

Faculty Senate

Wednesday, February 27, 2013

Senate Members Present: Conroy, Czyzewska, Cavitt, Feakes, Kimmel, McClellan, Furney, Sriraman, Hindson, Blunk, Payne, Covington, Wilson, Ash

Guests: Tompkins, Sigler, Opheim, Nielsen, England

1. Information and Follow-Up Items
 - a. Senate Elections
 - i. The mock election has concluded.
 - ii. The review sheets of nominees and voters are being prepared.
 - iii. The notice for faculty who do not wish to stand for election to have their names removed from the ballot will be sent out as soon as department candidate and voter lists are verified by Senators and Senate Liaisons.
 - b. The Mace Bearer for the McCoy College of Business May Commencement ceremony will be Debra Feakes.
2. Report on CAD 3/27/2013
 - a. The Admissions Office has a concern that when people come to visit campus, it is difficult to schedule meetings for students with the departments. They hope to look at alternative methods for departments to welcome prospective students.
 - b. The CAD discussed guidelines on overpayment of staff (more than FT).
 - c. Texas State is examining creating a pathway program with the ACC Kyle Campus, similar to dual enrollment programs at Blinn College-Bryan and Texas A&M University.
 - d. The impact of construction on bus routes, especially during April and May, is likely to be great. Faculty are asked to be sympathetic, especially during finals week.
 - e. The fifth-year review for SACS is coming up, and there are 20 standards for analysis, as opposed to the 90 standards required for the full accreditation process. There will be a focus on academic programs and student learning outcomes.
3. Associate Provost Opheim
 - a. PPS 7.12 Clear English Requirements
 - i. This PPS has gone through multiple drafts, including a draft reviewed by the University lawyer.
 - ii. The PPS is divided into procedures for new hires and for those who are currently employed.
 - iii. Attachment B, covering the hiring of new faculty, was revised for consistency in definitions and in recognition of long-term service at an institution where the primary language of instruction is English.
 - iv. The Senate expressed concern most strongly about the second part of the PPS that addressed current employees, particularly that student complaints would serve as instigation for a review process, and the Senate suggested that “appropriate actions” of discipline for those faculty not meeting standards be more clearly defined.
 - b. FDL Supplemental Grant Criteria
 - i. Discussion of this issue was returned to the agenda for later discussion, due to time consideration.

4. Dr. Milt Nielsen, Associate VP, Instructional Technologies Support
 - a. SPSS has been purchased by IBM, and the costs have increased tremendously.
 - b. Instructional Technology Support has extended the contract for SPSS through 9/30/2014.
 - c. Faculty raised concerns that the ability to use SPSS can be seen as a requirement for students' education (to prepare them for graduate school, for example).
 - d. Dr. Nielsen noted that if the university goes with a program that does not meet a department's needs, the department might choose to use its own funds to purchase SPSS.
 - e. A committee will be formed for identifying replacement software. They will consider a statistical package that
 - i. is a one-part tool
 - ii. is Mac and PC compatible
 - iii. contains cost issues
5. A discussion on ASG Transportation Concerns, requested by ASG President McDaniel, was returned to the agenda, due to his absence.
6. Academic Computing Committee Report, Dr. Tim England, Chair
 - a. The ACC conducted a survey of faculty to assess the acceptability of the current process of application, review, and awards. Responses indicated that the policies were functioning acceptably, but the date was moved up for the call, giving applicants more time.
 - b. The goal was slightly revised to include, "enhancing the lab" with updates, and proposals for new labs were considered if they had Provost-level approval.
 - c. The Committee recommends that 28 proposals be funded, leaving some amount of money in the balance.
 - d. The Senate requests that the possibility proposals will be entertained for new labs, with Provost-level approval, be more clearly communicated to applicants.
7. Old Business
 - a. PPS reviews were returned to the addenda due to time considerations.
 - b. A Handbook review process will be devised by the Chair.
8. New Business
 - a. The ASG Resolution to deny professors the opportunity to create and enforce mandatory attendance policies was discussed. Its conflict with several PPSs was noted.
 - b. A faculty member inquired about the randomization of comments on evaluations of chairs. The Senate questioned whether the chairs actually see verbatim comments. The Senate will ask the Associate Provost for clarification.
9. The minutes of February 13 and 20, 2013 were approved.