been updated with the approval of four courses effective immediately.
- Dr. Gardiner gave an update on the Strategic Plan. He reported that some senators participated in a two-day retreat in the spring to develop a strategic plan. This plan was then sent out and was open for feedback. Dr. Gardiner received around 100 comments that were productive. A response committee was formed and modified the plan based on comments given. A new mission statement, vision, goals and priorities were developed and sent to the President for his approval. Departments are now charged with developing goals and visions due September 11th for the new Provost.
- Dr. Gardiner stated that the President is aware of the needs of senior faculty. A committee has been formed, a survey has gone out, and the president is committed to address the needs of senior faculty.
- Dr. Gardiner mentioned the President is not ready to go forward with changes to the Faculty Handbook regarding staff teaching for additional pay. The President mentioned that the language on this needs to be clearer.
- Dr. Gardiner stated that faculty has already been told big news such as new budget, raises and buildings at the General Faculty Meeting.
- Dr. Gardiner solicited questions, but none were asked.
    - Dr. Verma extended an open invitation to the President, Dr. Anderson and Dr. Gardiner to attend future Faculty Senate Meetings.

❖ **Report on Ad Astra:**

➢ *Melissa Guajardo was available to answer questions on Ad Astra.*

- Mrs. Guajardo opened the floor for questions from senators, mentioning that Fall 2015 is our first time using Ad Astra and Spring 2016 semester will be rolling soon.
    - Dr. Rajab Challoo stated a concern about having back-to-back courses scheduled far across campus.
        - Mrs. Guajardo said that Ad Astra can adjust for those with back-to-back courses but it is difficult to accommodate preferences during peak times.
    - Dr. Kathleen Rees noted a need for posted information on how to use AV technology in various classrooms around campus and who to contact if the technology is not working.
        - Mrs. Guajardo stated that Ad Astra takes an inventory of the equipment that is in the room but does not keep track of what is working and what is not.
        - Dr. Gardiner stated that the issue was brought up with Dr. Terisa Riley and there is an initiative being started to write instructions on how to use the technology.
        - There are issues with projector bulbs not being replaced because no one can decide who should pay. This will soon be resolved with the bulbs purchased from a centralized account.
    - One senator stated that the labs/courses are not being scheduled in correct rooms needing software or equipment.

        - Mrs. Guajardo asked if the individual had turned in a preference sheet. She suggested if the faculty had not submitted a preference sheet to go ahead and do that, or if they need it revised to resubmit and write on the top that it is a revised preference. She stated that some departments had individuals that did not turn in any preferences.
    - Another comment was made that departments were told they could not list instructor as TBA. There was concern as they were still in the process of hiring individuals who are not in the system yet.
        - Mrs. Guajardo was unfamiliar with that rule because departments can put TBA for the instructor when they input the initial schedule.
    - It was asked who was in charge of Ad Astra.
        - Mrs. Guajardo stated that she was in charge of the program. She said she would send department chairs the preference sheet again for instructors needing to make changes or to submit preferences.
- With no further questions, Dr. Verma thanked Mrs. Guajardo for attending and requested that she attend the next meeting to which she agreed.

❖ **Report by AVP for Student Success:**

- *Dr. Nancy KingSanders presented on services her office has to offer for faculty and students.*

- Dr. KingSanders spoke about the history of Center for Student Success as well as the various programs and services administered by that office (Academic Advising, Dual Enrollment, etc.). She stated that our campus is an AVID Higher Education Campus and that GPS tutors are AVID certified. Dual Enrollment has extended from Hidalgo to Houston. She also mentioned the number of student in developmental courses has dropped and not just because the raising of admission standards. Dr. KingSanders introduced a new program titled "JSTARS" to the Senate and explained how it will allow advisors and faculty to keep track of students as an early alert program.
- Dr. KingSanders invited all faculty members to the Freshman Convocation held September 2, 2015 in the SPEC at 3:00 p.m. Regalia is not required for faculty.
- Dr. KingSanders opened the floor for questions.
    - It was stated that students in the UNIV courses have complained about the required 30 minutes a week to meet with GPS tutor. Dr. KingSanders stated that some don't need as much as other students do. The 30 minutes has been an overall guideline.
    - It was also stated that students have reported in the past that mentors were not there. Dr. KingSanders was not aware of any issues like that currently. They have really tightened up from the previous year but if there are any issues, please contact her.
    - It was stated that in the past, people have had difficulty hearing on the second floor of the SPEC at Convocation. Dr. KingSanders stated that she is aware of this issue and they have addressed it by setting up similarly to commencement.
- With no further questions, Dr. Verma thanked Dr. KingSanders for her presentation.

- **Report for Information Technology – Dr. Michelle Duran:**
  - *Dr. Michelle Duran did a presentation on updates to iTech on behalf of Mr. Bob Paulson who was unable to attend the meeting.*

    - Dr. Duran reminded faculty of the network update that is happening to the following buildings: Art, BESB, CYC, Conner, Cousins, Hill, Human Sciences, Nierman and Seale. Notification will go out when the network will be down. If there is a conflict, let iTech know and they can try and redirect the network for you. Printers and any device connected through the network will need to be reconfigured. When the network is up, representatives from iTech will be available to setup afterwards.
    - iTech is aware that JNET is not favorable but they are hoping to improve with the implementation of JNET 2.0 and are asking for faculty input.
      - One suggestion was a searchable option instead of having to use a content map and "dig" for items.
      - A faculty focus group will be setup. Contact Mr. Paulson or Dr. Duran if interested.
      - Another addition is giving JNET a mobile feature as asked for by students to allow them to check Blue and Gold on their phone.
    - Dr. Duran reminded the Senate that they do have a representative on the Technology and Distance Learning Committee that can relay information for them.
    - Dr. Duran reminded, with Office 365, faculty members have 5 free downloads on devices. All they need is their tamuk.edu account. If faculty members need students to have Word or Excel for example for their course, students also have access to the free downloads as well.
      - It was asked if the download was permanent. Dr. Duran clarified they are eligible for the free downloads as long as they have a tamuk.edu account. When students graduate they have a tamuk.edu account as alumni.
      - It was asked where individuals could find the download. Dr. Duran stated that Office 365 has an area for choosing downloads.
    - Dr. Duran stated that Office 2013 is available and iTech can update your computer if you are interested. iTech will be traveling across campus to various building during their "Teched Out" event. iTech staff will be available to answer any questions and work on all tickets associated with that building during that time.
      - Dr. Richard Miller asked if an individual could get access to their desktop from home. Dr. Duran stated it is possible but there are some protocols to that. She informed him to create a ticket and they can work on that.
      - Dr. Verma reminded Senators that information presented in Faculty Senate is not exclusive to Faculty Senate Meetings and urged Senators to share this information with their departments.
      - Dr. Verma also stated that during a meeting with the President and Dr. Rex Gandy (previous Provost) the concern of the university actively monitoring email was discussed. Dr. Verma stated the university does store email for an indefinite amount of time but does not monitor it actively. This does not mean that the university cannot monitor. Emails

are subject to open records as well as any correspondence that is work related, even if it is on a personal account or device.

- With no further questions, Dr. Verma thanked Dr. Duran for her presentation.

❖ **Report of Officers:**

➢ *Dr. Verma asked for an update from the various standing committees' work, if any, during the summer months.*

- Election Committee – Dr. McLauchlan
  - ➢ Nothing to report.

- Committee on Committee – Dr. Chatelain-Jardon
  - ➢ The committee worked this summer to fill upcoming vacancies. She asked senators to look at the Faculty Senate webpage to see who is serving on what committee.

- Resolution and By-laws Committee – Dr. Huff
  - ➢ Nothing to report.

- Piper Award Committee – Dr. Hong Zhou
  - ➢ Nothing to report.

- Annual Faculty Lecture Committee – Dr. Reinhuber
  - ➢ Dr. Reinhuber stated that the committee had selected him as the Annual Faculty Lecturer for this upcoming year.

- Administrator Evaluation Committee – Dr. Chatelain-Jardon
  - ➢ Dr. Chatelain-Jardon stated that the committee had nothing to report as this committee will be working in Spring.

- Faculty Count (Special Task Committee)
  - ➢ Dr. Verma stated that the committee had nothing to report but will be working to develop an accurate faculty count.

- Strategic Plan Response Committee – Dr. Sherman
  - ➢ Dr. Sherman stated that the committee met over the summer to work on the responses that were received pertaining to the proposed strategic plan, which was not well received. The committee met and formulated new mission, vision, goals and priorities that were approved by the President.

- Undergraduate Program Review Committee – Dr. Huff
  - ➢ Nothing to report.

- Faculty Evaluation Committee – Dr. Miller

- Dr. Miller reported that the committee worked last spring and has a report that will be ready by Monday that can then come to the Senate.

- SRI Committee – Dr. Janzen
  - Nothing to report.

- Title IX Working Group – Dr. Huskin
  - Dr. Huskin stated the committee did meet with Karen Royal to understand policies related to faculty and the obligation of the university. The committee is looking at curriculum in UNIV to discuss security and safety. This committee also is looking to adapt an app called Rave Guardian. We have purchased the program and will be rename something related to JavGuard. The app will be downloaded and turns your phone into the equivalent of the Campus Blue Phones. Phone's GPS will be turned on to find location and be sent to both Kingsville PD and University PD. The committee will be meeting again next week.

- Senior Faculty Reinvestment Program Committee – Dr. Miller
  - Dr. Miller stated that the committee met last spring semester. There were nine possible initiatives identified. Now that the faculty has returned, the committee has surveyed for input. Data will be compiled and revealed soon. A rating system was established and the committee will focus on the top five ranked initiatives for development. A full proposal will be forthcoming.
    - Dr. Verma stated that he is glad the President and Provost approved of this committee.
  - Dr. Miller asked for any questions. There were none.

- Dr. Verma announced that Dr. Bart Ballard will be the Faculty Senate Representative on the SB 11 committee implementing the new state law on guns on campus. The Committee has not met yet and will be chaired by Mr. Randy Hughes, Chief of Staff.

❖ **Old Business:**
  - *Dr. Verma opened the floor for old business. Since committees had already given updates, Dr. Verma moved to new business.*

❖ **New Business:**
  - *Dr. Verma opened discussion on new business.*

    - Dr. Verma stated that over the summer a new reaffirmation statement was added to the Faculty Handbook and published online.

❖ **Announcements/Discussion:**
  - *Dr. Verma opened the floor for any announcements or discussion items.*

- Dr. Kathleen Rees brought up the idea of a possible overhaul of the Faculty Handbook's Promotion/Tenure section. She stated that there is only an appeals committee at the university level, but they do not review. It was suggested that maybe this would be a discussion to be first taken up by the Handbook Committee.
  - Dr. Verma asked for volunteers to serve on the Faculty Handbook Committee.
    - Drs. Xiaoliu Chi, Hong Zhu, and Barbara Cooke were selected with Dr. Maria Ayala-Schueneman to serve as committee chair due to her previous service in the last update.
  - History was given on the University Appeal Committee to which Dr. Rex Gandy felt the University Promotion & Tenure Committee previously acted like an appeals committee.
  - It was stated that there is no promotion/tenure committee in Faculty Senate. It was suggested that any changes would need to be done to the Handbook and it was suggested also that someone from Administration be involved as they are knowledgeable on system policy.
  - There was discussion on the advantages of a University level promotion/tenure committee.
    - One disadvantage is the departments and colleges are already at a loss to individuals serving on the department and college level committees.
    - Also, there is disconnection between the colleges with their individual guidelines.
    - The benefit would be that it would be least guided by personal considerations at the department and college levels.
    - It was stated that some college have professors go for promotion first then tenure. It is not mandated that they have to go through tenure first then promotion or at the same time.
    - Dr. Verma stated that the Handbook committee will need to look at the promotion/tenure section, and inform and educate the senate on current policies.
  - There was discussion on the discrepancy in the wording of Promotion timeline.
    - Currently the handbook states that when going up for promotion, it should include everything since the last promotion but will be missing a year since the promotion is awarded the following year.
      - The missing year needs to be accounted for. It was stated that there is no violation of policy or procedure as it goes through chair, dean, and provost as they still do an annual year and can insert items in the binder if needed. The only downside of this is that the previous committee will not see it as it does not back up the approval process as they do not want to count something twice.
- These issues were given to the committee to further investigate.

❖ **Adjournment:**
- *With no further items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.*