

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – March 5, 2019

Senators Present: Polly Allred, Ambrose Anoruo, Marion Blake, Ulan Dakeev, Jieming Chen, David Cutton, LaVonne Fedynich, Christine Fiestas, Manuel Flores, Michelle Garcia, Jeffrey Glick, Elizabeth Janzen, Dongnyoung Kim, Larry Knight, Brian Menaker Craig Meyer, Patrick Mills, Christine Radcliff, Ari Sherris, Jack Shorter, Tushar Sinha, Marsha Sowell, Haibin Su, Benjamin Turner, William Worek, Pamela Wright, Nuri Yilmazer Hong Zhou

Senators Absent: Apurba Bhattacharya, Rudolf Bohm, Horacio Duarte, Karen Furgerson, Brent Hedquist, Joseph Jones, Veronica Lopez, Tanner Machado, Lana McDonnell, Hans Schumann, Dazhi Sun, Amit Verma, Fulden Wissinger,

I. Call to Order and Quorum Call.

At 3:37 p.m. President Janzen asked the parliamentarian, Poly Allred, if enough members were present for a quorum. Senator Allred replied in the affirmative.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 2019 Faculty Senate Meeting.

President Janzen asked for approval of the previous meeting minutes. Senator Glick motioned, Senator Fiestas seconded. Minutes were approved.

III. Presentations

a. Provost Rasmussen

The Provost reported that there will be a change in the due date for Summer grades. This is due to a Department of Education audit of the Financial Aid department. Instead of being due at noon, the new deadline time will be 9am.

He also reported that President Hussey has started meeting with individual departments. All meetings will be 45 minutes in length (10 min Dr. Hussey, 10min dept. report, 25 min Q&A). He has already met with the Animal Sciences department and has remaining departments scheduled as follows: March 21 Education, March 26th Agronomy, March 27th Engineering, and March 29th Arts & Sciences.

IV. Report of Officers

a. Senate President Elizabeth Janzen

President Janzen recently attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting. Topics of discussion included general faculty support (travel, etc.) and President Janzen confirmed that TAMUK is underfunded. Summer salary was also discussed with an informal vote to pursue this topic. There was a show of hands to see at what percentage summer salaries are funded with 1/10th, 1/11th and 1/12th being the most common, and President Janzen raised her hand to tell them that TAMUK is at 1/15th. There was also an ongoing conversation about non-tenure track faculty. She reported to the Senate that our newly created policy committee is looking into professional/ longer term contracts (specifically for adjuncts). The last topic from this meeting she reported on concerns the MyEvide health questionnaire. Starting Fall 2018 in order to receive your insurance premium incentive, members are required to have a wellness exam and answer a health assessment questionnaire through the MyEvide portal <https://myevive.com/dv2/signin?clientname=Tamus>. College Station feels that some of the questions are invasive, so they created a document expressing those concerns that was signed by all System Faculty Senate/Council

Presidents. Senator Knight asked if the questionnaire could be a HIPPA violation, and President Janzen said she would check with Karen Royal.

President Janzen also had news about the Faculty Reinvestment Award. (See *handout titled Faculty Reinvestment Award.*) President Hussey has agreed to do a pilot year for this that will give out 3 awards. The deadline to submit the required documentation to Dr. Jaya Goswami is close of business on Friday April 12, 2019.

A compensation committee has been created that will review all compensation issues. Committee membership includes Senators Knight, Fiestas, and Verma, President Janzen, College of Engineering Dean Alam, College of Arts & Sciences Dean Guerrero, and the Provost. They are schedule to have their first meeting the week after spring break.

One of the specific issues the committee will be reviewing is going to a 3/3 teaching load. President Hussey has ask Chancellor Hallmark about making this change. Chancellor Hallmark noted that most regional universities are 4/4 with the exception of TAMU-CC. Both Hussey and Hallmark will support a 3/3, but it will cost money or may result in larger class sizes. Merit raises will also be involved in this discussion. Please solicit feedback from your departmental colleagues on this issue.

Lastly President Janzen asked President Hussey what his philosophy of the Faculty Handbook is. He responded that it is more than guidelines, that it is a set of helpful rules, instructions, etc. He asked Dr. Goswami to make sure that nothing in the current handbook conflicts with System policies.

V. Old Business

a. Abstentions

Through a prior survey overseen by Senator Anouro faculty expressed their concern about the use of abstentions in continuation/ promotion and tenure decisions. President Tallant also was not in favor of having abstentions as an option and wanted it removed. President Janzen wanted to understand the current feelings of faculty on this issue before making any changes to the Faculty Handbook. In the February meeting President Janzen asked all Senators to solicit feedback from their colleagues on the following statement

“What is the assessment of faculty at TAMUK regarding the appropriateness and/or necessity of the option to abstain in Continuation and Tenure/Promotion committee votes at our university?”

A 12 minute time limit was established for discussion in the Senate on this topic. Concerns brought up during discussion focused on wanting to make sure that all faculty and upper administration understand that an abstention does not constitute a vote of no, contrary to what many faculty members on C/P&T committees have been explicitly told by full professors, chairs or deans in departments. The point was made that removing the option to abstain goes against parliamentary procedure which is used worldwide. Could alternate wording such as “present, not voting” be used to record votes instead of abstain. At the end of the allotted time, consensus was reached to keep abstentions as an option but have a better definition of what it means and to make sure that this

information is included in the Faculty Handbook. It was also agreed that on documentation for C/P&T only yes/no votes would be reported. These items will be included on the change list for the handbook next year.

- b. **Academic Calendar: Student's rights for religious observance**
(See handout titled *Greater Transparency of Student Rights to Religious Observance*)

Senator Sherris re-read his motion, and the motion was seconded by Senator Glick allowing time for discussion. Senator Sherris stated that he had taken the motion to the Student Government Association and they are interested in pursuing it, but no further movement has been indicated on the part of SGA. It was asked if the President and Provost have been notified of this and President Janzen said she would present it to them the following day in her meeting with them.

Senator Glick motioned to close discussion and the motion was seconded by Senator Worek. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

VI. Standing Committee Reports

- a. **Resolution and By-laws/Handbook Committee** – no report
- b. **Committee on Committees** – no report
- c. **Election Committee**
 - i. Emails have been sent to the Department Chairs who need to hold elections. Ballots are scheduled to be collected March 6th or 7th, with two departments waiting to hold elections immediately after spring break.

VII. Special Item

- a. **Proposed Constitutional Amendment:**
 - i. **Faculty Senate Absentee Policy**
(See handouts titled *FacSen TenMotion-Meyer-Original* and *FacSen TenMotion-Meyer-amended*)

Senator Meyer read the motion, and the motion was seconded by Senator Worek allowing time for discussion. Discussion included mentions that the proposed amendment takes the power from the department and gives it to the Executive Committee & Faculty Senate; is there a way to allow reasons beyond faculty control (classes or sickness) to be excused; where is the voice from colleagues if a Senator is not in attendance; Graduate Council uses stand in's; do other Senates do by proxy, one Senator stated they support part A, but not parts B & C of the proposed amendment.

There was then a motion to amend the motion. A vote was taken to amend the original motion, and it was passed that the original motion would be amended.

The amended motion was read, and a vote was taken to approve the amended proposed constitutional amendment. The amended proposed constitutional amendment Faculty Senate Absentee Policy was approved.

The amendment will need to be voted on a second time by the full Senate in the April 2019 meeting.

Quorum was lost at 5:04pm

VIII. Reports from Committees Reporting to the Senate

- a. **Administrator Evaluation Committee**
 - i. Survey will be emailed out at 10am March 6, 2019 and will be open for two weeks.
- b. **Annual Faculty Lecture Committee** – On track
- c. **Piper Award Committee** – No update
- d. **Faculty Evaluation Committee** – No update
- e. **University Appeals Committee** – Making progress
- f. **Faculty Benefits Committee** – No report
- g. **Policy Revision Committee**
 - i. Daniel Burt is the committee Chair and they are currently collecting data

IX. Task Force Reports

- a. **Online Elections**
 - i. They plan on running a pilot election this month in the Senate using Microsoft Forms.
- b. **Shared Governance** – No report
- c. **Dead Week/Dead Day** (*see handout titled TaskForce-StudyDay-Meyer*)
 - i. Senator Meyer read a proposal for revised definitions of Study Day and for the partial week of classes before study day.

X. New Business

- a. **Travel compensation for Dual Enrollment (Senator Knight)** – Moved to April

XI. Announcements

- a. President Janzen informed everyone that nominations are now being requested for the Outstanding Senator Award. She will email out the form tomorrow. Deadline for nominations is March 25th. Send all nominations to Senate Secretary Christine Radcliff. Executive Council will select a recipient at the March Executive Council meeting. (*see handout titled Senate DSA Nomination Form*)

XII. Good of the Senate (Informal discussion period)

XIII. Adjournment – At 5:15pm President Janzen informally adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Radcliff
Faculty Senate Secretary, 2018-2019

Faculty Reinvestment Awards

Purpose:	Reinvestment Awards are intended to promote the professional growth of the faculty through activities designed to enhance their scholarly and/or teaching effectiveness. Such activities must be used only for specific planned activities involving study, research, scholarship, or creative work of mutual benefit to the faculty member and the university.
Eligibility:	All full-time teaching faculty are encouraged to apply for funding; however, priority will be given to opportunities that focus on research, innovative teaching, or service which will enhance faculty effectiveness. Support is provided with due regard to the best interests of the eligible applicants and the university. Support will be granted only to a faculty member whose past service and performance warrant the assumption that the applicant and the university will benefit from the activity.
Awards:	For the 2018-2019 Academic Year, the Provost may issue multiple awards of up to \$5000.00. Additional awards will be granted in 2019-2020 as a pilot run of this program. Applicants are limited to receiving one (1) award per academic year.
Call for Applications:	<p>In order to ensure that funds are reserved for the academic year, the Provost will issue three (3) separate calls for Reinvestment Award Applications throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Deadlines for applications will be in September, December, and April. Announcements will be sent to each Department Chair & Administrative Assistant requesting the information be shared with all faculty.</p>
Application Process:	<p>Faculty are required to submit a completed Faculty Reinvestment Award Application, and a description of the merit and need for the professional opportunity in question (maximum of 500-words).</p> <p>Faculty Reinvestment Award applications should be submitted to Dr. Jaya Goswami (Jaya.Goswami@tamuk.edu), AVP for Academic Affairs.</p>
Notification of Award:	<p>The recipients of the Reinvestment Award for each cycle will be based on recommendations by a faculty committee with membership from each academic College and the library, appointed and overseen by the Provost.</p> <p>Recipients will be notified of their award by email. The email will include confirmation of the amount funded, the account number to utilize for allowable expenses and deadlines for filing expenses.</p>
Post Award Responsibilities:	By the end of the semester of the Faculty Reinvestment Award activity, each recipient must submit a written account of the activities and accomplishments to their chairs/directors, and dean. In addition, the faculty member may be asked to share what he/she has learned from the Faculty Reinvestment Award activity with others on campus.

How to apply (The following documents are required)

1. A statement of purpose for your Faculty Reinvestment Award activity:

This summary statement (maximum 500 words) should discuss the proposed activity and be informative to specialists in the applicant's discipline, as well as to other literate readers. The statement should include:

- A. Objectives for the proposed activity and expected significance to the university;
- B. Relation to longer-term goals of the applicant's professional career;
- C. Relation to the applicant's research and/or teaching assignments;
- D. Budget for the Faculty Reinvestment activity.

2. A current Curriculum Vitae

3. Department Chair's signed statement of support to the Provost that includes a curricular plan to cover the faculty member's classes during his/her reassigned time, if applicable.

Greater Transparency of Student Rights to Religious Observance

Motion:

The following be placed at the top of each TAMUK academic calendar:

“An institution of higher education shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable amount of time after the absence” (Texas Education Code, Section 51.911).*

* Texas uses the following: A “religious holy day” is defined as one observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Discussion points if motion is seconded:

--In my conversations with students, they were unaware of their rights in this area.

--This was particularly true of international students I talked with.

--When these same students were asked if they knew where and how to access our TAMUK academic calendar, they said they did.

--When asked about any student handbooks, most didn't; therefore, I think it best to include in the academic calendar, at the very top.

--As far as how to determine what is a “religious holy day,” Texas uses the following: A “religious holy day” is defined as one observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

FacSen TenMotion-Meyer-Original

Motion to amend the Constitution of the General Faculty of Texas A&M University-Kingsville,
Section 13

Sponsor: Senator Craig A. Meyer
Co-Sponsor: Senator Pamela Wright

The current Section 13 of the Constitution reads as follows:

Section 13. A Faculty Senate seat shall be declared vacant upon a Senator's three successive absences or seven total absences at regular meetings during a two-year term.

We motion to amend this section as follows:

Section 13. (a) A Faculty Senate seat ~~shall~~ **may** be declared vacant, by the Executive Committee (EC), upon a Senator's three successive absences or seven total absences at regular meetings during a two-year term.

(b) Any Faculty Senator may call for an Executive Committee majority vote to continue a Senator's tenure, if the EC has declared a Senate seat vacated.

(c) Any Faculty Senator may call for a Faculty Senate majority vote to continue any other Senator's tenure, if the EC has declared a Senate seat vacated.

FacSen TenMotion-Meyer-Amended

Motion to amend the Constitution of the General Faculty of Texas A&M University-Kingsville,
Section 13

Sponsor: Senator Craig A. Meyer
Co-Sponsor: Senator Pamela Wright

The current Section 13 of the Constitution reads as follows:

Section 13. A Faculty Senate seat shall be declared vacant upon a Senator's three successive absences or seven total absences at regular meetings during a two-year term.

We motion to amend this section as follows:

Section 13. (a) A Faculty Senate seat ~~shall~~ **may** be declared vacant upon a Senator's three successive absences or seven total absences at regular meetings during a two-year term.
(b) Any Faculty Senator may call for a Faculty Senate majority vote to continue any other Senator's tenure if a Senate seat has been declared vacated.

TaskForce-StudyDay-Meyer

CURRENT:

Dead Week and Study Day

To support the learning environment, the University will adhere to a four school-day period of student study before the first scheduled final examinations each long semester. During this time, no required quizzes, tests or examinations (except make-up tests and/or final examinations for graduating seniors) shall be administered. The latter does not preclude the introduction of new material in classes or the administering of laboratory final examinations, nor does it create an implication that class attendance is not expected during this period. The day before final examinations are scheduled to begin will be designated as a study day. No classes will be held on this day to allow preparation time for students and faculty. Scheduling of other University events or functions that involve students is discouraged and should be limited during this period.

PROPOSED:

Study Day

To support the learning environment, the University will adhere to a one school-day period of student study before the first scheduled final examinations each long semester. During this time, no required quizzes, tests or examinations (except make-up tests and/or final examinations for graduating seniors) shall be administered. The day before final examinations are scheduled to begin will be designated as Study Day. No classes will be held on this day to allow preparation time for students and faculty. Scheduling of other University events or functions that involve students is discouraged and should be limited during this period.

Partial Week of Classes before Study Day

During the partial week of classes leading up to Study Day, no comprehensive tests (known as a “Final”) will be administered to students, except under special circumstances (e.g. graduating seniors). Faculty should refrain from required tests, quizzes, or examinations and make any such material part of the Final Exam given during Finals Week. Presentations, projects, and papers can be turned in during the partial week of classes.

***TAMUK FACULTY SENATE
2019 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD***

This annual award to a past or current *TAMUK Faculty Senator* recognizes an exceptional commitment to the Honor, Integrity, Importance, and Seriousness of Serving as a TAMUK Faculty Senator

NOMINATION FORM: 2019 Faculty Senate Distinguished Service Award

Please return/mail nomination to Faculty Senate Secretary Christine Radcliff at: christine.radcliff@tamuk.edu (DEADLINE: March 25, 2019)

Date: _____

NOMINEE (Past or Current TAMUK Faculty Senator):

Nominated by an Outgoing, Continuing or Incoming Faculty Senator:

Nomination Seconded by an Outgoing, Continuing, or Incoming Faculty Senator:

Please provide a brief statement below in support of your nomination:

Selection of the recipient of the Senate Distinguished Service Award will be made after the March Executive Committee meeting by the outgoing Senate Executive Committee and announced at the Opening Convocation in the Fall.