

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING of September 12, 2013

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2013-2014 academic year was held September 12, 2013, at 3:30 p.m. in the Travis Room (HUC 2.202) with Dr. Rebekah Smith, Chair of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Diane Abdo, David Akopian, Robert Ambrosino, Rajesh Bhargave, Emily Bonner, Natasha Burns, Fengxin Chen, Frank Chen, Karen Daas, Glenn Dietrich, Jim Dykes, Martha Fasci, Yongli Gao, Mark Giles, Suat Gunhan, Robert Hard, Richard Harris, Harry Jarrett, Turgay Korkmaz, Francisco Marcos-Marin, Marian Martinello, Lydia Martinez-Rivera, Patricia McGee, Debbie Menger, Joycelyn Moody, John Nix, Antonio Petrov, Clyde Phelix, Anand Ramasubramanian, Misty Sailors, Juana Salazar, Elaine Sanders, Dan Sass, Rebekah Smith, Woodie Spivey, Rob Tillyer, Alistair Welchman, Wayne Wright, John Zhang

Absent: Pepe Chang, Vaidya Gundlupet (excused), Rosalie Herber, Drew Johnson, Richard Lewis (excused), Marcelo Marucho (excused), Emilio Mendoza, John Merrifield, Wing Chung Ng, Branco Ponomariov, Libby Rowe (excused), Johnelle Sparks (excused), Heather Trepal (excused), Bennie Wilson (excused)

Guests: James Calder (for Vaidya Gundlupet), John Frederick, Angel Gibbons, Sarah Leach, Ken Pierce

Total members present: 39

Total members absent: 14

II. Approval of the May 2, 2013 meeting minutes

The minutes were approved.

III. Reports

A. Chair of the Faculty Senate - Rebekah Smith

Senate duties:

Dr. Smith briefly reminded new senators of the responsibilities of being a member of the senate including attending meetings or sending a substitute, conveying

information back to faculty, and participating fully in committee activities. She listed the new committee chairs and briefly explained the policy review process. She said there are currently no policies undergoing stakeholder review but told senators to watch for upcoming emails to share with departments and provide feedback. She said that upcoming committee reports will be given on the following topics:

GRIP related changes in enrollment policies (APR committee report – October 10)

HOP 1.34 Visiting Scholars (Research committee report – November 7)

Changes to bylaws (NEP committee report – November 7)

Policy and faculty updates:

COI/COC - She said that once again, the implementation of the COI/COC policy has been delayed and thanked the senate for providing input regarding this policy to President Romo who forwarded the concerns to the Chancellor in May.

Chair's council - She said that the Department Chair's Council, co-chaired by Norma Guerra and Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, held their first meeting yesterday, which was a closed (chairs-only) meeting. The next meeting will take place on October 9th.

Core curriculum and QLP - She said that when a course was both a core curriculum and QLP course, the assessments for these could be combined as long as they met requirements for both types of assessment items. Nancy Martin or Rajendra Boppana may be contacted for more information.

System guidelines on teaching evaluations and peer observation - Dr. Smith said that the senate approved changes to student surveys in April and that peer observations will now be required for P&T reviews beginning in fall 2014.

VPR - She reminded senators that Mauli Agrawal is the new interim VPR and said that Misty Sailors, chair of the Research committee will give an update on other changes within the research area including the IRB report.

GRIP - She gave an update on initiatives related to the GRIP, including a retreat that was held in June, the restructuring of student advising initiative, and the early alert system.

Senate bylaws and other issues:

There were some changes made to the senate's bylaws last year, including pushing up the committee elections to the final meeting of the spring semester. She said that other topics to consider modifying in the bylaws include whether appointments to panels should be written in. She said that there have been some scheduling problems for senators that have conflicting class times and offered the possibility of changing the senate's meeting time. Dr. Smith reminded committee chairs to use large fonts in their PowerPoint presentations for ease of viewing and said she was made aware of some issues at the bookstore regarding books not arriving or arriving late. She asked the senate to send in a description of the specific problem in order to address it.

President's State of the University Address:

She reminded the senate that the President's State of the University Address is on Tuesday, September 24th at 3:00pm in the UC Ballroom and encouraged senators to attend.

B. Provost's Report – John Frederick

Dr. Frederick re-introduced Donna Edmondson, who previously served as Research Ombudsperson, and is now serving as an Ombudsperson to Academic Affairs. Dr. Frederick said that she would report to him, and encouraged faculty and staff to contact her with any issues and that any discussions with the Ombudsperson would remain confidential.

He said that recently, a memo was distributed regarding course surveys. Dr. Frederick said that the purpose of the memo was to illustrate taskforce suggestions about which strategies tend to work in increasing student participation on course surveys. There were some concerns about whether or not student names would be shared with faculty, even if they were not planning to give credit for the survey. Ultimately, the information would have to be captured electronically, and he said that currently, the simplest way to notify faculty members who are giving credit is to send the results to all faculty members (and it is up to each faculty member whether or not to use the information). He clarified that the list of student participants would be sent out before final grades are totaled, but the actual survey results would be distributed to faculty after they have filed final grades. He said that one suggestion would be to offer the whole class credit in exchange for receiving a specific percentage rate of completion on the evaluation surveys.

Dr. Frederick said that Page Smith has been appointed as the new Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and said that he is filling in for Dr. Flannagan.

He went on to mention that there is going to be a restructuring of advising at UTSA. Students are currently seeing multiple advisors (and often getting different advice) which has the potential to cause course enrollment and degree completion difficulties. He said that the new system would assign each student to a single advisor, in the hopes of them being able to retain the same advisor throughout their time at UTSA. Based on reviewing student graduation data in correlation with the majors that students began in, "clusters" of majors were developed. These clusters would allow advisors to have 6 primary majors and 6 secondary majors to specialize in. Statistically, this would allow approximately 80% of all students to be able to keep the same advisor through their entire experience at UTSA. This new system would move away from the traditional college-based centers and encourages advisors to act as liaisons to departments to foster increased collaboration. The new system will be implemented in May of 2014 at new student orientation.

Dr. Frederick gave some statistics about the incoming freshman class. The size of the class is down, but a greater proportion come from the top quartile of their high school class. He said that five years ago, UTSA admitted 92% applicants who applied. In 2012-2013 was 73%, and in 2013-2014 it was 60%. Dr. Frederick stressed that this group of freshman is the best group yet, and encouraged faculty to work to ensure their students' success as much as possible. He said that in the past, the freshman retention rate was about 65%. He is hoping to work up to retaining 75-80% of freshman this year. Dr. Frederick said that the preliminary numbers indicate that the overall student head count at UTSA is approximately 28,600-28,800 which is a little lower than usual, but this is due to increased admission standards as well as a smaller transfer student class.

C. Consent Calendar – Elaine Sanders

- MA in Geography

The Graduate Council's proposal was that the MA in Geography be approved. There was a discussion with some concerns regarding the role of GIS and lack of flexibility in course selection for students. The senate voted (one abstention) to table this proposal until the next meeting in October when more information would be available.

D. Curriculum Committee – Lydia Martinez-Rivera

- Minor in Dance

The committee's recommendation was to include a revision to section B which would include a required 6 upper-division hours, as other minors require. The committee voted to approve the minor, with this change included. A motion was made to support the committee's recommendation and the senate voted in favor unanimously.

E. Research Committee – Misty Sailors

- RAB committee update

Dr. Sailors explained the renaming and recharging of the Research Advisory Committee to the Research Advisory Board (RAB). She said that the RAB worked on three white papers last year:

1. Micro-issues whitepaper which included enhancing research within the disciplines; it spells out research goals for UTSA, and how to achieve them.
2. Macro-issues whitepaper which included recommendations for the implementation of a culture of research at UTSA.
3. Multi/Interdisciplinary research whitepaper which looked at ways to bring the disciplines together in order to enhance productivity at UTSA.

Dr. Sailors said that all whitepapers were sent to the President, Vice President for Research, and the Provost. A copy of each one can be found on the RAB's website and on Rowdyspace.

She said that the IRB underwent a review process where an outside group of consultants looked at regulatory and best practices at UTSA. Their report of the strengths, concerns, and recommendations may be found on Rowdyspace. She said that an IRB taskforce has been formed. The IRB's current process is being addressed and IRB forms are currently being revised. Dr. Sailors expects that an electronic management system will soon be implemented for IRB. In addition, the turnaround time for forms is being reduced from two weeks to 72 hours. She said that other changes include the office's separation of duties and a paradigm shift to focus on a minimal (but not zero) risk. Dr. Sailors said that the RAB committee's goals for 2013-2014 are graduate studies at UTSA, undergraduate research at UTSA, and following up on the committee's white papers.

IV. Unfinished Business

- Approval of members for panels:

- **HOP 2.36 – Procedures for Review of a Nonreappointment of a Nontenured Tenure-Track Faculty Member**

The following individuals were unanimously approved by the senate to serve on the panel:

COA – Mark Blizzard

COB – Glenn Dietrich and Martha Fasci

COE – Ruyan Guo and Drew Johnson

COEHD – Wayne Wright and John Zhang

COLFA – Reed Hunt and Francisco Marcos-Marin

COPP – Byongook Moon and Richard Harris

COS – Clyde Phelix and Fengxin Chen

- **HOP 10.02 – Misconduct in Research or in Other Scholarly Activities**

The following individuals were unanimously approved by the senate to serve on the panel:

COA – Mark Blizzard

COB – Martha Fasci and Pepe Chang

COE – Frank Chen

COEHD – Heather Trepal and Juliet Langman

COLFA – Reed Hunt and John Nix

COPP – Rob Tillyer and Johnelle Sparks

COS – Clyde Phelix

V. New Business

- Early Alert System – Ken Pierce, Vice Provost for Information Technology
Ken Pierce said that the new E.A.R.N. (Early Alert Retention Network) system has been implemented through the GRIP. He said that the Starfish system helps faculty and advisors to work collaboratively to ensure student success. With this system, student concerns can be flagged manually and automatically (based on online information from the Blackboard Learn Gradebook), and those flags are automatically cleared when progress is made. The initial types of flags for fall 2013 are for midterm grades (below a 70), advising holds, and faculty-raised flags which may include attendance, participation, low grades, etc. Flags for future semesters will be developed as needed. Mr. Pierce said that the Starfish system is accessible through Blackboard Learn. There will also be optional flag surveys sent out for pilot courses. He said that implementation of the new system will begin this fall before midterm grades are available. Additionally OIT is considering the replacement of Rowdyspace with Box (<https://www.box.com/>).

VI. Open Forum

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at 5:32 pm.