

APPROVED MINUTES

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
July 19, 2006

PRESENT: Poras Balsara, James Bartlett, John Burr, R. Chandrasekaran, Jeff DeJong, Gregg Dieckmann, Santosh D'Mello, John Gooch, Gopal Gupta, Marilyn Kaplan, Robert Kischnick, Murray Leaf, Sumit Majumdar, Dennis Miller, Shun Chen Niu, Simeon Ntafos, Ravi Prakash, Beatrice Rasmussen, Liz Salter, Mary Urquhart

ABSENT: Mark Anderson, Dinesh Bhatia, Gail Breen, Tom Brikowski, Duane Buhrmester, Cy Cantrell, David Daniel, Juan Gonzalez, Warren Goux, Jennifer Holmes, D.T. Huynh, Homer Montgomery, Ramachandran Natarajan, William Pervin, Sheila Pineres, Brian Ratchford, Tim Redman, Young Ryu, S. Venkatesan

VISITORS: Sandee Goertzen, Richard Huckaba, John Sibert

CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Dr. Leaf called the meeting to order in the absence of Dr. Daniel and Dr. Wildenthal. He did not have any announcements to make.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as circulated. The motion passed.

SPEAKER'S REPORT

1. The Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) will not meet over the summer to discuss the questions forwarded it to it by the Senate regarding the thesis honors program. Dr. Leaf had not realized this at the time of our June meeting. At the July meeting of the Council, he asked the Council to consider convening an ad hoc committee over the summer to begin consideration. The Council thought this would not be worthwhile in the time available, but the CUE will be happy to receive suggestions. Accordingly, if you have any thoughts please forward them to Michael Coleman. Dr. Leaf said he had just emailed the faculty to the same effect.

2. With the SACS accreditation in view, Robert Nelsen has been going over our rules and policies for internal assessment and has found a few lapses. The most important, in terms of impact on our time, concerns the evaluation of upper level administrators. Our rule is that we do it every three years. We have let a few slip. In consequence, on this basis, in 2006-2007 we will have to evaluate the Provost, the Director of the Library, and the Deans of Management, Engineering, Arts and Humanities, General Studies, and Brain

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and Behavioral Sciences. There is nothing in this that the Council and Senate have to do initially, but we need to be aware of the process and of the faculty time that it will take.

3. In the same vein, according to our policy on academic program review, we will also have to evaluate all the programs in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. The review process is established by the Senate Academic Program Review Committee.

Provost Wildenthal says this process is underway.

4. The Committee on Committees will meet on July 26. Anyone who would like to serve on any committee, or make any suggestions for someone else to serve, should contact Dr. Leaf or their school representative before that time. The members are Cy Cantrell, Juan Gonzalez, Ted Day, Marie Chevrier, Jack Rushing, and Margaret Owen. We ought to be able to complete our work in a day.

Assuming the Committee on Committee has its recommendations as planned; they would be available for the Senate to approve at the August meeting. However, we have little business for the meeting otherwise, and of course it falls in what will be our first or second full week of classes (depending on individual schedules). Yet it is an important matter.

Dr. Leaf asked whether the Senate would like to meet in August or, alternatively, authorize a mail ballot. The Senate agreed to leave it up to the Academic Council whether there should be a meeting or a mail ballot.

5 The Facilities Hotline is now up, although there is still an unresolved issue. The URL is <http://www.utdallas.edu/facilitieshotline/>

The issue concerns the Building Liaisons and the Safety Liaisons. In general, it seems logical that they should be the same people so far as possible, and this seems to have been the original idea in proposing them. However, the idea has not been implemented. We have a list of building liaisons, which has been circulated to the faculty, and staff and is now posted on the website, but there is no comparable list of safety liaisons. We are now trying to remedy the situation. Peggy Zotter will ask the Building Liaisons if they are also willing to assume the duties of Safety Liaisons. If any are not, additional people will be designated Safety Liaisons for their buildings. Then, when we have the list, the Environmental Health and Safety Office will arrange a training program, after the training the list modified building and safety liaison list will be posted on the Facilities Hotline website, and anywhere else, that seems appropriate.

6. The Senate website is being reconstructed. Modifications over the last few years have resulted in the Senate history, links page, and some key policy documents disappearing. These are now being restored, although as of this morning they were not yet up. We will also go back to having active links to contact every Senate and University Committee chair, and those committees with bylaws will have those bylaws available. This is

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particularly important in the case of CQ. Committees that want to post minutes will also be able to. Please check the site and let me have your suggestions.

7. The Council has agreed on members for the Calendar Policy Committee. They are Bill Pervin, John Wiorkowski (to Chair), Michael Coleman, Karen Jarrell, Gopal Gupta, Greg Dieckman, Marilyn Kaplan, and Judy Hensley. Dr. Leaf has not yet asked them if they can serve. If they can, they will be appointed.

8. U T System “Dating Service.” This was an idea originated in the FAC, mainly at the suggesting of Robert Nelsen. The idea is two-fold. First, it is a website where faculty can announce their research activities and seek cooperation and held from other faculty on other campuses. Second, it is a place where actual or prospective graduate students on each campus can seek programs on other campuses that they could join and work in, and where students can list themselves for faculty to find. This is now up and running, although it is difficult to find. The official name is the Research Projects Database, and it is found by going to the U T System site, then, under “offices” the Office of Academic Affairs, and at this home page, the research project database, and the potential graduate student database. The URL for the research projects database is <https://www.utsystem.edu/researchprojects/>. Now that it is up the FAC will collect information on its operation to make suggestions for improvements. Dr. Leaf therefore urged those present to try it and report on their impressions. Dr. Kaplan will send a notice to the faculty as a whole.

AMENDMENT OF GRIEVANCE POLICY TO INCLUDE SENIOR LECTURERS

The amendments are in section 1 paragraph two. It adds definitions on Lecturers and Senior Lecturers. The policy applies to full time Senior Lecturers, as well as part time Senior Lecturers who serve as administrators in addition to teaching. It does not apply to Lecturers who are hired to teach on a course-by-course basis. The policy also does not apply to “Visiting Professors” and “Lecturers” as they are usually not at UTD under a renewable contract.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Senior Lecturers Grievance Policy as amended. The motion passed.

REDLINGER REPORT ON MID-TERM GRADES

This report is circulated as an information item. Dr. Daniel asked for the report in part out of concern about graduation rates, which pertains to students who graduate in four to five years. Transfer students who graduate from UTD and students who begin at UTD and complete their degrees elsewhere are not included in the Regent’s definition of graduation rates. President Daniel wanted to find out how many students who come in as freshmen may not be succeeding in their core classes and, as a result, become discouraged and not continue at UTD until they graduate.

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Dr. Redlinger concludes that there are some classes in which students are not doing well, and that mid-term grades may be a way to predict whether they will make a passing grade in a class. The data also suggest that students are perhaps being placed in classes for which they may not be prepared. The report indicates that mid-term grades may be an indicator of a student's progress. A suggestion was made that sometimes the first half semester of a class might be more intensive out of necessity to learn the foundation of a subject and be less intensive after the basics have been learned.

Dr. Leaf pointed out that the report was merely to investigate one factor that may be responsible for the middle-of-the-road graduation rates at UTD.

APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES FOR GRADUATION

Dr. Leaf read the following motion to the Senate:

UNDERGRADUATE

These students have applied for graduation and have been reviewed by the Office of Records. The Office of Records declared that all of these students will be eligible for graduation upon the completion of the current semester's work at the necessary levels. I request, therefore, that the Academic Senate certify these students to graduate upon receipt of final grades, and notification of completion of other requirements, provided that the grades are consistent with the standards for graduation prescribed by this University. I also request that the Academic Senate certify those students designated as eligible to graduate with honors upon completion of coursework and requirements consistent with the standards for honors at the levels offered by this University.

Dr. Leaf asked for a motion to approve the candidates for graduation. It was seconded and it passed.

GRADUATE

These students have applied for graduate degrees and have been reviewed by the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean certifies that all of these students will be eligible for the degrees indicated upon satisfactory completion of the current semester's work. I request, therefore, that the Academic Senate certify these students to receive the degrees as indicated upon receipt of final grades and notification of completion of other requirements, provided that the grades received are consistent with the standards for credit prescribed by this University.

Dr. Leaf asked for a motion to approve the candidates for graduation. The motion was seconded and it passed.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

John Sibert, assistant professor of Chemistry at UTD, was at the meeting to discuss the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) component of the SACS re-accreditation process.

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John is the Director of the QEP project. He outlined the objectives and requirements that must be met by the program to meet the SACS requirement.

The QEP program brings together students, faculty and staff to research and create a specific goal that the university might establish as an enhancement to a student's academic experience at UTD. Focus groups will brainstorm to find possible topics that might meet this goal. The end result must have identifiable learning outcomes and assessment plans. The plan must have the support of all sections of the university and be a significant addition to a students learning.

The QEP committee will be searching for ideas and topics through focus groups and small meetings during the coming year. It is imperative that all areas of the university work together to develop a QEP at UTD. More information is available at http://sacs.utdallas.edu/qep_home.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed.

APPROVED: _____
Speaker of the Faculty

DATE: _____