

Senate Minutes for 11/16/11

Members present: Feakes, Ash, Cavitt , Conroy, Czyzewska, Furney, Hindson, Kimmel, Melzer, Morey, Sanders, Stone, Winek

Guests: Blanda, Skerpan-Wheeler, Sigler (Library)

Meeting called to order at 4:01 PM.

University Research Committee Recommendations

Professors Skerpan-Wheeler and Blanda presented the results of the Research Enhancement Program application and review cycle, and reported that there were no glaring problems with the process. The College Research Enhancement Committees were able to recommend that 35 of the 101 applications be fully funded, and that 9 be offered partial funding.

	<u>Applications</u>	<u>Recommended</u>
Tenure-track faculty	32	12
First time applicants (T and TT)	25	15
Tenured faculty	44	17

A discussion ensued concerning applications that were disqualified for either ineligibility (PI was funded in the previous cycle) or failure to adhere to application guidelines, and whether the allocation to the college should be reduced in these cases.

The Senate will act on the URC recommendations at its next regular meeting and applicants will be notified of the outcome in December. The URC will report any recommendations for revisions to the REP process in the spring.

University Arts Committee Report

Professor Stephen Hager, Chair of the University Arts Committee for the past five years, updated the Senate on the committee's activities. Committee members are in the process of drafting a mission statement for the committee and the University's Encore performance program, and a matrix for the review of proposal. When asked to describe the committee's process for soliciting proposals and reviewing prospective performing artists, Prof. Hager commented that it has been neither well defined nor methodical. Although funded through the University Arts program, the committee does not select the musicians for the "Stars of Texas Music" and the "Supple Folk Music" series. Performances typically do not pay for themselves through ticket sales. Because funding for the Encore series comes from both ticket sales and Student Service Fees, Prof. Hager was asked about the level of participation by student committee members, which seems to have been minimal.

The Senate Chair explained that the Senate is working to establish a webpage for each of its committees where past activity can be archived and accessed by the university committee. She then asked for feedback from Prof. Hager on whether he feels the committee has sufficient funding, and any problems he sees that reduce the effectiveness of the University Arts program. In Prof. Hager's view, the committee's funding level is inadequate and the Encore program is severely under publicized.

As with the University Lectures funding, which is housed in the College of Liberal Arts, the University Arts funding must be handled by an academic unit. The University Arts account resides in the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

Selection of Chair of the Summative Review Committee for Dr. Chahin

The Senate discussed the summative review of Deans process and the appointment of a Senator to chair the Summative Review Committee for Dean Chahin. The committee will be given a charge by the Provost to interview, summarize and conglomerate evaluative information, listing strengths and challenges, and successes based on the college plan.

Committee Representation

The Senate discussed appointment of faculty to fill vacancies on the following committees.

- Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities
- Presidential Award for Excellence in Service
- Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Academic Computing Committee

The Senate Chair will contact faculty recommended to serve on these committees.

Senator James Kimmel will represent the faculty on the Development Leave Supplemental Grant Committee.

Review of Faculty Development Leave Process

The Senate returned to a discussion of the newly revised Development Leave application process and Senators suggested additional revisions to the evaluation matrix that could provide more standardized scoring. Senator Ash will work on possible revisions to the matrix and will present her recommendations early next semester.

A Senator asked if contacting faculty after applications have been submitted to request clarification should be permitted. There was consensus that posting the applications on TRACS worked well. The Senate Chair will pursue the possibility of a wholly electronic submission process; the challenges being routing applications to the chairs and deans for comments, and the requirement for applicant, chair and dean signatures. There were several format revisions suggested that would facilitate review of materials and would streamline the application form.

New Business

1. Senator Cavitt, who serves on the Handbook Committee, introduced concerns that have been brought up by committee members, some of which stem from the recommendation of the AAUP that university handbooks should state the philosophical underpinnings of the policies by which faculties operate. The Senate Chair will invite the Handbook Committee Chair to give the Senate an interim report at the 11/30 senate meeting.
2. The Chair distributed a print out of a screen shot showing the menu of choices students are given to identify their reasons for dropping classes. The first reason listed is,

“Incompatibility with faculty.” A Senator suggested that this be moved to the bottom of the list, and other Senators expressed a desire to have it deleted, or to revise the wording. The Chair asked for suggestions for alternate wording.

3. There was concern expressed about the phasing out of the Grade Book I program. Faculty should be directed to the TRACS staff for assistance with problems.
4. A faculty member requested that the Senate eliminate the requirement that Senate Liaisons be tenured. Senators reiterated concerns about tenure-track faculty shouldering heavy service loads and declined to revise the policy.
5. The Chair will post the updated salary data to the Senate website prior to the next meeting. To access the data, faculty will be required to sign in with their network username and password.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the 11/2 meeting were approved.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:06.