

Faculty Senate

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Members Present: Czyzewska, Covington, McClellan, Wilson, Furney, Kimmel, Blunk, Hindson, Sriraman, Feakes

Guests: Opheim, Meyers

Announcements:

1. Because the Chair has another responsibility, Senator Wilson volunteered to attend this month's Adjunct Faculty Committee meeting as the Senate representative.
2. Request for Bobcat Pause event in April: Senator Furney was selected to read the names of those faculty who have passed away this academic year. All Senators were encouraged to attend the event, which takes place on April 10th from 6-8 PM, in the LBJ Student Ballroom.

PAAG follow-up (3/6):

1. Student Counseling Services: The Senate tabled review of this topic until the next meeting.
2. Faculty input on concerns outside of Academic Affairs: Senators reiterated that the administration should insure that all processes for decision-making at the university include faculty input.

Information and follow-up items:

1. CAD 3/19 report:
 - A. The Faculty Research Profiles will soon be published on the Texas State website. Since these profiles will by default be active, faculty are encouraged to visit the website to insure the information posted in their profiles is accurate. Faculty also may deactivate their profiles if they wish.
 - B. Dr. Dan Brown presented information regarding orientation for freshman and transfers.
 - C. Dr. Opheim discussed PPS approvals.
 - D. Dr. Heinze presented the current list of members on the Calendaring Committee.
 - E. The lists of missing fund assets for departments were given to deans. An audit of accounts revealed that many departments are missing funds.
 - F. The Board of Regents is to be contacted only through President Trauth.
 - G. The administration hopes to see increased participation by faculty and staff in the latest Family Campaign.
 - H. The Retired Faculty Association has created a scholarship; Deans were encouraged to share the information with their departments.

Senate election calendar:

The Senate election for this cycle is now begun, with the first round to end on April 8. At that point, the top two candidates for each seat will be contacted to make sure they will serve if elected in the final round of voting.

Request on Perception of Chairs Survey:

The Perception of Chairs Survey is conducted by the Provost (the Senate conducts the surveys of deans, the Provost and the President). Written responses are not randomized, but responses to the objective questions (10) are. Chairs have requested that their names on the results of question 10 – seeking faculty’s overall opinion of their chairs – be alphabetized rather than ranked. The Associate Provost agreed that is an appropriate choice for highlighting, but supported alphabetizing names. The Senate will discuss this request.

Joe Meyer discussed how the responses to the objective questions in the survey are randomized to insure anonymity. The system periodically randomizes results using the net ID information, and thus it would be very difficult to reverse the process and realign IDs with responses. However, written responses are listed as received (although they are no longer tied to the IDs of the persons who posted them). Senators expressed concerns about confidentiality in very small departments, where it might be fairly easy to uncover who wrote particular comments. The critical issue may be making sure that faculty understand Chairs can read the comments. Mr. Meyer noted that his office could delete the file of net IDs. Another alternative could be that deans summarize comments rather than providing all comments to chairs. A Senator suggested Mr. Meyer’s office explore creating a list of descriptors from which respondents could choose responses, thereby removing the possibility of identifying respondents by writing styles or details in their particular comments.

Discussions on these issues will continue at future Senate meetings.

Supplemental Grants for Development Leave:

Associate Provost Opheim noted that the review committee includes one Senator. The Senate asked about the criteria for awarding supplemental grants, how it was established, and whether the criteria could be posted more prominently so applicants can compose more effective proposals. Dr. Opheim cited PPS 8.02.28. as the document in which criteria are listed. Even so, Senators feel that the prose in the PPS could be made more precise to offer more guidance to applicants. The Senate suggested that a rubric be developed, perhaps based upon the Senate’s rubric for Leave proposals. The Associate Provost will ask the review committee to establish more specific criteria, including a rubric.

Incorporation of Service Task Force findings in PPS system:

PPS 7.10 has been revised to state explicitly that service is a central and important component in merit decisions. The Senate offered a few refinements to the suggested revisions.

PPS Reviews:

The Senate discussed the latest version of the PPS 7.12 governing the documentation of new and current faculty's English proficiency. There is still some concern among Senators that the ultimate penalty for faculty failing to establish proficiency is worded euphemistically. A Senator urged a more direct statement – that such faculty could see their contracts terminated, arguing that the administration should be honest about the possibility of such a summary decision on a person's job.

Minutes of 3/6/13 were approved

Adjournment